

## GCSE Knowledge Organiser (2) – Blood Brothers

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A contemporary plot revolving around fraternal twins Mickey and Eddie (Edward) who are separated at birth. One is raised in a wealthy family (Eddie) while the other is raised by a poor family (Mickey). Their different backgrounds take them to opposite ends of the social spectrum and the clear difference in upbringing leads to tragic consequences.

### ACT ONE

Act one begins with the Narrator summing up the story before we flash back to the beginning and Mrs Johnstone telling us about her life so far.

This is followed by the first interaction between Mrs Johnstone and Mrs Lyons where we can clearly see the difference in class. Mrs Johnstone is cleaning for Mrs Lyons as they have a conversation about Mrs Lyons inability to have children and Mrs Johnstone being pregnant again. Mrs Johnstone then finds out she is having twins.

Mrs Lyons then concocts a plan for Mrs Johnstone to give her one of the babies but they mustn't tell anyone. Mrs Lyons will lie to her husband as he is away with work and she makes Mrs Johnstone swear on the bible.

Once the babies are born, one is given to Mrs Lyons and she begins to bring him up as her own. Mrs Johnstone returns to work but Mrs Lyons starts to change and doesn't like Mrs Johnstone giving the baby (Edward) any attention. Mrs Lyons then fires Mrs Johnstone who threatens to expose the secret but Mrs Lyons reminds her of the oath they both took.

The story then jumps to when the twins are seven years old and we are introduced to Mickey who is struggling as the youngest in the family and wishing he was older. Edward then enters and they meet for the first time. There is an instant connection even though it is clear they have completely different backgrounds. The boys decide to become 'Blood Brothers' completely unaware they are actually twins by birth.

Mickey then meets Mrs Lyons for the first time as he goes to Eddie's house to 'call for him' and instantly Mrs Lyons realises who he is, panics and forbids Edward from seeing him again.

We then meet Linda for the first time and can already see she is very fond of Mickey as they sneak to Edward's house. We start to see Mrs Lyons become more paranoid and frantic at the point wanting to move away thinking that will solve the problem of Mickey.

We see the kids get in trouble with the police and this reinforces to Edwards family that his new friends are a bad influence. They plan to move away to the countryside. Before they leave Edward goes to say goodbye to Mickey and has an emotional farewell with Mrs Johnstone where she gives him a locket with a picture of her and Mickey in, but it has to be kept a secret.

Mrs Lyons is much happier once they move believing Edward is away from Mickey and the secret is safe. Mrs Johnstone then gets word that she is also being moved to the countryside by the council so her family can have a better future.

At the end of Act one we see both families looking forward to their new lives.

### ACT TWO

At the start of Act two the brothers are now 14 years old and the contrast is evident straight away. Mickey is being forced to go to school by his mum and Edward is saying goodbye after a break from boarding school.

Linda begins to make her feelings for Mickey more obvious much to his embarrassment and the different attitudes to education becomes more clear. Edward is doing very well at school but gets expelled for refusing to hand over his secret locket and swearing at the teacher. Mickey is constantly shouted at and picked on by the teacher but he shows no interest in learning or doing well.

Mrs Lyons finds out about the locket and we see panic begin to resurface whilst we also see Linda desperately trying to be noticed by Mickey in a romantic way.

Edward and Mickey then meet again and their friendship picks up where it left off. Mrs Johnstone becomes aware of the friendship but is happy to see Eddie and doesn't reveal the secret.

Mrs Lyons finds out where Mrs Johnstone lives and goes to confront her. By this point Mrs Lyons is completely irrational and paranoid about the secret being revealed and losing Edward.

Edward goes off to university and Mickey and Linda finally begin a relationship. Linda soon becomes pregnant and they get married. Mickey then loses his job and struggles to find work just before Edward returns from university expecting everything to be the same.

Mickey helps Sammy to rob a shop to get some money and ends up being caught and sent to prison. He becomes extremely depressed and dependent on medication. Edward confesses his love for Linda and she admits to having feelings for him too. There are rumours of an affair at this point.

Mickey comes out of prison but really struggles to get back to normality. He is completely dependent on his anti depressants and becomes threatening and abusive towards Linda. Linda seeks help from Eddie who manages to get them a house to live in and a job for Mickey but he becomes aware of who has done this for them and gets extremely jealous. Linda tries desperately to get Mickey off the medication and keep her family together but Mickey is a completely different person than at the start of the play.

Mickey finds out about the 'affair' between Linda and Eddie and goes to confront Eddie at his place of work with a gun. Linda finds out and dashes off to tell Mrs Johnstone what Mickey is about to do.

Mickey is withdrawing from his medication so is completely irrational and confused about what is going on. He confronts Edward who is suitably terrified and tries to calm Mickey down. Mickey believes Eddie has taken everything from him and he erratically waves around the gun.

The police and Mrs Johnstone arrive and she confesses what happened to the brothers when they were born. Mickey is horrified he wasn't given away and accidentally shoots Edward. The police immediately shoot Mickey. Both brothers are dead.