

- *August: Osage County* is written by Tracy Letts and directed by Eamon Flack. This production opened at Belvoir St Theatre on Thursday 14th November 2024. This play won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 2007.
- The show runs for approximately 3 hours and 30 minutes including two 15-minute intervals.
- *August: Osage County* is set in 2007 in a rural area outside Pawhuska, Oklahoma, United States of America. The action of the play takes place over the course of several weeks.
- The production features 13 actors, each portraying the same character consistently throughout the play.
- The action of the play takes place in the home of Beverly and Violet Weston. The Westons have three grown-up daughters – Barbara, Ivy and Karen.
- Bob Cousins' set design represents the Weston family home. Various rooms and sections of the house coexist within a single space. At times, scenes overlap, with actors remaining on stage, oblivious to the other scenes unfolding around them.
- *August: Osage County* explores themes of invasion, emotional violence, intergenerational trauma, addiction, parenting, and the decline of American society. In bringing these themes to life, we see characters engaging in moments of intense verbal and physical conflict including instances of assault.
- *August: Osage County* contains coarse language, depictions of emotional violence, verbal abuse, family dysfunction, and sexual references. The word c*nt is spoken once in the production in the context of a female character saying "...he called me a c*nt..." At various points in the play, this material is presented with a darkly comic tone, eliciting laughter from the audience despite the upsetting nature of the content.
- Throughout the play, there are various references to Violet having mouth cancer and the pain this induces.
- *August: Osage County* contains racist language and slurs. These slurs are spoken to depict the racist attitudes of some characters towards Native Americans, which students may find upsetting.
- [SPOILER]Throughout the play, it is revealed that first cousins, Ivy and Charles, are romantically involved and planning to move to New York to start a life together. However, they are unaware that they are half-siblings, resulting from an extramarital affair, revealed towards the end of the play.
- The play includes numerous references to alcoholism and drug addiction, depicting Violet taking prescription pills and the impact of these drugs on her mental state. Referencing her mother's drug addiction, Barbara recalls Violet smuggling drugs "into the psych-ward...in her vagina".
- The play contains references to the suicide. A pivotal moment in the play is the death of Beverly, the family patriarch, who commits suicide by drowning. After his body is found, there are descriptions of its decomposition.
- The play contains references to the character of Bill, Barbara's husband and a college lecturer, having an extramarital affair with a significantly younger college student. This event is described by Barbara as "screwing a girl who still wears a retainer". In the same conversation, she asks, "Is this just about the pleasures of young flesh, teenage pussy?" Later, Bill's 14-year-old daughter Jean says, "He's fucking one of his students which is pretty uncool." The relationship is presented in a negative light in the play.
- Throughout the production, fourteen-year-old Jean is seen smoking cigarettes and marijuana on stage. At one point, she is given marijuana by Steve, Karen's fifty-year-old fiancé.
- The play depicts the grooming and sexual assault of Barbara's 14-year-old daughter, Jean. The audience sees the character of Steve stroke Jean's face. Later, Steve offers Jean marijuana and encourages her to put her lips on his and inhale the smoke. The assault takes place off-stage and is ended when the character of Johnna breaks Steve and Jean apart. Johnna says that she saw Steve "messing with Jean...He was kissing her and grabbing her." Later, the character of Karen, Steve's

fiancé, states “...I doubt Jean is exactly blameless in this, that doesn't mean I've blamed her...” Later, Karen is seen to be standing by Stevie and leaves with him, still talking about getting married.

- The production contains a moment when Barbara, the mother of 14-year-old Jean, calls her a ‘freak’ in anger, which some students may find upsetting.
- In Act 2, Violet recalls being violently harmed by one of her mother's lovers who “was attacking [her] with a claw hammer!”
- At the end of Act 2, a fight breaks out over lunch between Violet and her daughter Barbara, who confronts her over a pill bottle. The altercation turns violent, and at one point, Barbara rips out a chunk of Violet's hair.
- This production includes the use of haze, onstage smoking of e-cigarettes, blackouts, and occasional loud noises.
- Some students may need a briefing on theatre etiquette. Please ensure mobile phones are turned off completely and refrain from eating in the theatre. Students should understand that the performance is live and that the actors can see and hear them in the audience.