

Lesson1. For Teachers: Please have the students read the sentences one at a time and correct their pronunciation of each sentence then have them repeat after you. Wait until after they read the sentence (use the number in place of the missing word) to have the students choose the correct answer to fill in the blank. When the students finish the article, move on to the further questions.

3[A] – The Career of Terence Rattigan



G1 14-1

1. Alongside Noel Coward, Terrence Rattigan was one of the most popular playwrights in Britain in the 1940s and early 1950s. The two shared astounding technical ability—their works were known for their brilliant craftsmanship and wit—as well as similar subject matter, which focused on the repressive, rule-bound, “stiff upper lip” world of the British upper class. As Coward and Rattigan socialized in the narrow, privileged circle of the country’s gentility, they were in an ideal position to portray the elite social sphere they wrote about. Still reeling in the aftermath of World War II, the British public flocked in to such plays, perhaps as a distraction from their own circumstances—certainly, few in the audience were familiar with those rarefied levels of society.

2. **Further Questions** *Ask student to answer the question on their own at first. If the student can't answer correctly, have him look at the last page and read the “example answer” for the question. Have the student try to memorize the answer, if it's too long or difficult, you should divide the sentence into 2 or 3 parts to make it easier to remember. Once they have memorized the answer, the teacher should ask the question one last time so that the student can practice answering. Also if you find any mistakes, please mark the page and let me know ASAP.

3. **1) What were the works of Noel Coward and Terrence Rattigan known for?**

They were known for their brilliant craftsmanship and wit.

4. **2) Why were Coward and Rattigan able to portray the elite social sphere?**

5. *They socialized in the narrow, privileged circle of the country’s gentility.*

Rattigan’s plays in particular were psychologically studies rife with subtle yet potent dramatic tension. Inhibited by the restrictive rules that governed the upper echelons of society, his characters concealed their sufferings, frustrations, and personality flaws behind dispassionate formal speech and behavior. Rattigan showed little interest in portraying the lives of ordinary working people or using his voice to bring about social change. Instead he wrote for his archetypal audience—middle class with conventional tastes.

London theatergoers, lulled by the world in which Rattigan’s plays took place got a jolt when *Look Back in Anger*, a work by the young, unknown playwright John Osborne opened in London in 1956. Its protagonist, Jimmy Porter, was an articulate university graduate, but one who had emerged from the harsh reality of working-class life and who scorned the emotional reserve typified by Rattigan’s characters. Indeed, Osborne purposely made emotions brutally explicit in his play, stating his theatrical mission was to “make people feel, to give them lessons in feelings.”

Further Questions

6. **3) How did characters in Rattigan’s plays behave?**

7. *Inhibited by the restrictive rules that governed the upper echelons of society, his characters concealed their sufferings, frustrations, and personality flaws behind dispassionate formal speech and behavior.*
8. **4) Who did Rattigan write his plays for?**
9. *He wrote for his archetypal audience—middle class with conventional tastes.*
- 5) **What did Osborne feel his theatrical mission was?**
10. *His theatrical mission was to “make people feel, to give the lessons in feelings.”*
11. *Look Back in Anger* captured a new mood that had overtaken Britain during the postwar era. Crippled by debt, wartime destruction, and the dissolution of its empire, the nation underwent years of hardship. At the same time, its rigid class structure was beginning to dissolve, and people were growing far less willing to defer to their upper-class “betters.” The popularity of Osborne’s work, and the unabashed, confrontational acting style it demanded, both reflected and contribute to this change in sentiment and a new generation of socially aware working-class playwrights emerged in its wake. With this, Rattigan’s subjects began to appear antiquated, and his later work attracted neither the attention nor the critical acclaim his previous plays had.
12. It was not until 1993, with the London revival of Rattigan’s play *The Deep Blue Sea*, that pendulum of popular taste began to swing back in his direction. Critics acknowledged his precipitous fall from grace had been unjust, based as it was on shifting preferences rather than artistic merit, and a string of revivals followed. In 2011—just over 20 years after Rattigan’s death—the restoration of his reputation reached its zenith: exhibitions were curated in celebration of his life and work, people poured in to watch his plays, and an organization was founded to carry on his legacy.

Further Questions

13. **6) How was Britain changing when *Look Back in Anger* premiered?**
14. *Its rigid class structure was beginning to dissolve, and people were growing far less willing to defer to their upper-class “betters.”*
15. **7) How did people view Rattigan’s plays compared to Osborne’s?**
16. *Rattigan’s subjects began to appear antiquated, and his later work attracted neither the attention nor the critical acclaim his previous plays had.*
17. **8) What did critics feel Rattigan’s fall from grace was due to?**
18. *Critics acknowledges his precipitous fall from grace had been unjust, based on shifting preferences rather than artistic merit.*

*Choose the correct answer from these choices.

19. **(32) What is true of both Noel Coward and Terrence Rattigan?**
- 1 Their plays satisfied upper-class British audiences’ appetite for characters and situations set in the context of World War II.
20. **2** They gained popular appeal in Britain by creating comical upper-class characters that are forced to handle unrealistic social situations.
21. **3** Their plays portrayed Britain’s upper-class from the point of view of outsiders who were not familiar with that level of society.

22. 4 They were able to convey the inner lives of British upper class to audiences that had little knowledge of that world.

23. (33) What was one consequence of the success of *Look Back in Anger*?

24. 1 Theatergoers began to question the accepted opinion that working-class playwrights were incapable of producing commercially successful plays.

25. 2 The public's attention shifted to playwrights whose opposition to the established British class system echoed their own.

26. 3 Many earlier plays lost popularity with actors who felt that portraying lower-class individuals offered them a greater opportunity to be creative.

27. 4 Members of Britain's upper class stopped attending theater performances because the plays no longer reflected their perspective.

28. (34) Recent reactions to Rattigan's work can be seen as

29. 1 a sign that his plays, which critics once thought lacked artistic merit, were actually just too advanced for their time.

30. 2 a renewed appreciation for a playwright who contemporary critics believe was unfairly dismissed by critics in the past.

31. 3 a response to audiences' growing fondness for the British elite coupled with their wish to escape from the boring aspects of ordinary life.

32. 4 a part of a broad trend of reviving mid-twentieth-century plays in a way that highlight their characters' interpersonal connections.

Answers for "Further Questions"



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They socialized in the narrow, privileged circle of the country's gentility.

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Inhibited by the restrictive rules that governed the upper echelons of society, his characters concealed their sufferings, frustrations, and personality flaws behind dispassionate formal speech and behavior.

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He wrote for his archetypal audience—middle class with conventional tastes.

37. 5) What did Osborne feel his theatrical mission was?

His theatrical mission was to "make people feel, to give the lessons in feelings."

38. 6) How was Britain changing when *Look Back in Anger* premiered?

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Rattigan's subjects began to appear antiquated, and his later work attracted neither the attention nor the critical acclaim his previous plays had.

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Critics acknowledges his precipitous fall from grace had been unjust, based on shifting preferences rather than artistic merit.

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