

# Elements of political and social protest writing resource package

A-level English Literature B (7716/7717)

Paper 2B, Section A

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For teaching from September 2015

## Introduction

We have developed a range of resources to help you plan your teaching and to create practice exam questions for every component of AS and A-level English Literature B.

In this package you find a variety of resources, including:

- creating your own questions guidance document, to give you the power to create your own practice exam questions
- specimen question commentaries, which explain how a question taken from the sample assessment materials addresses the assessment objectives, and which give some suggestions of how the task might be approached
- exemplar student responses with marking commentary, including two responses of different mark bands are given to a specific question from the Sample Assessment Materials
- text overviews, which show you how the texts you have chosen can be read through the lens of the genre of political and social protest writing.

## Resources in this package

- Creating your own questions - Paper 2B, Section A
- Exemplar student response and examiner commentary - Paper 2B, Section A - band 4 - *A man for all seasons*
- Exemplar student response and examiner commentary - Paper 2B, Section A - band 5 - *A man for all seasons*
- Specimen question commentary - Paper 2B, Section A - *A man for all seasons*

## How to use these resources

These documents are clearly an excellent starting point when planning your teaching. If you haven't yet decided on which texts or text combinations to teach, the text overviews and specimen mark schemes give you details about some of the elements of the genre each text covers, which can help you decide. Don't forget to consult the specification for a list of possible elements. Once you have decided, these documents will help you to focus your teaching on those elements and to work towards the relevant exam question in the specimen assessment materials. The exemplar student responses with marking commentary act as models for the students and help you to assess their work.

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Version 0.2  
First published (02/07/2015)  
Last updated (02/07/2015)

# Creating your own questions

A-level English Literature B (7716/7717)

Elements of political and social protest writing

Resource package: Paper 2B, Section A

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For teaching from September 2015

## Introduction

Below you will find instructions on how to use the accompanying resources to create your own exam practice questions. This example shows you how to use the Elements of political and social protest writing: resource package to set questions for Paper 2B, Section A, for the Elements of political and social protest writing component for A-level English Literature B.

## Paper 2B, Section A

If you have used the relevant question from the specimen assessment materials and want to set a question on a different unseen extract, you can use these documents in the following way:

1. Look at how the relevant questions from the specimen assessment materials are constructed, for example:

*Explore the significance of the elements of political protest in this extract. Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed analysis of the ways Bolt has shaped meanings.*

You will need to set a different extract. The question wording can remain largely unchanged with the exception of the extract writer's name and the extension from 'political protest' to 'political and social protest' if appropriate for the chosen extract.

2. Look for extracts which include a range of elements of political and social protest writing; ideas for elements can be found in the specification. Possible sources include:

- extracts from any of texts on the political and social protest writing set text list
- extracts from other texts which fit this genre
- remember to set extracts from poetry, prose and drama as the unseen text in the examination can be set from any of these.

Version 0.2

First published (02/07/2015)

Last updated (02/07/2015)

# Exemplar student response and examiner commentary

A-level English Literature B (7716/7717)

Elements of political and social protest writing

Resource package: Paper 2B, Section A

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For teaching from September 2015

## Introduction

Below you will find an exemplar student response to a Section A question in the specimen assessment materials, followed by an examiner commentary on the response.

## Paper 2B, Section A

*Explore the significance of the elements of political protest in this extract. Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed analysis of the ways Bolt has shaped meanings.*

## Band 4 response

Bolt creates baited-breath type tension in this scene, which is only to be expected given its context of one of the most influential and studied periods of English history. ‘*A Man for All Seasons*’ is set during the tumultuous period of the Reformation, in which Henry VIII stamped his authority on the Church, a time when opposition of all kind was increasingly dangerous in the eyes of the emerging tyrant. However, this scene contains many political nuances, especially with regards to shifts and clashes of power between particular individuals, complicating the audience’s perspective of who might be in charge.

First, one of the key political debates in this scene, indeed the whole subject matter of the play, is symbolised through the personal power of both Cromwell and More, and their tense argument. Bolt parallels the two characters in both their speeches and in body movement, representing the equal intimidation from the former and defensive response from the latter. At first, Cromwell is directed as ‘approaching More, behind him’ which immediately suggests threat, and More’s vulnerability. Cromwell’s cunning and shiftiness comes through here, he stands exactly where the prisoner can’t see his face, the perfect back-stabbing position. At this moment, the murky duplicity of politics thrives; indeed politics itself could be said to be a kind of theatre. Cromwell at first has the upper hand as More physically shies away from eye contact: ‘he turns his head away from Cromwell’. However, Bolt levels More with Cromwell, as he later ‘faces Cromwell, his eyes sparkling with suspicion.’ He goes on to belittle Cromwell subtly in his speech, calling him ‘Mr Secretary’ rather than ‘Master’, reminding him of his real position, subservient to the King, and mocking his role. Bolt also compares the characters through their speeches, equalling engaging and eloquent. Both use personification, More in his description of death (‘Death ...comes for us all...he will neither kneel

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nor make them any reverence...but roughly grasp them by the very breast') and Cromwell in his evaluation of silence ('so silence can...speak'). The level, opposing politics and personalities of the two men are heightened by Bolt's use of dramatic suspense, constantly putting off the climax of the scene with intense, pedantic debate.

Indeed the intellectual struggle between them, and the very fussiness of the case (More's life depends on a mere technicality, the meaning of his silence) could possibly be symbolic of the King's Great Matter and the Reformation hinted at in the play, the overarching political problem in this play. It was a long, arduous legal battle. In terms of the divorce especially, it centred around trying to find a loophole in the Pope's dispensation, which had allowed Henry to marry Catherine of Aragon. The following arguments over minutiae which exploded into the dramatic event of the Reformation are reflected perfectly by More and Cromwell's sparring over the legal interpretation of silence. Bolt's symbolic microcosm works to clarify and deepen the gravity of the umbrella political issue.

The captive argument between Cromwell and More also serves to emphasise the absence of the 'Supreme Head of the Church in England', the King, and one wonders whether this also means an absence of royal authority. On the one hand, Bolt's decision to absent the person around whom it all revolves is a clever way of actually increasing the ominous strength of his presence, one's sense of awe. His power can be read through the attitude of the Duke of Norfolk, who on the one hand is clearly sympathetic to More: ('leaning forward urgently' 'Your life lies in your own hand, Thomas, as it always has'). This momentary slip from professional distance suggests previous acquaintance with More, as is noticeable by the intimate body language and his ceasing to say 'Sir Thomas': instead, just 'Thomas'. Bolt creates a direct contrast here with the Duke's speech to Cromwell, which is brusque and snappy, suggesting a withheld dislike. He curbs Cromwell's drawn out cruelty to More, exclaiming, 'Master Secretary, read the charge!' However, he never attempts to defend More, and he fades easily from the conversation towards the end of the scene, adding to the impression of the weakness of his character. Ultimately, he gives himself over to loyalty, or fear, of the King, which would be the wisest, safest political move. Hence, Henry's power seeps through without him needing to be there.

However, another possible reason for his minimal influence in the scene is to emphasise Cromwell's growing, dangerous authority, and a key element of political protest writing. He has utter control over the scene, despite the fact that Norfolk is supposedly presiding over the trial. Cromwell is at ease, maliciously toying with his victim: '...The late Bishop Fisher I should have said.' He indulges himself in his musings, voicing his thoughts to the room, telling it 'let us say it is in the dead of night – there's nothing like darkness for sharpening the ear.' He is even sinister in setting the scene of his own ponderings. Whilst he finds pleasure in antagonising More, Henry, well known to have been a friend and admirer of his Chancellor, perhaps cannot muster the strength to involve himself too closely. Cromwell, only too happy to prey on this weakness in his master, is happy to take over. It could be, then, that this scene is a foretaste of developments between the King and Cromwell, raising questions as to who drives crucial decisions in this time: who manipulates who? In conclusion, I think the significance of political elements in this extract is that it presents power in all forms: suppressed, challenged, lost and undermined. Bolt's use of stage directions, suspense, speech, parallels, contrasts and perhaps even symbolism serve to muddy the political waters, particularly in terms of the extent of Cromwell's power and whether it is beginning to overstep that of a 'secretary'.

## Examiner commentary

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This is a clearly written response which begins very well. The first two paragraphs focus very sharply on the task and there is excellent discussion of drama, Bolt and political elements. After this though, the answer is less sharp and there is rather too much focus on material outside of the extract and too much of a commentary on events and characters. In the second half of the answer there is less focus on Bolt as the dramatist and in places the candidate writes about the characters as real.

#### **AO1**

The candidate's response is articulate and there is a shape to the writing. The answer is technically accurate and ideas are well organised. The introduction is helpful in contextualising the passage though the momentum is not sustained through the whole response and the conclusion is a little list like and repetitive.

#### **AO2**

There is engagement with authorial methods and how these shape meanings such as the manner in which Bolt uses suspense and the way Cromwell's musings set the scene. The second paragraph is very strong on the effects of staging. However, there is less detailed analysis of dramatic methods in the second half of the answer.

#### **AO3**

There is a clear focus on the political and historical contexts of the scene. There are also insightful comments on politics as a 'kind of theatre'. Sometimes the focus on historical context though takes the candidate away from the passage and the task. The candidate's discussion of the absence of the king does not quite work here as there is little sense that Bolt is following history rather than himself choosing for Henry not to be present at the trial.

#### **AO4**

There is some perceptive exploration of connections to the genre of political protest writing with some depth of understanding shown in the analysis of the power dynamics at work on stage. At times this could have been a little better supported though.

#### **AO5**

There is some range of ideas evident here and the candidate clearly offers an often perceptive interpretation of how power politics work in this scene.

This answer seems to be operating in the top half of Band 4. A best fit mark would be appropriate here. The first part of the answer has qualities of Band 5 but much of the rest of the answer is Band 3 or Band 4.

Version 0.2

First published (02/07/2015)

Last updated (02/07/2015)

# Exemplar student response and examiner commentary

A-level English Literature B (7716/7717)

Elements of political and social protest writing

Resource package: Paper 2B, Section A

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For teaching from September 2015

## Introduction

Below you will find an exemplar student response to a Section A question in the specimen assessment materials, followed by an examiner commentary on the response.

## Paper 2B, Section A

*Explore the significance of the elements of political protest in this extract. Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed analysis of the ways Bolt has shaped meanings.*

## Band 5 response

In this extract from *A Man for All Seasons*, Robert Bolt carefully constructs language and visual effect for the audience to explore political themes, including the nature of power and its relationship to the individual, notions of justice, and guilt. The choice of a trial scene also allows an examination of the entrapment of the individual at the hands of a ruthless state. From the start of the extract the playwright's language and register seems to befit the setting of the scene in terms of its historical context and being in a court of law, with phrases such as "betokened" and "traitorously". This provides a convincing scene for the audience, in which Bolt can explore more universal political ideas.

First, Bolt examines the nature of power through the language he chooses, particularly with regard to the power invested in the prosecutor. For example, Cromwell's charge against More includes three examples of tautology: "traitorously and maliciously", "deny and deprive" and "undoubted certain". The use of excessive emotive language and rhetorical devices demonstrates Cromwell's ability to launch an emphatic and powerful charge revealing his bullying and perhaps also his lust for power. The fact that Bolt gives the prosecutor in a court such a facility with language gives Cromwell power and authority in the court, leaving the defendant in some ways at a disadvantage. Indeed, directors staging this scene could emphasise Bolt's stage direction of 'formal' to indicate how the words should be delivered to show the linguistic strength Cromwell has. Bolt packs Cromwell's speech full of rhetorical devices. Much is made of the word 'silence', upon which More stands. Cromwell's points are driven home with the use of hypotheses, rhetorical questions, imperatives, minor sentences and emotive language, for example: 'Consider first the silence of a

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man when he is dead....What do we hear? Silence. What does it betoken, this silence? Nothing. This is silence, pure and simple'.

Furthermore, Bolt goes on to illustrate the power of language by having More include the Latin maxim 'qui tacet consentire' in his reply to Cromwell's claim that More's silence does not betoken silence at all but 'most eloquent denial'. Bolt ensures that More is addressing 'Mr Secretary' when he speaks the Latin words, before he turns to the 'Common Man' (and Bolt's modern audience who might well not know Latin) and offers a translation: 'Silence gives consent'. The stage direction reinforces Bolt's examination of how knowledge of legal language can offer power to individuals, as in this example knowledge of a classical and perhaps revered language adds strength to More's defence. However, it could be argued that Bolt criticises the tendency of academics and those who access this power through language and knowledge by giving the direction that More speaks 'with some of his academic's impatience' and 'very carefully' when he translates. This might indicate that More is patronising those who do not understand Latin and thus empowering himself, although the extent to which this interpretation is felt by the audience would depend on how much the actor and director chose to emphasise it.

In the scene, Bolt explores key elements of political protest writing: the relationship between the power of authority and the powerlessness of the individual and the defiance of an individual who wants his voice to be heard. When Cromwell speaks to More he is threatening and aggressive. He suggests that More's punishment will be more serious than imprisonment. Although More is clearly powerless in the sense he is on trial he has courage and integrity, seen in his crisp yet softly cutting reply: 'Death... comes for us all, my lords. Yes, even for Kings he comes'. Here, Bolt includes reference both to lord and king, to emphasise More's argument that although those with great political power might believe in their immortality, no one can escape death. Bolt presents this dichotomy using both courtly and violent imagery vividly personifying death. First, he describes the fact that death will not 'kneel' as all men must before the king, and will not make kings 'any reverence', despite their 'Royalty and brute strength'. In his explanation of what will happen, the phrases 'roughly grasp them' and 'rattle them until they be stark dead' are almost onomatopoeic and convey a visceral image of the fact that the real 'brute strength' lies with death, not political power. In this way the ordinary man offers an impressive challenge to the authorities that judge him. This examination of the conflict between earthly power and the force of nature is emphasised by the dramatic pause of the ellipsis after 'Death' and 'judgement'. Therefore, Bolt demonstrates to his audience that political power is in fact an illusion, and that the reality that all individuals die is not removed by titles or wealth.

Moreover, Bolt uses the scene to explore the political protest elements of justice and guilt. Bolt begins by examining the conflict between personal issues and public situations, here specifically the demands and desires of the king. Cromwell begins the trial by breaking the news of Bishop Fisher to More, and "clinically" observes the 'violent shock, then grief' of the accused. The moment polarises the personal and the public with Cromwell's attempts to manipulate More and exert power by referring directly to the Bishop's death. The public and private worlds are also foregrounded by Norfolk. While Norfolk reads the charges he addresses More formally with 'Sir Thomas'. However, when More seems to be unyielding, Norfolk leans towards him and simply appeals to him as 'Thomas'. The public and private spheres are developed further by More himself who draws attention to the microcosm of the court and the macrocosm of 'the world', saying, 'the world must construe according to its wits. This court must construe according to the law'. Here, More indicates that justice and moral issues may function differently depending on whether in a public or private setting. Indeed, this is apparent in the fact that Cromwell addresses the 'Gentlemen of the Jury' while More addresses 'Mr Secretary, suggesting that there are different criteria for making moral and legal judgements, whether 'the court' (represented by the secretary) or 'the world' (represented by the common people of the jury).



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Finally, the justice of the entire proceeding is challenged by Bolt's use of stage direction and structure. Cromwell uses the underhand tactic of the personal shock to More at the very start of the trial, and does so 'behind him' and 'informally'. Dramatic convention leads audiences to mistrust characters who deploy themselves behind others, perhaps influenced by pantomime. This leads Cromwell to appear sly and evil, attempting to stab More in the back before the trial even begins. Indeed, Bolt uses the existing belief among many English people that Cromwell was indeed Machiavellian, which is an assumption that has recently been challenged by Hilary Mantel's *Wolf Hall*. When presenting to an English audience, therefore, Bolt can take advantage of the fact that some are likely to be prejudiced against Cromwell, casting him in an even more negative light. The fact that the scene is set in a trial allows Bolt to consider the results of transgression against the state. The trial is unfair, and the law is inconsistent. As a result, Bolt could be suggesting that opposition to the state is futile, as within a private context it will end in a rigged trial and condemnation. Of course Bolt was dramatising a known historical situation, but the ideas here could apply to power politics of any era. However, one might argue more plausibly that More is celebrated in the play –which is named in his honour -, as he is shown to be intelligent through his language and the stage directions indicate that his eyes sparkle with suspicion, suggesting that he knows exactly what game is being played. Though difficult to act, this detail presents More as bright and energetic, and thus one could argue that he is being celebrated for his defiance. Of course, More cannot be rewarded as Bolt is restricted by the historical fact that More was beheaded after an unfair trial, but he is nonetheless given the last word in this extract.

## Examiner commentary

This is a very thorough response and the candidate explores many ideas about political protest writing in the extract. The second half of the answer is rather better than the first. At times (particularly in the first half) the candidate gets bogged down with micro-analysing words. It might have helped if there had been more of an overview at the start rather than an immediate focus on language choices. However, as the answer progresses, the student is able to step back and focus more on the drama as a whole, seeing how Bolt interrogates political conflicts. There is some perceptive work here.

### AO1

This is an articulate and structured response with a clear argument though points could have been made a little more concisely. The candidate regularly uses technical terms whilst analysing the scene. The introduction sets up the response quite well and the answer is neatly worked to the conclusion.

### AO2

The depth of the analysis is very impressive here. There is perceptive understanding of the author's language choices and a good sense of other dramatic methods, though perhaps more could have been done with stage action and a little less on language. The focus is clearly on the author throughout and there is real depth to the exploration of the impact of Bolt's choices.

### AO3

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There is perceptive understanding of various contexts both in terms of the courtroom drama and ideas associated with justice. The candidate is also aware of the historical context of the play. Some very insightful points are made about Cromwell and the candidate makes some contextual points which it is not necessary for candidates to know. However, the response clearly demonstrates that this individual is well-read and able to integrate contextual understanding into an astute argument.

#### **AO4**

A range of points about political protest writing are perceptively made and well developed; there is excellent use of supporting detail and a clear sense of the political significance of this scene. There is both implicit and explicit connection with the genre.

#### **AO5**

A range of interpretations emerge and the candidate writes confidently before reaching an assured conclusion.

The answer seems to comfortably fit into Band 5.

Version 0.2

First published (02/07/2015)

Last updated (02/07/2015)

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# Specimen question commentary

A-level English Literature B (7716/7717)

Elements of political and social protest writing

Resource package: Paper 2B, Section A

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For teaching from September 2015

## Introduction

This resource explains how a question taken from the specimen assessment material addresses the assessment objectives, with some suggestions of how the task might be approached. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of every point that could be made but it gives teachers and students some guidance that will support their work on this paper.

## Paper 2B, Section A

## Sample question

### Question 1: The Unseen

*Explore the significance of the elements of political protest in this extract. Remember to include in your answer relevant detailed analysis of the ways Bolt has shaped meanings.*

## How the question meets the Assessment Objectives

In this question, as throughout the paper, all the assessment objectives are assessed. The key words and terms in the question are: explore, significance, elements of political protest, analysis, ways and shaped meanings, and these are clearly connected to the assessment objectives.

**AO1** will be tested through the ways the students organise their writing and express their ideas as they are exploring significance and analysing dramatic method. **AO2** is set up in the requirement for students to analyse 'the ways Bolt has shaped meanings' (specifically his dramatic methods) and to show how the ways open up meanings about political protest writing. The word 'significance' is an invitation for students to target **AO3** and **AO5**, to show what is signified in terms of contexts and interpretations that arise about political protest writing as revealed in the extract. **AO3** will be addressed through the students' showing their understanding of both the political writing and modern dramatic contexts of *A Man for All Seasons*; and in the way they will elicit from the extract contextual ideas about when the text was written and how it might be received. **AO5** will be addressed when students consider meanings that arise about political writing in the extract. Finally, in writing about and engaging with elements of political writing, **AO4** will be hit as students will be connecting implicitly with concepts of the political and social protest writing genre (and other political and social protest texts) through the 'elements' which they are exploring.

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## Possible content

It may be helpful for students to begin by briefly giving an overview of the extract in terms of the political situation that is set up. Students can then focus on specific political elements and what significances arise. They should always be mindful that this is a play and that Bolt heightens the political ideas by the dramatic methods he uses.

The contextual information given at the start of the extract offers a possible structure for students' responses in that it points to a series of political conflicts that can be explored. These conflicts include that between Henry VIII and the pope and those between court representatives and the ordinary man. The conflicts might be seen as especially intense and therefore dramatically powerful, in that they take place in the adversarial setting of the courtroom, which pits More and Cromwell against each other. There is also a sense that the country at large will be affected by the outcomes in the court, not least of all because 'the country greatly respects More' and because More directly addresses the Common Man. The political conflicts and power struggles set up in the extract are clearly key to the drama and central to political writing.

## Some ideas students might write about: Power struggles

### Religious conflict: Pope vs King

The conflict between the pope and the king, which is only alluded to in this passage, overarches and informs the other power struggles that Bolt dramatises. Of course neither the king nor the pope is present (as they would not have been historically), but Bolt makes it clear to his audience that the authority in the court is the king. The trial after all is based on Henry's decision to set himself up as the Head of the Church of England breaking with the pope's authority in Rome. Candidates might choose to explore the language used to refer to King Henry; the number of titles that he is given suggests Henry's power and the need of his court officials to make capital of that power. Candidates might see More as a representative of the pope and More's eloquent and self-evident suggestion that kings die is a clear challenge to Henry's authority. More certainly is an ambassador for the authority of God in whom he has an unshakeable faith. When Norfolk suggests that More's life lies in his own hands (thereby suggesting an easeful life and natural death), More replies: 'For our own deaths, my lord, yours and mine, dare we for shame desire to enter the Kingdom with ease, when Our Lord Himself entered with so much pain?' More's religious faith is dramatically contrasted to the self seeking attitudes of the court officials who seem to worship the king as opposed to God.

### The State against the Individual: More vs Cromwell (and the king)

At the centre of the extract an ordinary man is being tried by the state. Within the grand and formal setting of a courtroom, More is in the clutches of a corrupt and powerful state machine. Yet Bolt gives to him a dignified and impressive stage presence and a voice that cuts through state power. When Cromwell implies that More will be punished by death, More impressively retorts: 'Death ...comes for us all, my lords. Yes, even for Kings he comes'. The contrast between More's and Cromwell's behaviour is also strong: Cromwell prowls around the courtroom, approaching his

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adversary from behind, suggesting the drawing of a dagger (candidates should notice the threat implied here). More, meanwhile, is static – suggesting both his controlled manner and his metaphorically being tied to the stake. Cromwell is very well aware of the importance of theatricality in achieving his political ends (an ironic point sharpened by the specific dramatic context of Bolt's play). In pointing up the contrasts, it is very clear whose side Bolt is on. The emptiness of Cromwell's argument about silence, emphasised by the own overblown rhetoric, contrasts with the stage directions indicating More's academic 'impatience for a shoddy line of reasoning'. Cromwell's attempt to impress with his verbal trickery is starkly contrasted by More's crisp answer in Latin 'qui tacet consentire' which he translates for the Common Man ('Silence Gives Consent').

In this extract, the audience is placed in the position of the Common Man alongside More. From the start the audience knows that the state has power to sentence its citizens to death. The news of Bishop Fisher's execution, which is a surprise to More, is used by Cromwell to terrorise More as part of his bullying strategy. But it is also a reminder of what could happen to More, making More a tragic figure. Although this extract ends with More triumphant, the references to death and Fisher's execution suggest what More's end will be. Perhaps his outcome is also suggested by the way he contrasts with the court officials. Where they are devious, More speaks truth, emphasised by his relative stillness. What is also made clear is that state power will also destroy personal bonds. Norfolk seems to feel some affection for More (he calls him Thomas) but the extract makes it clear that the court is corrupt and that political expediency will lead to the destruction of any friendship. There is no place for personal sentiment at all. We are told in the introduction that the king also 'likes More personally' but this has to be sacrificed. Although Cromwell is the front man here, the king is the real antagonist, an antagonist that will win at all costs. The ordinary man with right on his side, is helpless when the power of the state turns on him. The audience, like More, has a growing sense that the trial is 'in some way rigged'.

## The importance of the law

Central to political protest writing – and all societies which political writing represents – is the law of the land. The law ought to be fair but political texts often show that the law is unjust. Part of More's tragedy is that he puts his faith in the law - this court must construe according to the law, he says. But the law is increasingly slippery.

Bolt sets this scene in a court of law and the focus on what is 'legal' directly connects *A Man for all Seasons* to other political and social protest texts, like *I Henry IV* and *The Handmaid's Tale*. Here there is an imposing setting of a 16th century courtroom with powerful and intimidating court officials. A man is on trial for his life accused of high treason. What is interesting is the nature of his supposed crime: that he 'did conspire traitorously and maliciously to deny and deprive our liege lord Henry of his undoubted certain title, Supreme Head of the Church in England', a charge (embellished with emotive adverbs) which More denies. More's understanding of the law and ability to reason gives him a seeming advantage. Although Cromwell castigates him for his silence, More points out that silence technically 'gives consent'. However, while More seems to have the advantage in terms of the strength of his academic arguments, his sense that the trial is rigged casts a dark shadow over the events, which the audience, with a deep sense of foreboding and perhaps knowledge of the historical facts, share. Although More is superior in intellectual reasoning, Bolt focuses on his growing anxiety revealed in the stage directions (More's face registers 'shock', 'grief', 'indignation', 'suspicion').

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However, although More is clearly trapped (obvious in a visual sense), Bolt gives him a personal integrity in which he shows that the moral laws for which More stands are of greater worth than the laws of the king.

Version 0.2

First published (02/07/2015)

Last updated (02/07/2015)