



Exploring Senior Cycle Texts

The Banshees of Inisherin

Directed by Martin Mc Donagh

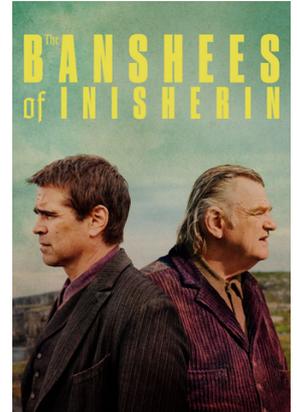


Image courtesy of IMDB

The Banshees of Inisherin, directed by Martin Mc Donagh, is a film included as part of the Prescribed Material for the Leaving Certificate English Examination in 2026, 2027 and 2028. It may be used as part of the Comparative Study at Ordinary Level or Higher Level.

Please note:

- The following tasks might be completed over a series of lessons.
- You may like to adapt and adjust the tasks to suit your context.
- Please note that *The Banshees of Inisherin* covers themes which could be considered sensitive or controversial. You may wish to consult with our READY Framework to support you in your study.



Scan the QR code or click here to access a Getting Started with Guide for this Text

Before You Watch... (Teacher Guidance)

These activities support students in activating prior knowledge, exploring cultural context, and making predictions prior to viewing *The Banshees of Inisherin*.

Adapt as appropriate for your class context.

1. Exploring Context and Expectations

You may wish to use a Think–Pair–Share structure to prompt discussion on students' prior knowledge of the banshee in Irish folklore and the expectations created by the film's title. Encourage consideration of life on a small, remote Irish island in the 1920s, including both challenges and opportunities associated with isolation and community. Discussion may also explore how individuals respond to the breakdown of close friendships and why such experiences can be emotionally significant.

2. Making Predictions

Invite students to predict the type of story suggested by the film's title and setting. Students may compose a short paragraph outlining anticipated tone, themes, or narrative developments prior to viewing.



Activities Based on Film Still and Clip (Teacher Guidance)

The following may be completed in written or oral format,
as individuals or as part of a group activity.

1. Lighting and Colour Analysis

Have pupils examine the use of lighting and colour in the provided stills. Ask them to discuss with a partner how the visual style in each image contributes to the mood and tone of the scenes throughout the film. Have students make notes on their observations.

2. Cinematography and Mise-en-scène

Guide students to analyse each still by focusing on cinematography (camera angle, lighting, framing) and mise-en-scène (characters, expressions, costumes, props, setting). Ask them to consider how these elements communicate mood, emotion, or relationships within the scene. Have students identify the image they believe conveys these elements most effectively and justify their choice.

3. Film Clip Study

Direct students to watch the film clip linked [here](#). Ask them to examine how the filmmaker uses cinematography, sound, character actions, dialogue, and mise-en-scène to create comedic effect and engage the audience. Instruct them to select one or two specific moments from the clip and explain why these moments are funny or effective.



Images courtesy of IMDB



Reflect and Respond (Teacher Guidance)

The following questions may be based on the extract included or form part of your extended study of the novel. Students may like to complete the activities individually or collaboratively.

1. Personal Essay

Instruct students to write a personal response to *The Banshees of Inisherin*. Ask them to describe their thoughts and feelings about the story, characters, and themes, and to explain how the film prompted them to think about friendship, relationships, or human behaviour. Direct students to support their ideas with specific examples from the film.

2. Speech

Guide students to write a speech for their classmates on the topic:

“Some friendships last a lifetime, while others can end suddenly. What do friendships teach us about ourselves and the way we treat others?”

Instruct them to craft a clear, engaging speech that explores this premise, drawing on insights from the film where appropriate.

3. Creative Writing – Diary Entry

Ask students to imagine they are Pádraic, Colm, or another islander. Instruct them to write a diary entry describing the day the friendship breaks, focusing on the character’s inner thoughts, emotions, and reflections. Encourage students to write in a voice and tone that realistically matches their chosen character.

4. Perspective Shift

Organise students into groups and direct them to rewrite a scene from the point of view of a minor character such as Siobhán or Jenny the donkey. Ask them to explore what this character notices or feels that the main characters do not. Students may storyboard their ideas or write a script and act out the reimagined scene.

5. Newspaper Project – Reporting from the Island

Instruct students to imagine they are journalists writing for the local island newspaper about the sudden end of Pádraic and Colm’s friendship. Have them create a front-page article that includes:

- a compelling headline
- a lead paragraph summarising the event
- a detailed body text explaining the story
- quotes or imagined interviews
- clear context for readers
- formal yet engaging newspaper-style language

Ask students to present their front page to the class and explain the editorial choices they made.