

## 'DNA': The Root of Human Savagery

To be completed whilst watching Mr Bruff's YouTube analysis video: <https://youtu.be/2Mw1TlwzH4>  
Alternatively, search on YouTube for 'DNA Root of Human Savagery, Mr Bruff'.



### Questions:

1. What are the two main ideas explored in Dennis Kelly's play 'DNA' as the source of savagery?
2. How does Kelly incorporate Charles Darwin's theory of evolution into the play?
3. Give three examples of animal imagery or references in the play.
4. How does the play's setting contribute to the idea of devolving into an animalistic state?
5. Explain the significance of Adam's name in the play and how it relates to the Biblical narrative of the Garden of Eden.
6. What is the nature/nurture debate, and how does the play's title relate to this debate?
7. Why is it important that the characters in 'DNA' are children?
8. What are the two main ideas about the cause of savagery in 'DNA'?
9. How does the play connect to Darwin's theory of evolution?
10. Give three examples of animal imagery or references in the play.
11. How does the play's setting contribute to the idea of devolving into an animalistic state?
12. Why is Adam's name important in the play, and how does it connect to the Bible story of Adam and Eve?
13. What is the nature versus nurture debate, and how is it linked to the play's title?
14. Why is it important that the characters in 'DNA' are children?

### Extension Questions:

- a) How do the events in 'DNA' function as a microcosm of the wider world, and what statement might this make about human nature?
- b) Considering both the Darwinian and Biblical interpretations of human savagery presented in the play, what message do you think Kelly wants the audience to take away?

### Exam question:

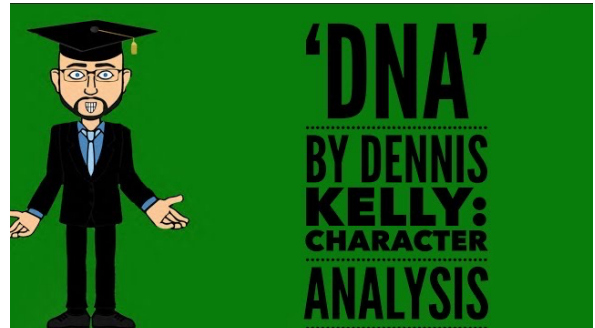
How does Kelly use the play *DNA* to explore ideas about human behaviour?

## 'DNA': Jan, Mark and John Tate

To be completed whilst watching Mr Bruff's YouTube analysis video:

<https://youtu.be/m4KnmyQs3uw>

Alternatively, search on YouTube for 'DNA: Jan, Mark and John Tate, Mr Bruff'.



Questions:

1. What is the role of Jan and Mark in the play?
2. List three instances in which Jan and Mark reveal key information to the audience.
3. How does John Tate first appear as a leader, and what methods does he use to control the group?
4. What is the significance of John Tate being the only character with a mentioned surname?
5. Describe the power struggle between Richard and John Tate. How does this interaction highlight John Tate's bully behaviour?
6. Compare John Tate's dialogue with Phil's. What does this reveal about John Tate's character and his ability to lead?
7. What happens to John Tate after he disappears from the play? Provide three references to his fate mentioned by other characters.

Extension Questions:

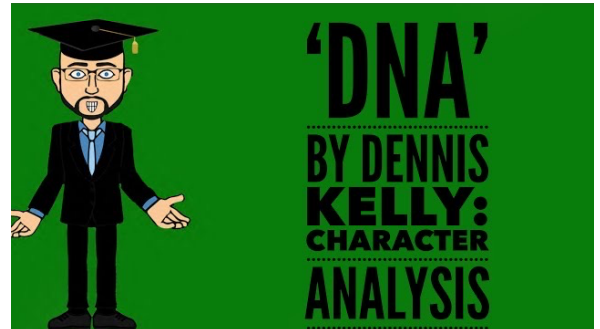
- a) Discuss the different leadership styles of John Tate and Phil. How do their methods of control differ, and what does this reveal about their characters?
- b) How might John Tate's character contribute to the themes of power and leadership in the play?

Exam question:

'John Tate is not an effective leader.' How far do you agree with this view?

## 'DNA' Character Analysis: Phil

To be completed whilst watching Mr Bruff's YouTube analysis video: <https://youtu.be/vEasPMnNx8o>  
Alternatively, search on YouTube for 'Phil Character Analysis, Mr Bruff'.



### Questions:

1. How does Phil assert his power over Leah in the early scenes of the play?
2. Compare Phil's leadership style to John Tate's. What makes Phil more effective as a leader?
3. List three instances where Phil uses imperatives to direct other characters in the play.
4. Describe how Phil's behaviour is different when interacting with Leah, Brian, and Lou. What does this tell us about his leadership style?
5. How does Phil react to emotional or shocking events in the play? What does this reveal about his character?
6. Explain how Leah might be considered a foil for Phil. Provide at least two examples from the play.
7. How do the roles between Phil and Leah change in Act Three, Scene Four? What is the significance of this change?
8. What happens to Phil at the end of the play? How does his character change, and what might have caused this change?

### Extension Questions:

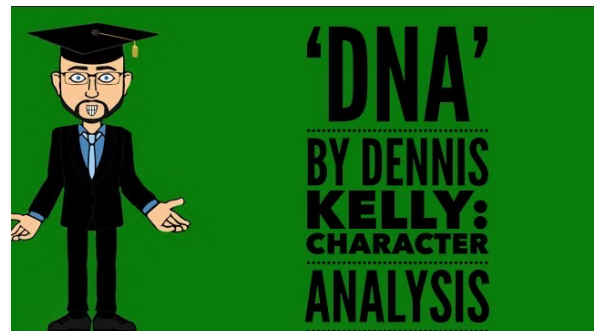
- a) Discuss how Phil's character can be related to the concept of psychopathy. Provide examples from the play to support your answer.
- b) Analyse the role of power and control in the play, specifically focusing on Phil's leadership style and interactions with other characters.

### Exam question:

How does Kelly use the character of Phil to explore ideas about leadership?

## 'DNA' Character Analysis: Brian and Danny

To be completed whilst watching Mr Bruff's YouTube analysis video: <https://youtu.be/pTOA5I-SIX8>  
Alternatively, search on YouTube for 'Brian and Danny Character Analysis, Mr Bruff'.



1. In Act One, Scene Three, how is Brian initially presented to the audience? Give specific examples from the text.
2. What is Brian's first line of dialogue in Act One, and what does it reveal about his character?
3. In Act Two, Scene Three, what does Brian say about how he feels when speaking to the police? Why is this statement significant?
4. Describe the power dynamic between Phil and Brian during the conversation about going to the police station. Provide specific lines from the play to support your answer.
5. How does Brian's mental state change by the end of Act Three, and what factors contribute to this change?
6. What is Danny's major concern about being involved in the murder of Adam, and how does it reflect his character?
7. In Act Two, how does Danny respond when he hears that the postman has been arrested? What does this reveal about his priorities?
8. What is Danny's reaction when Phil threatens to take Brian to the grille, and what does it suggest about his character?
9. Describe the one instance when Danny stands up for what is right. How does his reasoning compare to Brian's actions in a similar situation?
10. How is Danny's experience at the dentist's at the end of the play connected to the events surrounding Adam's murder?

Extension Questions:

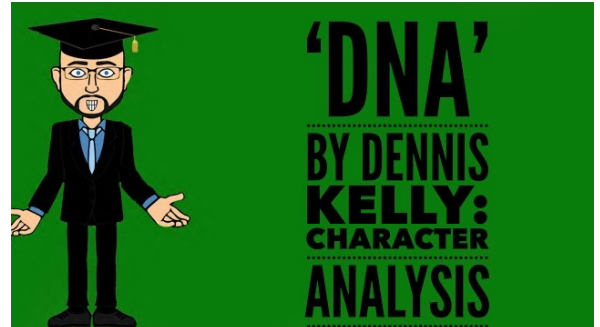
- a) Compare and contrast the ways Brian and Danny succumb to peer pressure throughout the play. Provide specific examples from the text.
- b) Analyse the similarities and differences between Brian's and Danny's reactions to the consequences of their actions. How does this reflect on their individual characters?

Exam question:

'None of the characters are inherently bad.' How far do you agree with this view of DNA?

## 'DNA' Character Analysis: Leah

To be completed whilst watching Mr Bruff's YouTube analysis video: <https://youtu.be/7gx-H51hl7Q>  
Alternatively, search on YouTube for 'Leah Character Analysis, Mr Bruff'.



1. How is Leah first introduced in Act One, Scene Two, and what does her interaction with Phil reveal about her character?
2. In Act One, Scene Three, what does Leah's statement about the group's actions show about her loyalty?
3. What are some themes and topics Leah explores through her monologues and speeches in the play?
4. How does Leah's bonobos monologue relate to the theme of human savagery and the events that unfold in the play?
5. What is the significance of Leah's question about whether people are 'doomed to behave like people before us did' in relation to the play's structure and themes?
6. How does Leah's Act Two, Scene Two revelation about Jerry demonstrate her desire to impress Phil?
7. In what ways does Leah change by the end of the play, particularly in her interactions with Phil and the group?
8. How does Leah's decision to leave the school and group signify her transformation from the beginning of the play?

### EXTENSION:

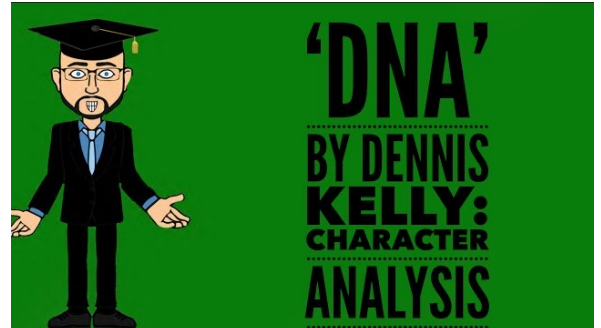
- a) Compare and contrast the characters of Leah and Brian in terms of their morality, intelligence, and vulnerability. How do their roles in the group evolve throughout the play?
- b) Analyse the significance of Leah's monologues in relation to the play's overall themes and messages. How do her monologues contribute to the understanding of human nature and the consequences of peer pressure?

Exam question:

How is Leah changed by what happens in the play?

## 'DNA' Character Analysis: Adam and Cathy

To be completed whilst watching Mr Bruff's YouTube analysis video: <https://youtu.be/syqrjVgliBI>  
Alternatively, search on YouTube for 'Adam and Cathy Character Analysis, Mr Bruff'.



1. How does Cathy's initial reaction to Adam's death reveal her character and attitude towards the events in the play?
2. How does Cathy follow Phil's plan without asking questions, and how is this different from other characters in the play?
3. What does Cathy do to frame an innocent person for the crime, and what does it suggest about her character?
4. How does Cathy use threats and violence in the play, and how does it help her become the leader of the group?
5. What is the difference between Phil being a psychopath and Cathy being sadistic, and how do these traits affect the play's outcomes?
6. How does Adam being an outsider in the group affect how he is treated by the other characters?
7. How does the play use animal imagery or references to show Adam's character and connect to the theme of savagery?
8. Explain the ways in which Kelly uses animal imagery in relation to Adam's character. How does this connect to Darwinian theory and the theme of human savagery?
9. Why is Adam's name important in the play, and how does it connect to the Bible story of Adam and Eve?
10. How are the two different ideas about the cause of savagery shown through Adam's character: becoming more animal-like and the Bible idea of original sin?

### EXTENSION QUESTION:

- a) Examine Cathy's role in the play, focusing on her relationship with Adam and her reactions to his death. How does her character development contribute to the play's exploration of themes such as loyalty, peer pressure, and the consequences of actions?

### Exam question:

How does the play explore the root of human behaviour?