Close reading using stylistic analysis practice focussing on the development of Wesley as a character.

Objectives:

- To practise the kind of close reading needed when analysing a passage from the play in the exam, focusses on stylistic (linguistic and literary) and features of the dialogue.
- To think about the wider development of Wesley as a character, what his function is in the play in terms of its wider themes, and how the changing depiction of him can be linked to the play's wider move from a comedic to a more tragic tone. This is important as you will be asked to contextualise the passage in the exam within the wider context of the play as a whole. This is because you need to show how your passage in the exam fits into the play more widely.



Group 1/ Extract 1 (page 34)

Read the short extract and try and identify six of the following choice of stylistic features in the dialogue, going on the suggest what they suggest about the characterisation of Wesley — how he is feeling, what the is situation he is in, his intentions and motivations, what his values and attitudes as a character might be, how he interacts with the other characters.

Extract (page 34)

Enter WESLEY, dressed as a morris dancer.

WESLEY. Morning, Rooster.

JOHNNY. Wesley.

WESLEY. Morning, Lee. Ginger. Morning, all. Lovely morning. Listen, Rooster, I can't stay but I need a quick word.

JOHNNY. What the fuck's going on, Wesley?

WESLEY. Excuse me?

GINGER. Wesley. What are you wearing, mate?

WESLEY. Oh. Right. This. Right. (*Beat.*) Basically. Don't go there. Basically, it's a long story. First of all. It weren't my idea. Secondly, fuck off, okay? I know. Whatever. So. Yes. Basically. I got roped in.

Choice of possible stylistic features

Stylistic feature	Impact in terms of Wesley's character
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Group 2/ Extract 2 (page 35)

Read the short extract and try and identify **six** of the following choice of stylistic features in the dialogue, going on the suggest what they suggest about the characterisation of Wesley – how he is feeling, what the is situation he is in, what his values and attitudes as a character might be, how he interacts with the other characters.

Extract

WESLEY. Six weeks. But it's not all doom and gloom. I'm the Barley Sword Bearer.

TANYA. Who?

PEA. The what?

WESLEY. The Barley Sword Bearer. They have this big cake with loads of bottles of brandy, Tia Maria, advocaat, whatever they can't shift, all that in it. I cut the cake and distribute it among the womenfolk. It's bollocks, really. Basically it connotes fertility and the hunt.

GINGER. And you're comfortable with this?

WESLEY. It's the brewery's idea. They've got right behind the fair this year. Point-of-sale material. T-shirts. Flintock Men. Special ale.

Choice of possible stylistic features

Stylistic feature	Impact in terms of Wesley's character

Group 3/ Extract 3 (page 42)

Read the short extract and try and identify **six** of the following choice of stylistic features in the dialogue, going on the suggest what they suggest about the characterisation of Wesley – how he is feeling, what the is situation he is in, what his values and attitudes as a character might be, how he interacts with the other characters.

Extract

WESLEY. Nothing. What? Come on, Johnny. You know what.

JOHNNY. I ain't seen her. Phaedra Cox ain't none of my business.

WESLEY. It's just -

JOHNNY. I said I ain't seen her, Wesley.

WESLEY. Good. Good. Well, that's what I thought. (*Beat.*)
Come on, Johnny. You got kids here day and night, Johnny.
Look at all this. They're drinking.

Choice of possible stylistic features

Stylistic feature	Impact in terms of Wesley's character
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Group 4/ Extract 4 (page 44)

Read the short extract and try and identify **six** of the following choice of stylistic features in the dialogue, going on the suggest what they suggest about the characterisation of Wesley – how he is feeling, what the is situation he is in, what his values and attitudes as a character might be, how he interacts with the other characters.

Extract

WESLEY. Wake up, Johnny. What's that on your door?

JOHNNY. Looks like a piece of paper, Wesley.

WESLEY. 'Piece of paper.' 'Piece of paper.'

JOHNNY. Them's Kennet and Avon, love-writing to me. I get love letters every day.

WESLEY. 'Love letter.' 'Piece of paper.'

He reads the notice on the door.

Here. 'Piece of paper.' Listen. (*Reads.*) Kennet and Avon Council Injunction F-99. Salisbury Magistrates' Court rules that aforementioned Mr Byron shall be forthwith and forcibly evicted by Kennet and Avon Council bailiffs in cooperation with South Wiltshire Constabulary at 9 a.m., Saturday 24th April.

Choice of possible stylistic features

Stylistic feature	Impact in terms of Wesley's character

Group 5/ Extract 5 (page 54)

Read the short extract and try and identify **six** of the following choice of stylistic features in the dialogue, going on the suggest what they suggest about the characterisation of Wesley – how he is feeling, what the is situation he is in, what his values and attitudes as a character might be, how he interacts with the other characters.

Extract

ALL. Burn him! Burn him!

Off with his head!

WESLEY. Well, I'd love to oblige but the saloon bar's heaving. So I'll have to love you and leave you. I just popped over to catch young Lee before he flies. Lee, mate, Sue and I are sad that, come tomorrow, you won't be with us, so we all clubbed together and got you this.

He takes out a red T-shirt. It says:

'FARE

WELL

LEE?'

Choice of possible stylistic features

Stylistic feature	Impact in terms of Wesley's character
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Group 6/ Extract 6 (page 55)

Read the short extract and try and identify **six** of the following choice of stylistic features in the dialogue, going on the suggest what they suggest about the characterisation of Wesley – how he is feeling, what the is situation he is in, what his values and attitudes as a character might be, how he interacts with the other characters.

Extract

JOHNNY. Is that it, Wesley? Is that all you wanted?

WESLEY. Yes. What? Yes. That's it. That's all. I just thought, you know... (Beat.) Look, it's just, it's Fair Day and I've gotta do this fucking dancing all day, and I'm knackered, see, from working all week. Just need a little buzz to get the party going. Come on, Johnny. Just get me through this palaver in one fucking piece. Sue's driving me mad. I'm dressed like a cunt. Come on, mate. Cut me some slack.

Pause.

JOHNNY. How much do you want?

WESLEY. Oh, cheers, mate. Just a cheeky gram'll do. Two if you can spare it.

Choice of possible stylistic features

Stylistic feature	Impact in terms of Wesley's character
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Group 7/ Extract 7 (page 92)

Read the short extract and try and identify **six** of the following choice of stylistic features in the dialogue, going on the suggest what they suggest about the characterisation of Wesley – how he is feeling, what the is situation he is in, what his values and attitudes as a character might be, how he interacts with the other characters.

Extract

WESLEY. I come to bed when the last cunt's gone home. I lie there next to her and I can't breathe. 'Did you cash up. Lock up? Wash out the trays? Well done, love. Sleep well, my darling.' How much does that cost, eh? I'm the reason that pub's full five nights a week. Swindon knows that. Last Monday, lunchtime, the regional lays five brochures on the bar. Take your pick. The Plume in Devizes, The Mason's in Salisbury, The Green Man in Oxford, somewhere in Banbury. And somewhere else in somewhere else. All good inns. Take your pick. Who do they bring the fucking brochures to? Sue? Bollocks. Me. They trust me. Sometimes I want to take Sue and drive her off into the middle of nowhere... Stupid... bloody... bitch. I never even touched the bloody cash'n'carry card... (Pause.) Number one, work all your life. Number two, be nice to people...

He lies down and starts crying.

Choice of possible stylistic features

Stylistic feature	Impact in terms of Wesley's character

What conclusions can we draw about the development of Wesley's character from looking closely at his dialogue?
Summarise his character in Act One
Summarise his character in Act Two
Summarise his character in Act Three