



Author:	Mohsin Zaidi	Title:	A Dutiful Boy
Key Stages:	5	Subject:	English Lit/Language

Learning Question	How does Zaidi present intersectionality in A Dutiful Boy?
Starter (2 minutes)	
Ask students to define intersectionality to elicit prior knowledge. Clarify any misconceptions, give two definitions and an example of how intersectionality can be experienced by an individual through the visual Venn diagram.	
Activity One (13 minutes) – Read, The Guardian Article entitled, “Forty years on from the New Cross fire, what has changed for black Britons?” https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jan/17/forty-years-on-from-the-new-cross-fire-what-has-changed-for-black-britons	
<p>Read through the article as a class or independently and ask students to answer the following questions through class discussion.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) How is intersectionality demonstrated in the article? 2) What role did authoritative institutions and figures play (now, and then) in resolving the matter at hand? <p>At this point in the lesson, students will need to consider the text type, audience and purpose of the article. The New Cross Massacre is an event of historical significance which links thematically to Zaidi’s text. The Guardian Article provides readers with a contextual segue into understanding two major aspects of Zaidi’s text – the intersectionality between poverty and minority and the role of the police as authority figures. In the final activity and challenge task in this resource pack, students will be asked to consolidate knowledge of the purpose of Zaidi’s autobiographical text and potentially compare and contrast with the article. Essentially, prior to, during and after reading the extract and watching the accompanying videos, students could grapple with ideas around the purpose of the text. Is it socio-political commentary, a critique of institutions and institutional racism, a reflection of ongoing and historical criticism of police, an exploration of accountability, a scathing indictment of treatment of youths? There are a number of other aspects of identity that could also be addressed, e.g. sexuality and faith but the purpose of this specific lesson has focussed ultimately on how Zaidi invites the reader to gain a greater understanding of intersectionality between poverty and minority. Teachers can use a range of questioning techniques to develop students’ understanding at any point in the lesson.</p> <p>As a class, take feedback from students on the main task and consolidate understanding of: the key term intersectionality, the intersection between poverty and minority as experienced by black youths in New Cross and how institutional racism was and is experienced. This will segue into understanding Zaidi’s text.</p>	



Activity Two (20 minutes) - Read the extract from Chapter 14, *A Dutiful Boy*

This activity focuses on a close reading of the extract from Chapter 14 of Mohsin Zaidi's autobiographical text, *A Dutiful Son*. To transition between reading the two texts, the teacher could ask students to answer the same questions above, so students can begin drawing parallels.

- 1) How is intersectionality demonstrated in the extract, Chapter 14?
- 2) What role did authoritative institutions and figures play (now, and then) in resolving the matter at hand?

Ask students to analyse the extract – students can complete an allocated question and feedback to the class. Students can then agree with/challenge each other's responses. The questions are designed to invite students to engage with the conscious crafting of the literary non-fiction text and as a challenge, evaluate the effectiveness of Zaidi's structural and linguistic choices.

- What type of text is this?
- What perspective is used? Why?
- Who is the intended audience?
- What is the authorial intention? The purpose of the text?
- What atmosphere is created in the opening paragraph? Why?
- What impression of the protagonist is created? How?
- What are the protagonist's initial instincts upon seeing the blaze?
- What is the effect of interweaving dialogue and description? Why is it so important we hear the protagonist's voice? E.g. "GRAB HIM"
- How does Zaidi use emotive and figurative language for effect?
- What is the effect of verbs, adjectives, nouns and imperatives in the extract? Are there any patterns? How do these reflect central themes?
- Consider the impact of imagery created in this extract: what is Zaidi asking the reader to consider and why? What is the significance of the burning crucifix and the sunglasses?
- How do the policeman's questions highlight the intersection between poverty and minority?
- What effect do Zaidi's structural and linguistic choices have on the reader?
- How has Zaidi structured the text to interest the reader?
- Is Zaidi successful in building tension in this extract? Why (not)?
- What contextual links is Zaidi encouraging the reader to make and why? E.g. The burning crucifix
- How is intersectionality demonstrated in the extract?
- What role did authority figures play in resolving the matter?

If there is time, students should complete the challenge task, either verbally or in writing providing a personal, critical response to the text. How effective are Zaidi's structural and linguistic choices?

As a class, take feedback from students on the main task and the challenge task.



Activity Three (5 minutes) - Watch the video of Mohsin Zaidi reading the text

For this activity, students watch the video of the author reading the extract. Students should further develop their personal critical response to the text by answering the following questions in pairs and presenting their ideas back to the class.

1. Has the author's reading changed or influenced your interpretation of the extract?
2. Would you change/amend your previous answers based on the author's reading?
3. Do you feel more or less sympathetic towards the narrator/author and why?
4. Does Zaidi's reading emphasise the importance of any particular section of the extract? Why?

As a class, take feedback from the students on the main task and the challenge task.

Activity Four (20 minutes) - Watch the video of the author interview

The full interview is 25 minutes. Teachers can show sections they feel are most relevant to the students.

Prior to watching the video, ask students to consider the following questions alongside the images of kintsugi pottery on the PPT slide:

- **How could these images represent the narrator's (author's) concept of identity?**
- **How could these images represent the process of writing an autobiographical text?**

In the interview, Zaidi refers to the process of Kintsugi (see Wikipedia definition) **Kintsugi** (金継ぎ, "golden joinery"), also known as **kintsukuroi** (金繕い, "golden repair"),^[1] is the [Japanese art](#) of repairing broken [pottery](#) by mending the areas of breakage with [lacquer](#) dusted or mixed with powdered [gold](#), [silver](#), or [platinum](#); the method is similar to the [maki-e](#) technique.^{[2][3][4]} As a [philosophy](#), it treats breakage and repair as part of the history of an object, rather than something to disguise.

Zaidi claims Kintsugi is one of the most appropriate representations of his autobiographical text for two primary reasons. Zaidi experienced intersectionality due to his ethnicity, social class, faith, religion and sexual identity/orientation. As the blurb likewise recognises, "It is the story of a young boy growing up in a devout Muslim family in east London who knew he was gay but who also knew such an admission was inconceivable in a religious culture where homosexuality was still taboo. This is the story of a family's love, a battle with shame and a long journey to acceptance." Zaidi states that writing autobiographically as a creative process has enabled him to heal once fragmented/broken/fractional sections of his identity into an artistic and complete whole. This lesson has focussed on the intersectionality between poverty and minority – homosexuality and sexual identity is also a pivotal part of the narrative and perspective and needs to be recognised.

If there is time, students could revisit the Venn diagram at the start of the lesson that represents intersectionality and complete for their own identities. Students could also complete the challenge task by completing creative writing tasks, diary entries/letter to a friend/family member or transactional writing – writing a letter to the police or another institution. **What are the intersections in your own identity? How do you/have you experienced these in your life?**



As a class, take feedback from the students on the main task and the challenge task.

Activity Five (10 minutes)

Ask students to consolidate knowledge through discussion or writing by answering the question: **How and why does Zaidi present intersectionality in *A Dutiful Boy*?**

If there is time, students could also complete the challenge task comparing the two texts: What parallels can be drawn between the Guardian article and the extract from Chapter 14 of *A Dutiful Boy* by Mohsin Zaidi? What is the purpose of the Guardian article and Zaidi's text? Are there similarities and differences in target audiences and authorial intention?

NB: referred to with instructions for Activity One. Essentially, prior to, during and after reading the extract and watching the accompanying videos, students could grapple with ideas around the purpose of the text. Is it socio-political commentary, a critique of institutions and institutional racism, a reflection of ongoing and historical criticism of police, an exploration of accountability, a scathing indictment of treatment of youths? Ultimately, how does Zaidi invite the reader to gain a greater understanding of intersectionality between poverty and minority? How is this similar to *The Guardian* article?

Teachers can use questions to encourage students to link knowledge from each task and form their own comparative response. Have they experienced intersectionality in the same way? How would students propose to change this in the future?

As a class, take feedback from the students on the main and challenge task and lesson as whole.

Caveat: Please note teachers can easily adapt this lesson to suit more of a Language or Literature focus at KS5. Assessment Objectives for both are included in the notes section on the slides in the PPT. An English Language lesson should enable students to spend more time identifying and analysing linguistic techniques used in Zaidi's extract. A Literature lesson could focus more on comparing the two texts, and potentially introducing literary theory, e.g. Postcolonialism.

Lesson can be adapted to suit KS4/5 English Language or English Literature:

KS5 English Language AOs:

- AO1: Apply appropriate methods of language analysis, using associated terminology and coherent written expression.
- AO2: Demonstrate critical understanding of concepts and issues relevant to language use.
- AO3: Analyse and evaluate how contextual factors and language features are associated with the construction of meaning.
- AO4: Explore connections across texts, informed by linguistic concepts and methods.
- AO5: Demonstrate expertise and creativity in the use of English to communicate in different ways.

Or, KS5 English Literature AOs

- AO1: Articulate informed, personal and creative responses to literary texts, using associated concepts and terminology, and coherent, accurate written expression.

Lit in colour



- AO2: Analyse ways in which meanings are shaped in literary texts.
- AO3: Demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of the contexts in which literary texts are written and received.
- AO4: Explore connections across literary texts.
- AO5: Explore literary texts informed by different interpretations.