

## LIT 3043, Modern Drama, fall semester, MWF 3<sup>rd</sup> period, online, Sid Homan

Monday, August 31: Introduction to the course, including rules and regulations; an experiment with Pinter's *The Lover* (printed on syllabus).

Wednesday, September 2: Pinter, *Old Times*: **1.** p. 3 (dark)-p. 6 (I don't know); **2.** p. 6 (She was a thief)-p. 9 (No).

Friday, September 4: Pinter, *Old Times*: **3.** p. 10 (I have no)-p. 13 (none of this matters); **4.** p. 14 (We rarely)-p. 18 (more often than not); **5.** p. 43 (Here we are)-p. 48 (met before).

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Monday, September 7: **no class**

Wednesday, September 9: Pinter, *Betrayal*: **6.** Scene 1, p. 118 (You're)-p. 121 (happening); **7.** Scene 2, p. 128 (I don't)-p. 130 (children); **8.** Scene 3, p. 136 (the fact is)-p. 139 (decision).

Friday, September 11: Pinter, *Betrayal*: **9.** Scene 6, p. 156 (I spoke)-p. 159 (her up); **10.** Scene 7, p. 163 (I went)-p. 167 (you).

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Monday, September 14: *Your Mother's Butt*: **11.** Psychologist: So nothing in (p. 18)-Client: sense of humor (p. 19); **12.** Psychologist: Shoes seen to (p. 20)-Client: Oh, God, I'm sorry! (p. 22); **13.** Psychologist: How are you feeling? (p. 22)-Psychologist: This is really good (p. 24).

Wednesday, September 16: *Your Mother's Butt*: **14.** Psychologist: How are you feeling? (p. 22)-Psychologist: This is really good (p. 24); **15.** Client: And I'm thinking (p. 24)-Psychologist: what would you say? (p. 27); **16.** Client: Get out of my face (p. 27)-Client: buying those shoes (p. 29).

Friday, September 18: *Outsourced*: **17.** Max: I mind (p. 82)-Max: You are a person (p. 84); **18.** Max: So you *are* a real woman (p. 85)-Sonali: and zero-zero-cents (p. 87).

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Monday, September 21: *2B (Or Not 2B)*: **19.** Franny: AHH! (p. 351)-Franny: to marinate poultry? (p. 355); **20.** Franny: Okay, get out! (p. 355)-Franny: Amelia Earhart? (p. 358).

Wednesday, September 23: *2B (Or Not 2B)*: **21.** Bee: I don't want to rush you (p. 358)-Bee: Touch it (p. 360); **22.** Franny: Oh. Oh. It's—it's nice (p. 360)-Franny: let's fly (p. 362).

Friday, September 25: Pinter, *No Man's Land*: **23.** p. 79 (Do you)-p. 83 (for you) [pp. 59-61 in edition with a few less pages]; **24.** p. 84 (And the)-p. 87 (I am) [pp. 61-64 in edition with a few less pages]; **25.** p. 87 (And I)-p. 92 (no more) [pp. 64-67 in edition with a few less pages].

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Monday, September 28: *Surprise*: **26.** Whitney: So you know I'm going to dump you? (p. 221)-Peter: Except ours is here (p. 22); Beckett's *Come and Go* (printed on syllabus).

Wednesday, September 30: *Wanda's Visit*: **27.** Jim: Our lives had been (p. 129)-Jim: it must be Wanda (p. 132); **28.** [with actor doubling as Waiter at the top of the scene] Jim: Could we just finish dinner, please? (p. 157)-Jim: Right (p. 161).

Friday, October 2: no class (Homecoming)

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Monday, October 5: Pinter, *No Man's Land*: **29**. p. 79 (Do you)-p. 83 (for you) [pp. 59-61 in edition with a few less pages]; **30**. p. 84 (And the)-p. 87 (I am) [pp. 61-64 in edition with a few less pages]; **31**. p. 87 (And I)-p. 92 (no more) [pp. 64-67 in edition with a few less pages].

Wednesday, October 7: Pinter, *No Man's Land*: **32**. P. 92 (There is)-p. 96 (silent) [pp. 67-69 in edition with a few less pages]; **33**. p. 128 (You were)-p. 134 (member) [pp. 91-94 in edition with a few less pages]; **34**. p. 134 (I'm)-p. 137 (your life) [pp. 94-96 in edition with a few less pages].

Friday, October 9: Pinter, *No Man's Land*: **35**. Spooner's last big speech (cut, pp. 146-149 [pp. 102-104 in edition with a few less pages].

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Monday, October 12: : Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*: **36**. p. 2 (Nothing to be done)-p. 5 (be happy); **37**. p. 6 (You should have been)-p. 9 (note of it); **38**. p. 10 (But what Saturday)-p. 13 (leave it).

Wednesday, October 14: Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*: **39**. p. 14 (What exactly)-p. 17 (finish it); **40**. p. 51 (That passed the time)-p. 52 (the same) and also p. 57 (At last)-p. 59 (Yes, let's go).

Friday, October 16: Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*: **41**. p. 66 (Say you are)-p. 69 (like leaves); **42**. p. 82 (Will you not play?)-p. 86 (has fun); **43**. p. 107 (What's wrong)-p. 109 (let's go).

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Monday, October 19: *Please Have a Seat and Someone Will Be With You Shortly*: **44**. David: I'm doing much better (p. 486)-David: could say goodbye (p. 488); **45**. Sue: I imagined you were a carpenter (p. 488)-Sue: Hello (p. 491);

*The Way of All Fish*: **46**. Ms. Asquith: You know (p. 261)-Ms. Asquith: these things happen (p. 264).

Wednesday, October 21: *The Way of All Fish*: **47**. Miss Riverton: Tomorrow night (p. 264)-Ms. Asquith: Lovely (p. 267); **48**. Ms. Asquith: How did you develop (p. 268)-Miss Riverton: Jane ... Joan. (p. 270).

Friday, October 23: **49**. *The Way of All Fish* [speech divided between two actors] Miss Riverton: But you can be (p. 274)-no special ability (p. 276);

*The Statue of Bolivar*: **50**. Jemma: That shit'll kill ya (p. 195)-Jemma: Nice to meet you, Elizabeth (p. 197).

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Monday, October 26: *The Statue of Bolivar*: **51**. Elizabeth: Excuse me? (p. 197)-Elizabeth: I hate your dad (p. 200); **52**. Jemma: Welcome to my life (p. 200)-Elizabeth: Fourteen, Jeez (p. 202); **53**. Jemma: I won't ask (p. 202)-Jemma: Yeah. Nothing (p. 204).

Wednesday, October 28: Beckett, *All That Fall*: **54.** p. 13 (She doesn't)-17 (Jesus); **55.** p. 29 (Are you)-p. 32 (Maddy); **56.** p. 34 (Why are)-p. 37 (Maiden).

Friday, October 30: Beckett, *Embers*: **57.** p. 99 (what are)-p. 102 (hear me); **58.** p. 103 (My dear Bolton)-p. 104 (a sound).

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Monday, November 2: Tuesday: Shepard, *True West*: **59.** p. 5 (So, Mom)-p. 9 (sleep); **60.** p. 12 (Why'd)-p. 15 (stuff); **61.** p. 20 (all right)-p. 22 (flat).

Wednesday, November 4: Shepard, *True West*: **62.** p. 36 (Red sails)-p. 39 (imagination); **63.** p. 50 (All right, read it)-p. 52 (Good); **64.** p. 24 (No, really)-p. 27 (going).

Friday, November 6: Shepard, *True West*: **65.** p. 135 (You shouldn't)-p. 137 (tell me);  
Shepard, *Curse of the Starving Class*: **66.** p. 137 (I was lying)-138 (could be heard); **67.** p. 138 (Now)-p. 141 (BOIL IT).

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Monday, November 9: Shepard, *Curse of the Starving Class*: **68.** p. 147 (What)-p. 150 (young); **69.** p. 157 (What the hell)-p. 159 (not much).

Wednesday, November 11; no class

Friday, November 13: Pinter's *Last to Go* (printed on syllabus).

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Monday, November 16: Stoppard, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*: **70.** p. 11 (Head)-p. 15 (with light); **71.** p. 18 (Another curious)-p. 21 (they come); **72.** p. 39 (You made)-p. 41 (no practice).

Wednesday, November 18: Stoppard, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*: **73.** p. 56- (I think)-p. 59 (Draught, yes); **74.** p. 59 (In that)-p. 61 (Double bluff); **75.** p. 69 (What did)-p. 71 (to death).

Friday, November 20: Stoppard, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*: **76.** p. 85 (That must)-p. 88 (be violent); **77.** p. 97 (Are you)-p. 99 (to sleep).

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Monday, November 23: *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*: **78.** p. 100 (Well, shall)-p. 102 (from instinct); **79.** p. 107 (Now that)-p. 110 (making conversation); **80.** p. 124 (Deaths for all ages)-p. 126 (now you--).

Wednesday, November 24: no class

Friday, November 27: no class

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Monday, November 30: Shepard, *Buried Child*: **81**. pp. 64-66 (Dodge ... I suppose); **95**. pp. 73-74 (Of course ... glass); **82**. pp. 83-85 (This is it ... sorry).

Wednesday, Dec. 2: Shepard, *Buried Child*: **83**. pp. 100-102 (I thought ... than driving); **84**. pp. 108-111 (This is ... enough outa' you); **85**. p. 130 (I was gonna ... dissolved).

Friday: December 4: Beckett, *Embers*: **86**. p. 99 (what are)-p. 102 (hear me); **87**. p. 103 ("My dear Bolton")-p. 104 (a sound).

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Monday, December 7: Beckett, *Eh Joe*: **88**. p. 202 (Joe)-203 (us); **89**. p. 205 (all right)-207 (Eh, Joe?);

Wednesday, December 9: no class.

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#### Notes:

1. Each student chooses and works with a scene partner during the semester. Scene assignments will be made before the first class—by request or assignment as you choose. Scene work must be performed on the day assigned since the scene work is the “text” of that day’s class; scene work cannot be rescheduled. Scene work should be off-book.

I repeat here my suggestions (expressed in an earlier e-mail) about the options for rehearsal, given the fact that actors will be online for the actual performance and the challenges presented by the virus. You, of course, should pick the one that works best for you: 1. rehearsing in person, on campus, while, of course, maintaining a safe distance; 2 rehearsing by Zoom (especially if you are in different locations--say, one actor on campus and the other at home); 3. rehearsing by face-time or other means; or 4. even rehearsing by phone and/or communicating by e-mail. Being online, actors will, of course, not be able to do any extensive stage movement (though you might suggest stage movement and blocking in your paper), and so the focus, by necessity, will be on the delivery, the sub-text you give your character, gestures, and such small movements that would be compatible with an online performance.

Please be assured that I realize you will be rehearsing under something less than ideal conditions, and I will take this into account in assessing your work. Please have no worries here

If one of the scene partners cannot make it on the day the scene is due, the course stage manager will take his or her part, with my giving some compensation to the actor who does perform since that actor will be working with someone “new.” The partner who was unable to perform must do the scene online later, with my taking the role of his or her partner. That actor must also hand in, at the time of this performance, a ten-page paper on an assigned topic (on the play in question), as well as the 2-3 page paper (see #2 below) normally written about the actor’s experience rehearsing the scene with a partner. The grade for scene work will be the average of the performance, the short paper, and the ten-page paper.

2. By noon on the day of your performance with your scene partner, please send me by e-mail ([shakes@ufl.edu](mailto:shakes@ufl.edu)) a 2-3-page paper, where you discuss your experience during rehearsals. Not just an account, the paper should be an assessment of what you learned, what “discoveries” you made, the way the scene evolved during rehearsals. The paper should be specific, rooted in the script, and should be geared to the dialogue as it evolves in the scene. General points should always be grounded in these specifics. See below for some more detailed comments about what makes a “good paper.”

3. The day after your in-class performance your paper will be returned by e-mail--with two grades. One is for your acting, the other for the paper. If the two grades are 5 or less points apart, you will be given the higher grade; if they are more than 6 or more points apart, you will be given the average of the two. The grading scale is: F--anything 59 or below; D--60-66, D+--67-69; C- --70-72, C--73-76, C+--77-79; B- --80-82, B--83-86, B+--87-89; A- --90-92, A--93-100.

Please note that your grade in the course is the average of all your performances/scene-work papers. There is no provision for extra credit or redoing work.

During class, the stage manager will record the names of students who volunteer comments and reactions following each performance —this is an essential part of the class and I can tell you from experience that the actors are eager for your thoughts on their performance. I’ve never given a grade on discussion or such participation; I would prefer it to be natural, given freely. But I also recognize the “impersonality” of a Zoom class, and so, with the stage managers making a list of who participates in discussion at each class, I will give extra credit (in the form of points added to your final grade average) to students who thus participate freely and with some frequency. The decision here, as I hope you will understand, must be unilateral.

4. Attendance is required at every online meeting, and will be taken by the stage manager (a student who has volunteered for this position) during the class. Each student is allowed 2 excused absences. Excuses must be made at least one day ahead of time by Professor Homan, preferably by e-mail: [shakes@ufl.edu](mailto:shakes@ufl.edu). Excuses made the day of the absence, let alone after the fact, cannot be accepted. In very, *very* rare cases a student can be excused for more than two class meetings, but this must also be approved ahead of time. For each unexcused absence, the student’s grade will be lowered by a letter. Please note there are no exceptions to this. If you miss a class without being excused, the stage manager will e-mail you about this later in the same day.

But, again, I am sensitive to the fact that holding a class online presents difficulties, inconveniences. I am grateful for your help here, and, no less, appreciate any comments or concerns you have about the conditions under which we all are working.

5. Books: *Laugh Lines: Short Comic Plays*, Eric Lane and Nina Shengold, eds.; Tom Stoppard, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* (Grove Press); Samuel Beckett, *Waiting for Godot* (Grove Press); Beckett, *Collected Shorter Plays* (Grove Press); Harold Pinter, *Complete Works* (Grove Press), volume 4; Sam Shepard, *Seven Plays* (Bantam Books).

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### **Some Suggestions for Writing Papers on Scene Work:**

1. Try to work as closely with the dialogue, the actual script as possible, and back up every

general point with reference to the script.

2. Go through the entire scene, most often in sequence, both the dialogue and what gestures and movement you chose.
  3. Don't just say what happens or what is said, and don't just explicate or "translate" the words and lines. Rather, discuss the script in terms of: a. your actor's choices; b. the character's object (what he or she is after), and c. the character's subtext (what the character is thinking and saying to himself or herself beneath the dialogue).
  4. Don't spend time setting up the paper, talking about how and where you met, talking about topics not immediately linked to the script—get right to the scene in question.
  5. Your "text" is ultimately not the script itself, not even the playwright's words, but your actor's/director's take on the script and on your character as he or she exists in the script.
  6. Have some sense of the larger play, and of the character's role in that larger play, but make sure you don't jump too far from your specific scene. The largest part of your paper should be spent on your particular scene.
  7. Be sure that one paragraph follows logically from the preceding one; and make sure there are segues not only between paragraphs but between sections of the individual paragraph—and, for that matter, segues from one sentence to the next.
  8. You can be informal as you want, and can use the first person—but observe all the rules of good writing, from spelling to punctuation, from clear word choice to correct grammar.
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**Pinter, *The Lover***

RICHARD (*amiably*). Is your lover coming today?

SARAH. Mmmn.

RICHARD. What time?

SARAH. Three.

RICHARD. Will you be going out ... or staying in?

SARAH. Oh ... I think we'll stay in.

RICHARD. I thought you wanted to go to that exhibition.

SARAH. I did, yes ... but I think I'd prefer to stay in with him today.

RICHARD, Mmn-hmmm. Well, I must be off.

*(He goes to the hall and puts on his bowler hat.)*

RICHARD. Will he be staying long do you think?

SARAH. Mmmnnn ...

RICHARD. About ... six, then.

SARAH. Yes.

RICHARD. Have a pleasant afternoon.

SARAH. Mmnn.

RICHARD. Bye-bye.

SARAH. Bye.

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**Harold Pinter, *LAST TO GO***

*A coffee stall. A **BARMAN** and an old **NEWSPAPER SELLER**. The **BARMAN** leans on his counter, the **OLD MAN** stands with tea.  
Silence.*

MAN: You was a bit busier earlier.

BARMAN: Ah.

MAN: Round about ten.

BARMAN: Ten, was it?

MAN: About then.

*Pause.*

I passed by here about then.

BARMAN: Oh yes?

MAN: I noticed you were doing a bit of trade.

*Pause.*

BARMAN: Yes, trade was very brisk here about ten.

MAN: Yes, I noticed.

*Pause.*

I sold my last one about then. Yes. About nine forty-five.

BARMAN: Sold your last then, did you?

MAN: Yes, my last "Evening News" it was. Went about twenty to ten.

*Pause.*

BARMAN: "Evening News", was it?

MAN: Yes.

*Pause.*

Sometimes it's the "Star" is the last to go.

BARMAN: Ah.

MAN: Or the . . . whatsisname.

BARMAN: "Standard".

MAN: Yes.

*Pause.*

All I had left tonight was the "Evening News".

*Pause.*

BARMAN: Then that went, did it?

MAN: Yes.

*Pause.*

Like a shot.

*Pause.*

BARMAN: You didn't have any left, eh?

MAN: No. Not after I sold that one.

*Pause.*

BARMAN: It was after that you must have come by here then, was it?

MAN: Yes, I come by here after that, see, after I packed up.

BARMAN: You didn't stop here though, did you?

MAN: When?

BARMAN: I mean, you didn't stop here and have a cup of tea then, did you?

MAN: What, about ten?

BARMAN: Yes.

MAN: No, I went up to Victoria.

BARMAN: No, I thought I didn't see you.

MAN: I had to go up to Victoria.

*Pause.*

BARMAN: Yes, trade was very brisk here about then.

*Pause.*

MAN: I went to see if I could get hold of George.

BARMAN: Who?

MAN: George.

*Pause.*

BARMAN: George who?

MAN: George . . . whasisname.

BARMAN: Oh.

*Pause.*

Did you get hold of him?

MAN: No. No, I couldn't get hold of him. I couldn't locate him.

BARMAN: He's not about much now, is he?

*Pause.*

MAN: When did you last see him then?

BARMAN: Oh, I haven't seen him for years.

MAN: No, nor me.

*Pause.*

BARMAN: Used to suffer very bad from arthritis.

MAN: Arthritis?

BARMAN: Yes.

MAN: He never suffered from arthritis.

BARMAN: Suffered very bad.

*Pause.*

MAN: Not when I knew him.

*Pause.*

BARMAN: I think he must have left the area.

*Pause.*

MAN: Yes, it was the "Evening News" was the last to go tonight.

BARMAN: Not always the last though, is it, though?

MAN: No. Oh no. I mean sometimes it's the "News". Other times it's one of the others. No way of

telling beforehand. Until you've got your last one left, of course. Then you can tell which one it's going to be.

BARMAN: Yes.

*Pause.*

MAN: Oh yes.

*Pause.*

I think he must have left the area.

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**Beckett, *Come and Go*:**

**FLO**

**VI**

**RU**

**(Age undeterminable)**

**Sitting centre side by side stage right to left FLO, VI and RU. Very erect, facing front, hands clasped in laps. Silence.**

**VI : When did we three last meet?**

**RU : Let us not speak. [Silence. Exit VI right. Silence.]**

**FLO : Ru.**

**RU : Yes.**

**FLO : What do you think of Vi?**

**RU : I see little change. [FLO moves to centre seat, whispers in RU's ear. Appalled.] Oh! [They look at each other. FLO puts her finger to her lips,] Does she not realize?**

**FLO : God grant not. [Enter VI. FLO and RU turn back front, resume pose. VI sits right. Silence.] Just sit together as we used to, in the playground at Miss Wade's. RU : On the log. [Silence. Exit FLO left. Silence.] Vi.**

**VI : Yes.**

**RU: How do you find FLO?**

**VI : She seems much the same. [RU moves to centre seat, whispers in VI's ear. Appalled.] Oh! [They look at each other. RU puts her finger to her lips.] Has she not been told?**

**RU : God forbid. [Enter FLO. RU and VI turn back front, resume pose. FLO sits left.] Holding hands . . . that way.**

FLO : Dreaming of . . . love. [Silence. Exit RU right. Silence.]

VI : Flo.

FLO : Yes.

VI : How do you think Ru is looking?

FLO : One sees little in this light. [VI moves centre seat, whispers in FLO's ear. Appalled.] Oh! [They look at each other. VI puts her finger to her lips.] Does she not know?

VI : Please God not. [Enter RU. VI and FLO turn back front, resume pose. RU sits right. Silence.] May we not speak of the old days? [Silence.] Of what came after? [Silence.] Shall we hold hands in the old way?

[After a moment they join hands as follows : VI's right hand with RU's right hand. VI's left hand with FLO's left hand, FLO's right hand with RU's left hand, VI's arms being above RU's left arm and FLO's right arm. The three pairs of clasped hands rest on the three laps. Silence.]

FLO: I can feel the rings. [Silence.]

CURTAIN