SAMMY JOHNSTONE

Key features · development · paired evidence

THE BIG IDEA

Sammy connects early intimidation to adult criminal violence. His influence gives the idea of a role model a darker form than Edward's friendship.

FOLLOW THE CHARACTER

1 Models older-boy power › **2** Makes aggression ordinary › **3** Draws Mickey into crime › **4** Extends childhood danger into adulthood

TAKING SWEETS, MINIMISING ARMED VIOLENCE

"Give us a sweet"

Sammy, Act 1: interrupting the boys after their blood-brother pact

PAIRED WITH

"They're just frighteners"

Sammy, Act 2: persuading Mickey to help with the robbery

METHOD → MEANING

The early imperative establishes an older brother who demands and takes. The later minimising phrase makes real guns sound harmless, easing Mickey towards criminal involvement. The progression links childhood intimidation to dangerous adult persuasion without claiming that youthful aggression makes violence inevitable.

TRACE THE CHARACTER THROUGH THE DRAMA

An older child's status

Mickey watches an older brother who claims authority through aggression. Performance can show both imitation and uncertainty.

Games become danger

Childhood threats initially seem reversible. The robbery turns a pattern of intimidation towards actual weapons and irreversible harm.

Persuading Mickey

Lack of work makes criminal money attractive, but coercion and minimisation also matter. Class conditions increase vulnerability without making criminality inevitable.

PUSH THE ARGUMENT

Class explains vulnerability and opportunity; it does not make criminality an inherent working-class trait. Keep that distinction explicit.

COVER THE SHEET. CAN YOU EXPLAIN…?

How does Russell change the audience's response to childhood games when violence becomes real?