

La casa de Bernarda Alba - Federico García Lorca

Finished just before the playwright's death in 1936, *La Casa de Bernarda* explores female experiences in early 20th century Andalusia. Conditioned by religion, social pressures and a fear of gossip, the eponymous protagonist goes to great lengths to maintain control over her life and daughters. As the play progresses and the stifling summer heat rises, Bernarda's tyranny heightens and the girls feel increasingly oppressed. Adela, in particular, longs for freedom and embarks on an affair with Pepe el Romano who is betrothed to her older sister, Angustias. However, despite being warned on several occasions by La Poncia, her lifelong servant, Bernarda refuses to give in, ultimately leading to her youngest daughter's tragic suicide.

Activity 1	<p>Description of activity and suggested uses:</p> <p>Students read a short extract from the novel and with the help of a mind map, write a newspaper article summarising the events. Here, we see another woman—la Librada's daughter—chased through the village after she has a baby out of wedlock and kills it for fear of being shamed. Bernarda echoes the desires of the mob, who call for the woman's death, while Adela, perhaps identifying with the woman somewhat, begs for her life to be spared.</p>	<p>Skills covered:</p> <p>This is a creative activity where reading, writing and summary skills can be developed. Students need to focus on the context and the attitudes circulating at the time in rural Andalusia.</p>
Activity 2	<p>This is a summative exercise to check comprehension of the plot. Students read three sentences linked to context only one of which is correct, and for each correct answer, they score 10 points. 10 consecutive correct answers will take them to 100 points.</p> <p>Follow up activities could be for students to correct any false sentences.</p>	<p>Reading skills are developed and students are encouraged to note down useful vocabulary/phrases (a dictionary may be needed). An understanding of the context is developed.</p>
Activity 3	<p>Students have to put the sentences in order they occur in the novel. All of the sentences relate to important contextual details.</p>	<p>Reading and comprehension skills are developed here as well as further detailed understanding of the context.</p>