

PHIZZICAL

EDUCATION PACK

SHAHID IQBAL KHAN'S OLIVIER AWARD NOMINATED PLAY

10 NIGHTS

*The funny & moving story of a young British Muslim
on a spiritual journey during Ramadan.*



INTRODUCTION

10 Nights is an Olivier award-nominated one-man show included in the Bloomsbury Lit in Colour Play List. It explores themes of faith, identity, redemption, and personal struggle. The story follows Yasser, a British Pakistani man, as he embarks on a ten-night Itikaf in a mosque, grappling with his faith, past mistakes, and internal conflicts.

TARGET GROUPS

Suitable for students aged 12 and above, including secondary school, sixth form, and university levels.

EDUCATIONAL RELEVANCE

The play connects to multiple curriculum areas, including English Literature, Drama, Religious Studies, Sociology, and PSHE (Personal, Social, and Health Education). It provides insights into British Muslim working-class life, making it a valuable resource for understanding contemporary social issues.

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

ENGLISH LITERATURE

THEMES

- Faith, guilt, and redemption.
- Misinterpretation of relationships and male entitlement.
- Addiction as a coping mechanism.
- Class and identity in working-class British Muslim life.

SKILLS DEVELOPED

- Analysing complex characters and shifting emotions.
- Exploring the symbolism and subtext in dialogue.
- Reflecting on societal influences shaping individual choices.

DRAMA AND THEATRE STUDIES

FOCUS AREAS

- The demands of a one-man show: portraying multiple characters and emotions with clarity.
- Quick shifts in thoughts: exploring how the actor transitions between Yasser's introspection, external dialogue, and flashbacks.
- Vocal and physical stamina: techniques to prevent burnout in a demanding solo performance.
- Effective use of warm-ups and breathwork: preparing for the play's emotional and physical intensity.

SKILLS DEVELOPED

- Acting: mastering techniques for character differentiation and rapid transitions.
- Voice work: using breath control and vocal exercises to maintain energy and clarity.
- Direction: understanding how staging, lighting, and sound support the narrative.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

KEY TOPICS

- Exploration of Islamic rituals such as Itikaf and Laylatul Qadr.
- Themes of forgiveness, repentance, and personal growth.
- Tensions between religious practice and modern life.

SKILLS DEVELOPED:

- Critical thinking: exploring how faith can coexist with personal struggles.
- Ethical reasoning: understanding the balance between personal accountability and community support.
- Cultural awareness: appreciating diversity within Muslim practices.

CIVIC AND GENERAL STUDIES

FOCUS AREAS

- Addiction and mental health in cultural contexts.
- Male entitlement and misreading female communication.
- Class dynamics in British working-class communities.

SKILLS DEVELOPED:

- Empathy and understanding: exploring societal challenges.
- Analytical thinking: evaluating how social norms shape behaviour.
- Reflective writing: considering how faith and community influence personal identity.

THEMES IN DEPTH

FAITH AND SELF-DISCOVERY

Yasser's journey through Itikaf is one of spiritual struggle and self-awareness, culminating in moments of redemption and forgiveness.

ADDICTION AND RECOVERY

Yasser's struggle with alcohol, cigarettes, and sheesha is a coping mechanism for grief and guilt. His Itikaf serves as a space for reflection and a turning point in his journey.

GENDER DYNAMICS

The play critiques toxic masculinity and explores male entitlement, particularly through Yasser's misinterpretation of Aneela's gestures.

CLASS AND IDENTITY

Set within a working-class British Muslim community, the play highlights economic struggles, cultural pride, and the tensions between tradition and modernity.



PERFORMANCE DEMANDS

QUICK SHIFTS IN THINKING

CHALLENGE

The actor must rapidly switch between different characters, emotions, and thought processes while maintaining clarity and coherence.

SOLUTION

- Use clear physical and vocal distinctions for each character.
- Anchor each shift with a specific trigger, such as a prop, gesture, or vocal inflection.

SUSTAINING ENERGY AND AVOIDING BURNOUT

CHALLENGE

Solo performances can be vocally and physically demanding, especially with the play's emotional intensity.

SOLUTION

- Warm-up exercises to prepare the body and voice (e.g., diaphragmatic breathing, humming, and stretching).
- Use breathwork techniques to manage emotional peaks and sustain vocal clarity.
- Maintain hydration and rest during breaks to protect the voice.

STAGING AND SUPPORT

- Staging choices (e.g., lighting changes, sound effects) can assist the actor by signalling shifts in tone and character to the audience.
- Strategic pauses can give the actor moments to recalibrate without losing momentum.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES

DISCUSSION PROMPTS

- How do monologues help an audience connect with a character's inner journey?
- What are the unique challenges of performing a one-person play?

RESEARCH TASKS

- Investigate the importance of *Laylatul Qadr* in Islamic tradition.
- Compare *10 Nights* to other solo plays (e.g., *Fleabag, I*, *Daniel Blake*)

POST-SHOW ACTIVITIES

DRAMA WORKSHOP

- Explore how breathwork and physicality can convey emotional shifts.
- Recreate a scene with different staging or sound effects to emphasise key transitions.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS

- Discuss how the actor differentiates characters and navigates Yasser's emotional shifts.
- Write an essay on how the play balances humour and intensity to engage the audience.

CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

ENGLISH LITERATURE

- Analyse how the Quranic verses are woven into Yasser's narrative to deepen the themes of guilt and redemption.
- Compare *10 Nights* to other works exploring faith, such as *The Crucible*.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

- Debate: "Is faith a personal journey, or is it shaped by community expectations?"
- Reflect on how Yasser's journey aligns with Islamic teachings on repentance and self-improvement.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will:

1. Develop analytical skills through discussions on faith, identity, and addiction.
2. Enhance empathy and cultural awareness by exploring Muslim experiences.
3. Build performance skills, including characterisation, breathwork, and physicality.
4. Reflect on societal and personal challenges through creative and critical tasks.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- Creative Writing: Write a monologue from Salah's or Aneela's perspective.
- Research: Explore how working-class British Muslims navigate the balance between tradition and modernity.
- Performance: Experiment with staging choices to enhance the play's emotional impact.



RESOURCES

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- Itikaf: A spiritual retreat in a mosque.
- Laylatul Qadr: The Night of Power, a sacred night in Ramadan.
- Niyah: Intention, a key concept in Islamic worship.

FURTHER READING

- Articles on Islamic rituals and their significance.
- Books on acting techniques for solo performances.
- Monologues for diverse actors

SUMMARY

10 Nights, part of the Bloomsbury Lit in Colour Play List, is a profound exploration of faith, identity, and personal transformation.

It offers students a unique opportunity to engage with complex societal issues through the lens of a deeply personal narrative.

This education pack provides tools for critical discussion, creative exploration, and performance analysis, ensuring that students gain a holistic understanding of the play and its themes.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact: info@phizzical.com

www.phizzical.com