

Billy Elliot

Key Moments Revision

Describe	<p>Set out characteristics of something</p> <p>Describe the actors Physical and Vocal skills in detail. Describe what the actor was trying to convey to an audience about the character</p>
Analyse	<p>Look at the information provided and break it down to identify and interpret the main points being raised</p> <p>Zoom in on what particular skills were used and explain why the actor acted the way they did to show a particular emotion.</p>
Evaluate	<p>Make a judgment from the evidence available</p> <p>What was it about that acting skill that was successful at conveying the information to the audience and how did you and the audience react?</p>

- Sentence Starters:

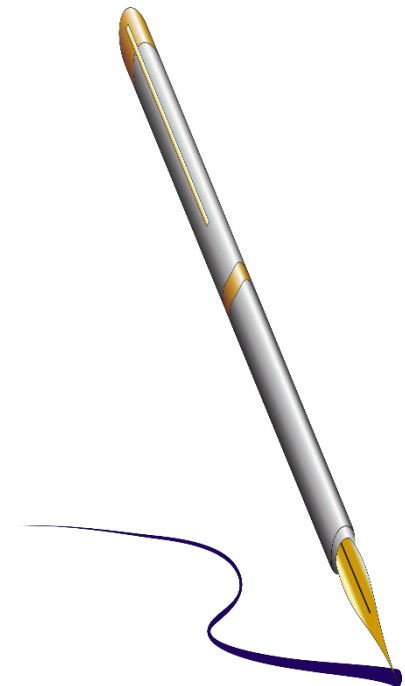
- A specific successful moment was when ...
- The actor delivered the line ...
- The actor showed (intention) they did this when ...
- The actor did this by ...
- The use of ...
- This allowed the audience to see/ interpret think/ feel/ understand ...
- This meant that the actor successfully conveyed/ showed the ...

- Analytical sentence starters:

- *This communicated the ...*
- *The intended effect was ...*
- *This allowed the audience to see/ interpret think/ feel/ understand ...*
- *This meant that the actor conveyed/ showed the ...*
- *This helped to show the ...*

Evaluating sentence starters and key words:

- I found this emotive
- I felt moved
- I was convinced by this moment
- I was mesmerised
- I was shocked by ...
- I was amazed ...
- I was engrossed with ...
- Compelling
- Enthralling
- Captivating
- Gripping
- Spellbinding
- Fascinating
- Thrilling





The cast

- **Cast**
- Elliott Hanna as Billy Elliot.
- Ruthie Henshall as Sandra Wilkinson.
- Dekka Walmsley as Jackie Elliot.
- Ann Emery as Grandma.
- Chris Grahamson as Tony Elliot.
- Zach Atkinson as Michael Caffrey.
- Liam Mower as Older Billy.

Introduction

- Billy Elliot the Musical Live
- Recorded at The Victoria Palace Theatre London – watched at Eggar's School November 2019
- Plot summary in one sentence
- Name the actor/s you are going to focus on and state why – use an evaluative phrase and use the words from the question – “how the character develops/successfully showed emotion/ interpreted their character well”
- State why you enjoyed Billy Elliot the Musical

Facts and quotes about the Musical

“Set in a northern English mining town against the background of the 1984 miners' strike, *Billy Elliot* is the inspirational story of a young boy's struggle against the odds to make his dream come true”

“*Billy Elliot* tells the story of a young boy from a coal mining village in northeast England who transcends class and circumstance to become a ballet star.”

Miner's Strike 1984 – 85

County Durham



Key Moments

Dad discovers Billy at the Ballet Class

Summary Billy is centre stage with one arm outstretched and the other held above his head looking like a professional ballerina. He has just completed a series of perfect turns and looks elated with a proud facial expression. Mrs Wilkinson stands upstage right with her hand over her mouth, amazed at Billy's ability. Jackie, Billy's dad enters and shows in an aggressive and angry manner that he is not happy that Billy is doing ballet, when he should have been at his boxing class.

Characters/ actors involved Mrs Wilkinson/ Ruthie Henshall, Billy Elliot/ Elliott Hanna, Jackie Elliot/ Dekka Walmsley and other young female ballerina's

Points to note The contrast between the successful moment of Billy's turns to the shock of Jackie's entrance. Jackie's traditional male working-class attitude to dance and Wayne Sleep. His aggression and physical handling of Billy. His aggressive attitude towards Mrs Wilkinson, shouting loudly and his close proxemics as he shouts at her to stop interfering in the way he is treating his son Billy, causing her to recoil. Shock at his foul language and anger by the young ballerina's.

Audience reactions Massive shock at Jackie's entrance. Stunned into silence, so we stop clapping immediately, almost like we are in the wrong too. Concern for Billy. We understand how Jackie feels, as his son was at ballet when he should have been at boxing but disagree with the way he is handling the situation. Shock at the aggression and anger seen towards both Billy and Mrs Wilkinson. Laugh at the shock shown by the young ballerinas when Jackie swears loudly. Laugh when Billy stands up to his dad and then realises, he has overstepped the mark and runs off quickly. Relief when Jackie leaves the stage, as we were almost holding our breath wondering what he would do, breathing out again as he leaves. Feel sympathy for Mrs Wilkinson and Billy, after such an outburst.



Describe

Analyse

Evaluate

Key Moment 2
The strike is becoming more violent – The crowbar scene
Summary Tony comes downstairs with a crowbar as the strike has become more violent, with Gary Robson’s legs being broken. Jackie tells Tony to put it down as he doesn’t want Tony hurt. Tony refuses and challenges his dad to make him put it down. Tony exclaims that his dad has been a complete waste of space since his mam died. Jackie punches Tony completely out of the blue, and Tony gets up and walks out without saying a word with the crowbar. Billy watches on in shock.
Characters/ actors involved Jackie Elliot/ Dekka Walmsley and Tony Elliot/ Chris Grahamson
Points to note We see Tony as an angry young man, who is willing to use violence to win the strike and keep the pits open. We see Jackie try to reason with Tony, but then become more aggressive and try to maintain his authority as a parent. We see Tony being disrespectful and threatening to his dad. Even when Jackie becomes violent and punches Tony, his son still ignores his wishes and continues out with the crowbar. Challenge of two males wrestling for supremacy. Traditional male attitude to use violence and aggression to get their own way.
Audience reactions Surprise that Tony wants to use the crowbar. Shock at the way Tony speaks to his father and the aggression shown when he shouts in his face making his father recoil. Anger at Tony when he says that Jackie has been a waste of space since his mam died, hatred for Tony for sinking this low and treating his father with such contempt. Gasp from the audience when Jackie hits Tony. Shock at the way Jackie shouts at Billy.



Describe	Analyse	Evaluate

Mrs Wilkinson helps Billy feel confident about the audition
<p>Summary Mrs Wilkson has arranged the audition for Billy and is ensuring he knows the arrangements for the day. He swears at her fussing, and they laugh, and she tells him to keep his mouth shut. Then Billy stands down stage left, looking a little lost and scared. He wipes his eye, as if he is crying. Mrs Wilkinson looks to the sky then walks slowly towards Billy and straightens his coat, doing it up and giving him a pep talk. She bends down to do the last button on his coat up and tells him to “Do it for you Billy” and then both say in unison smiling at each other “put me alarm on” as if he has always said this to her.</p>
<p>Characters/ actors involved Mrs Wilkinson/ Ruthie Henshall and Billy Elliot/ Elliot Hanna</p>
<p>Points to Note Mrs Wilkinson shows a maternal side, that we don’t even see with her own daughter Debbie. She hugs him like he really needs to be loved and cared for. He clings on as if he has missed his own mother’s hugs and that maternal touch that he doesn’t get anymore. She shows complete faith in Billy, as if this is his chance to escape the traditional mining route that he will after to follow if he doesn’t escape through dance.</p>
<p>Audience reactions We are surprised to see Billy so vulnerable. There is a sigh from the audience when Mrs Wilkinson hugs Billy. We laugh at the way she is responding to Billy whilst having this tender moment with Billy. The audience feel pleased that Billy is being cared for and supported.</p>



Describe	Analyse	Evaluate

Mrs Wilkinson arrives and is annoyed why Billy is late for the audition
Summary Tensions are high as Tony is hurt in a riot. Billy wakes up late for his audition. Mrs Wilkinson arrives to collect him. She greets them in a cheery way. Then moves angrily towards Billy shouting that he has left her waiting and that he will miss the audition.
Characters/ actors involved – Mrs Wilkinson / Ruthie Henshall and Billy Elliot/ Elliot Hannah. The miners, Tony/ Chris Grahamson and Jackie/ Dekka Walmsley
Points to note – Mrs Wilkinson acts like an angry parent towards Billy as he has left her waiting, but more importantly he will miss his chance to audition. Miners are confused why she is there and why she is shouting at Billy.
Audience reactions -laughter at the juxtaposition from the angry miners when Mrs Henshall says 'Hello' and their confused faces Surprise when Henshall moves past the minders to shout at Billy Understanding why she is frustrated at Billy for missing the alarm Wondering how Jack and Tony feel and will react as they are not sure why she is in their house – they stand open mouthed and stare



Describe	Analyse	Evaluate

Mrs Wilkinson explains Billy is doing Ballet and Tony is annoyed about this
Summary Jackie, Tony and some of the miners learn of the audition. Tony threatens Mrs Wilkinson. Tony forces Billy to dance, but Billy doesn't. Tony bans him from ballet. Mrs Wilkinson stands up to Tony. We hear police sirens, and the miners dash off stage left. Mrs Wilkinson is incensed and storms out saying Billy 'doesn't stand a chance'.
Characters/ actors involved Tony Elliot/ Chris Grahamson, Mrs Wilkinson/ Ruthie Henshall and Jackie Elliot/Dekka Walmsley and other miners
Points to note Mrs Wilkinson protect Billy and shields him as she expects an angry backlash to the news. Confusion from the miners and Tony and Jackie at what she is saying. Angry outburst from Tony, jumping up and shouting in a very aggressive and furious manner. Jackie standing looking shocked at both what has happened and the way his son is reacting, but not confronting either. Mrs Wilkinson is not intimidated by Tony's behaviour and stands her ground.
Audience reactions Laughing at the fact that Mrs Wilkinson hides Billy behind her and that Billy begs her not to tell them. Shock at the way Tony reacts. Gasp when he threatens to hit her. Admiration of Mrs Wilkinson when she stands up for herself and Billy. Sadness for Billy that he doesn't stand a chance with the traditional male attitude to ballet, and in the midst of such a volatile situation his passions and dreams are second place. Relief for Mrs Wilkinson when Tony goes out as he is needed on the strike.



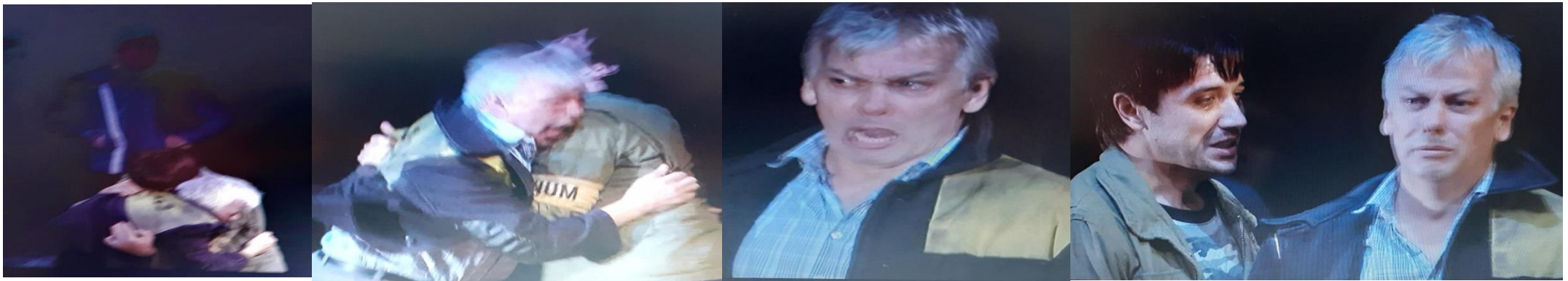
Describe	Analyse	Evaluate

Billy's dad goes to ask Mrs Wilkinson if it too late for Billy to audition
Summary Jackie has just watched Billy do an amazing dance and realises that he has to help Billy to live his dream. He is feeling conflicted as to whether to go back to work to ensure he has enough money to help Billy and wants to know if Billy really has a chance.
Characters/ actors involved Mrs Wilkinson/ Ruth Henshall and Dekka Walmsley
Points to note We see Mrs Wilkinson's harsh attitude to Debbie again. We see her sarcastic tone and despair at the way Jackie behaved about Billy's chances change as she sees his genuine interests in helping Billy. We see his traditional working-class pride, that he can't accept charity and that he only wanted the facts from her. He is appreciative of her help but needs to provide for his own family. His shock and confusion at the cost of the ballet school.
Audience reactions We feel sympathy for Jackie and can see how his attitude has developed towards Billy's talent. We feel worried at first that he will give up and Billy will not get the chance. We see Mrs Wilkinson's realisation and we feel hopeful that they can work together to help Billy. We respect Jackie's attitude of providing for his family and feel sympathy for the conflict he feels. We wonder what he will do next.



Describe	Analyse	Evaluate

Tony tries to stop his dad from becoming a scab and stop him going back to work.
Summary Jackie Elliot has just found out that there is still a chance for Billy, and he can go to the audition if they can afford to send him. He is standing centre stage alone and we can see his facial expressions showing the agony he is feeling as he makes the decision to go back to work. Tony and the other miners try and persuade him not to be a scab and go back to work. He wrestles with his conscience and his son who tries to persuade
Characters/ actors involved Jackie Elliot/Dekka Walmsley and Tony Elliot/ Chris Grahamson and other miners
Points to Note He is feeling conflicted whether he should stick to the strike with the other miners and the traditional career his family follow or if he should go back to work and help Billy. We see Tony's aggression but also his despair at his father, he is worried he will never be able to speak to his dad again. The other miners despair that Jackie, of all people, might go back to work and weaken the strike's position. Tony and Jackie wrestle and it is a battle of wills. Jackie collapses and Tony hugs him and reassures him the miners will help Billy.
Audience reactions Empathy at Jackie's dilemma, sympathy for how upset he is. Feel conflicted ourselves whether we should admire Jackie for helping Billy or feel disappointed that he is going back to work. Feel sympathy for Tony when he asks, what about me dad? We can see his pleading and confusion at what his dad is doing, and we feel sympathy for him. We almost can't watch the deterioration of Jackie's character as he collapses at the weight of this decision. Audience is silent and tense.



Describe	Analyse	Evaluate

Billy Elliot The Musical was performed live and recorded at the Victoria Palace Theatre on 28.09.14. This musical contains both comedy and tragedy and tells the story of a young boy named Billy who wants to become a ballet dancer amidst the turmoil of the miners' strike of 1984/5. In one scene, Billy's Dad, played by Deka Walmsley attempts to cross the picket line and go back to work in the pits, while Billy's older brother Tony, played by Chris Grahamson, tries to prevent him from doing so. Both actors used their acting skills to great success within this moment. The scene begins with Walmsley facing out to the audience as other 'scab' miners gather to go back to work. Walmsley faces the audience, his lip quivering, a lost expression on his face and his head shaking in disbelief over what he is about to do. These physical choices worked incredibly successfully in portraying his character as being tense in that moment; I could see that the character was trying to contain his emotions and bottle them away but was shaking involuntarily as a result. Walmsley's character could be compared to a piece of elastic being pulled too tight, almost at the point of breaking; and as I witnessed this, I felt concern and sympathy towards him as he made such an impossible decision. Throughout the scene Walmsley's quivering continued and grew in its intensity, this was effective because it conveyed the growing anxiety and distress of the character as the situation, he found himself in became more and more unbearable to handle. Grahamson entered the scene in an extremely powerful way; by climbing over a metal gate and using his vocal skills to scream the word 'Dad' at the top of his voice, which subsequently echoed and left a moment for the action to pause. By having his character climb over a high metal gate in such a way, Grahamson was effectively able to convey his character's desperation to reach his father before he made such a life-changing decision. It successfully made the character appear to be determined not to let any barriers, no matter the size, stand in his way of keeping his family together. The way in which the line was screamed and echoed also showed this desperation as well as anger. This anger was clearly over his dad's decision to cross the picket line and betray his community and family, the character of Tony is, as a result, successfully portrayed as being passionate about the strike and unwilling to let a member of his own family become a 'scab'. The two actors then stood, motionless, across the stage from each other. Walmsley centre stage-left and Grahamson centre stage-right. This was an effective use of proxemics, having such distance between the two characters, because it signified the emotional distance between them in that moment. The character of Tony clearly believes in the strike, whereas the character of Dad's belief has wavered and the decision to go back to work has torn the family apart; this is incredibly and the decision to go back to work has torn the family apart; this is incredibly evident

from the use of proxemics seen here and we can sense that should Walmsley's character make the decision to go back to work, he would be shunned by his family and community and the distance between the two characters would only continue to grow and grow. At this point in the play the characters become ever-more representational of so many families who were torn apart during the miners' strike as people made the tough decision to cross the picket line. This moment was, as a result, incredibly emotional and tense and the actors gave the audience a clear insight into how the characters' relationship was at that moment in time. In another moment of the same scene Walmsley and Grahamson used physical contact and height levels brilliantly to convey their characters. Both actors charged towards one another at a quick pace and locked their arms around each other in a physical fight. They struggled with each other for a while. We had seen the two engage in a physical fight earlier in the play and therefore expected the two characters were to try and beat each other up. However, in a magical moment, this physical fight slowly turned into a hug as the two characters embraced one another and fell down to the ground together. This was incredibly emotional and effective because it demonstrated how vulnerable the two characters actually were, which came as a shock to the audience. They had portrayed their two characters as such strong and powerful men up until this point and finally we got to see their true emotions released as they, on their knees sobbed into each other's arms. The audience felt sympathy and catharsis during this heart-breaking moment. The two grown men brought down to their knees, meant that height levels were being used successfully to convey how exhausted and vulnerable the two characters felt, but they also symbolised an entire community on their knees in that moment, as the strike was crumbling before their eyes. The use of height levels also effectively showed that no matter how hard these two characters fought for power, they were both ultimately of a low status in society and this 'lowness' could also be linked to their self-worth and confidence. Finally, Walmsley, as he tried to sing his final chorus of the song 'He Could be a Star', used a weak and stammering tone of voice accompanied by pauses. This worked extremely effectively in conveying his character as a completely broken man; he was so overcome with emotion that he could not even get the words out of his mouth. I could sense the pain that the character was experiencing in that moment because the actor was using vocal skills so effectively and I even felt myself getting choked-up with him. I believe that everyone has experienced moments when they have become so overwhelmed by their emotions that it has rendered them unable to articulate their words, and the audience could identify with the character of Dad in this respect, making Walmsley's portrayal all the more believable.

