

The Signing

Characters

SANDRA Murphy: A hard working mum in her early forties who dreams of well behaved children and a clean kitchen.

TOMMY Murphy: A football and YouTube obsessed teenage boy, who dreams of leaving home and being signed to Manchester United.

MR EMMET: An ageing football talent scout who dreams of signing the next Cristiano Ronaldo.

*Lights come up to **reveal** an old-fashioned, run-down looking kitchen. There is a sink filled with dishes, broken kitchen cabinets and a work top covered in packets and food. **Down stage left** there is a fridge, with an open bottle of fizzy drink on top. There is a small wooden table centre stage. There are two chairs behind the table, facing the audience. Both the table and chairs look rather old and tired. There are a few dirty glasses on the table. A crashing noise is heard off stage.*

SANDRA: *(off stage)* Tommy! I told you to keep that thing out of here, how many times? I've enough to do without you making extra work for me.

From the direction of the noise, Tommy – a fifteen year old boy, wearing muddy football shorts and a Manchester United T-Shirt comes running in. He is dribbling a ball. He runs over to the fridge, puts his phone on top of it and begins dribbling the ball around the kitchen.

TOMMY: He's closing in, he's getting there, past the last defender, he shoots... *(at this stage Tommy kicks the ball against the fridge hard, so that the open bottle of fizzy drink that was balanced on top falls over and begins running onto the floor)* He scores!

Tommy rips off his shirt, flings it on to the table, toppling glasses, and runs around the stage. He dives on to his knees, in front of the fridge. All the time still talking.

What a goal from the young Murphy, on his **debut** for this club. Nothing more could have been asked for. He came here to prove himself and he did that – what a welcome to Old Traff...

*At this moment he notices Sandra, his mother has entered **up stage left**. She is wearing jeans and an oversized polo shirt. She is also wearing a cleaning apron and carrying a plastic container full of cleaning products and rubber gloves etc. She is balancing three brooms of **differing** sizes under her arms and staring at the mess in the kitchen in horror.*

SANDRA: *(interrupting)* Thomas Murphy! Look at the mess you've made. I spend my whole day cleaning other people's houses – and then I have to come home and clean my own. Look at this place.

Tommy has been mouthing along with his mother, letting the audience know he has heard her speech more than once. She catches him at the end, and the two stare at each other until Tommy drops his face to the floor.

And if you know what I'm saying so well Mr. Know-it-all, then why wait for me to say it?!

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The Signing – 5 – Text

TOMMY: *(picking his shirt off the table and the ball off the floor, whining)* It's not only me mum. Kerry and Lisa also live here you know *(he motions to the mess in the kitchen. In motioning, he accidentally throws the ball once more, this time through the kitchen window.)*

SANDRA: ARGH! Tommy!

Lights down.

*Lights come up on the same kitchen only this time it is much tidier. The window at the back has been taped up. There is a pot of tea and three cups on the table in the centre. Sandra is furiously cleaning invisible spots off the work tops and Tommy is **pacing** across the stage. He is wearing a pair of trousers too short for him and an unironed shirt. Sandra comes over, licks the back of her hand and starts to flatten his hair.*

TOMMY: *(moving his head out of the way)* Muuum! Get off!

SANDRA: Keep still Tommy – you look a mess.

TOMMY: Mum! *(He finally breaks free of her and picks up his cup of tea.)* He wants to meet us to talk about my football career, not my hair. *(He looks **arrogantly** into the audience)* my FOOTBALL career.

The doorbell rings and Tommy snaps out of his trance, drops his cup and spills tea all over the floor.

SANDRA: *(squealing and grabbing a tea towel)* Go and let him in, I'll clean this all this up

She begins wiping the floor and kicks the broken cup under the table as Tommy enters with a man in a suit. She straightens up and holds out her hand.

MR EMMET: I'm Mr Emmet, you must be Mrs. Murphy – lovely to meet you.

SANDRA: That's me, hello. Please take a seat. *(She **gestures** at the chairs behind the table)* Would you like a cup of tea?

MR EMMET: Tea would be lovely.

MR EMMET sits down and pulls a brief case onto the table. He pulls out some paperwork as SANDRA pours the tea and TOMMY fidgets nervously.

I must say, I think your son is an **innovative** thinker, and that's what made me travel all the way up here.

SANDRA: *(confused)* Innovative thinker?

MR EMMET: Yes, it's not every young man that personally emails every youth division in the country asking for a trial.

Normally it doesn't work of course, but sending the YouTube videos with it... Well I could see talent then. *(He turns to the window that has been taped up and begins laughing.)* All fixed then, eh?!

SANDRA: *(smiling, partly with confusion and partly to be polite)* Videos?

TOMMY: *(quickly and nervously interrupting)* Mr... Emmet. I've been playing football since I could walk and I'm ... so pleased...

SANDRA: *(interrupting)* Sorry, I don't understand. Did Tommy tell you about the window Mr Emmet?

MR EMMET: Tell me?! He didn't have to, it's on his YouTube channel, along with everything else! I think you're a great sport – making regular appearances. That was all part of the humour! We all remember being told off by our mothers, but watching you, stood there in your apron – hilarious. That's what made me realise, Tommy is an innovative thinker, **combined** with his talent we think he deserves a go at the youth clubs and there are a few interested. It's not everyday you get to sign a **viral sensation**...

SANDRA has not been listening, instead she has been staring intently at Tommy in horror and shock. MR EMMET realises that something is amiss and stares between the two. He looks highly uncomfortable. TOMMY has his head down and is staring silently at his lap.

SANDRA: *(without breaking her stare)* Oh yes. He is an...innovative alright, and after you leave Mr. Emmet, Tommy and I will be talking about just how innovative he is!

Lights down.

The Signing – Oral Teacher Questions

What type of the text is this? (AF4) **A script.**

Find two features of the text that indicate this. (AF4) **The character list, the stage directions and the character dialogue.**

Why did Tommy put his phone on top of the fridge in the first scene? Include a quote from the text to illustrate this. (AF2/AF3) **To film what was about to happen. Various quotes regarding his YouTube account.**

How many characters are mentioned in this script? List them from start to finish. (AF2) **Five. Tommy, Sandra, Kerry, Lisa and Mr. Emmet.**

What do you notice about the text that is in italics and what is its purpose in the text? (AF4) **They are stage directions. They instruct the actors what to do.**

Compare reading this with reading a story. Is a script harder or easier to read? Does it paint a more or less vivid picture of the scene in your head? Why? (AF5) **Various answers if justified. Scripts contain less emotion, they are more of a skeleton for a performance etc.**

What language device is the following sentence, ‘How many times have I told you?’? (AF4) **A rhetorical question.**

Do you think Tommy deserved to be signed to a youth club? (AF6) **Various answers if justified.**

Which genre would you say this play was? (AF3)

What is the name of a person who directs actors on stage, using the stage directions and their own ideas to perform the story? (AF7) **The Director.**

Who could Kerry and Lisa be? (AF3) **They could be Tommy’s sisters, although this is never stated. They could be any relatives or friends.**

How do we know when a scene has finished? (AF2/AF7) **The stage directions say lights down.**

Re-write a section of the script in prose (as a story would be written). Include two sets of stage directions and at least five lines of dialogue. (AF3/AF6) **Various answers.**

Find three adjectives that describe Tommy (they can’t be the same ones as in the character list) and then find three quotes from the text that give you this idea. (AF5) **Various answers if justified.**

What is the main function of a script. Is this the same or different than a story? (AF4) **The main function of a script is to direct the actors how to perform the story. The function of a story is to entertain and/or move the reader.**

Imagine the conversation that happened between Tommy and Sandra after Mr. Emmet has left. Write it here in script format. (AF3/AF4) **Various answers.**

What type of the text is this? (AF4)

Find two features of the text that indicate this. (AF4)

Why did Tommy put his phone on top of the fridge in the first scene? Include a quote from the text to illustrate this. (AF2/AF3)

How many characters are mentioned in this script? List them from start to finish. (AF2)

What do you notice about the text that is in italics and what is its purpose in the text? (AF4)

Compare reading this with reading a story. Is a script harder or easier to read? Does it paint a more or less vivid picture of the scene in your head? Why? (AF5)

What language device is the following sentence, 'How many times have I told you?'? (AF4)

Do you think Tommy deserved to be signed to a youth club? (AF6)

Which genre would you say this play was? Why? (AF3)

What is the name of a person who directs actors on stage, using the stage directions and their own ideas to perform the story? (AF7)

Who could Kerry and Lisa be? (AF2/AF3)

How do we know when a scene has finished? (AF2)

Re-write a section of the script in prose (as a story would be written). Include two sets of stage directions and at least five lines of dialogue. (AF4)

Find three adjectives that describe Tommy (they can't be the same ones as in the character list) and then find three quotes from the text that give you this idea. (AF5)

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Imagine the conversation that happened between Tommy and Sandra after Mr. Emmet has left. Write it here in script format. (AF3/AF4)

The Signing – Vocab 1

Write the meaning of each of these words. (AF2)

reveal _____

down stage left _____

debut _____

up stage left _____

differing _____

pacing _____

arrogantly _____

gestures _____

innovative _____

combined _____

viral sensation _____

intently _____

amiss _____

The Signing – Vocab 1

Write the meaning of each of these words. (AF2)

reveal – to show or tell something.

down stage left – the area at the front of the stage on the audience's right hand side. (see diagram).

up stage right	up stage centre	up stage left
centre stage right	centre stage	centre stage left
down stage right	down stage centre	down stage left

debut – a person's first appearance or performance

up stage left – see diagram

differing – with differences, various

pacing – walk at a steady speed as an expression of anxiety or annoyance

arrogantly – adverbial of arrogant, having an exaggerated sense of one's own importance or abilities

gestures – a movement of part of the body, especially a hand or the head

innovative – new, creative thinking or methods

combined – join or merge

viral sensation – a video that has been shared over social media and has had more than 5 million views

intently – with determination and focus

amiss – not quite right, out of place

Arrogantly is the adverbial of arrogant. Define an adverbial.

Turn the three adjectives that you found to describe Tommy into adverbial clauses.

Using the correct grammar when denoting speech, rewrite the following lines from the text in reported speech.

TOMMY: (moving his head out of the way) Muuum! Get off!

SANDRA: Keep still Tommy – you look a mess.

TOMMY: Mum! (*He finally breaks free of her and picks up his cup of tea.*) He wants to meet us to talk about my football career, not my hair. (*He looks arrogantly into the audience*) my FOOTBALL career.

Contract the following phrases:

Tommy will

Sandra will not

Mr Emett shall not

Rewrite a section of scripted text into prose (how you would read a regular story) you must include a minor, simple and compound sentence, and label each one.

The Signing – SPAG

Arrogantly is the adverbial of arrogant. Define an adverbial.

A word that describes the verb.

Turn the three adjectives that you found to describe Tommy into adverbial clauses.

Various answers depending on adjectives chosen e.g. cheeky – he cheekily looked at his mother.

Using the correct grammar when denoting speech, rewrite the following lines from the text in reported speech.

Tommy moved his head out of the way, ‘Mum! Get off!’

‘Keep still Tommy’, she responded, ‘you look a mess.’.

‘Mum!’ he shouted breaking free of her, ‘He wants to talk about my football career, not my hair. My FOOTBALL career’.

Contract the following phrases:

Tommy will

Sandra will not

Mr Emett shall not

Tommy’ll

Sandra won’t

Mr Emett shan’t

Rewrite a section of the scripted text into prose (how you would read a regular story) you must include a minor, simple and compound sentence, and label each one.

Various answers.