**Dramaturge Information**

**How this Information Sheet Works**

This sheet is organized based on ideas and concepts at hand and the words in the script. The concepts are in **black, bolded, underlined font.** The vital information from each section is in red, and the general body of research I found is in blue beneath that.

For the words, the word itself is in **bold**, and the people who say it are in plain black. If the word is vitally important, it’s in **red bold.**

I’m a massive nerd, so I did a lot of research, because a.) I enjoy research, and b.) maybe someone will be as nerdy as I am, and want to read all of this, and maybe it will aid to their overall understanding of the play. This is why the essential stuff (the Need to Knows) are in bright red. There are entire sections of background that are in blue. That means that they’re not *entirely* necessary.

**Concepts and Ideas**

**Background on the Play**

Need to Knows: This is a show written because of the theatre for theatre people. Real estate is a common theme throughout.

“Noises off” is a British stage term meaning sounds coming from offstage that are intended to be heard by the audience. The term has extended to mean intrusive noises coming from backstage, as fits the show. The term Nothing On means basically nothing, but could be taken as a response to the term “Noises Off,” as if it were a call and response, though it is not.

***Noises Off*** is a 1982 play by the English playwright [Michael Frayn](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Frayn). The idea for it came in 1970, when Frayn was watching from the wings a performance of [*The Two of Us*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Two_of_Us_(play)). He said, "It was funnier from behind than in front, and I thought that one day I must write a farce from behind.” At the request of his associate, [Michael Codron](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Codron), Frayn expanded this into what would become *Noises Off*. Though the play was written in 1982, and the script specifies that it is modernized thoughout, it is commonly set in other eras, anywhere from the sixties to today.

The playwright, Michael Frayn, shows time and time again in the script that he is a massive nerd, and/or that Robin Housemonger, the fictional author of *Nothing On* is. There are numerous real estate jokes and references throughout the whole script, including in the stage directions and character descriptions. Just the name of the fictional author says enough—the word Housemonger is a made up, but the suffix –monger means “seller”. So the name of Robin Housemonger basically means Robin the Real Estate Agent. Interestingly enough, the robin bird has some interesting nesting habits to go along with the name. Birds migrate from season to season, and Robins specifically return to the same nests every year, and even build new nests on top of old ones. This could be seen in parallel to the Brents’ use of their home, as it’s been in the family for generations, and people return to the country home time after time, and it has been fully modernized throughout. So the name of the fictional playwright says a lot about the fictional “16th century posset mill.”

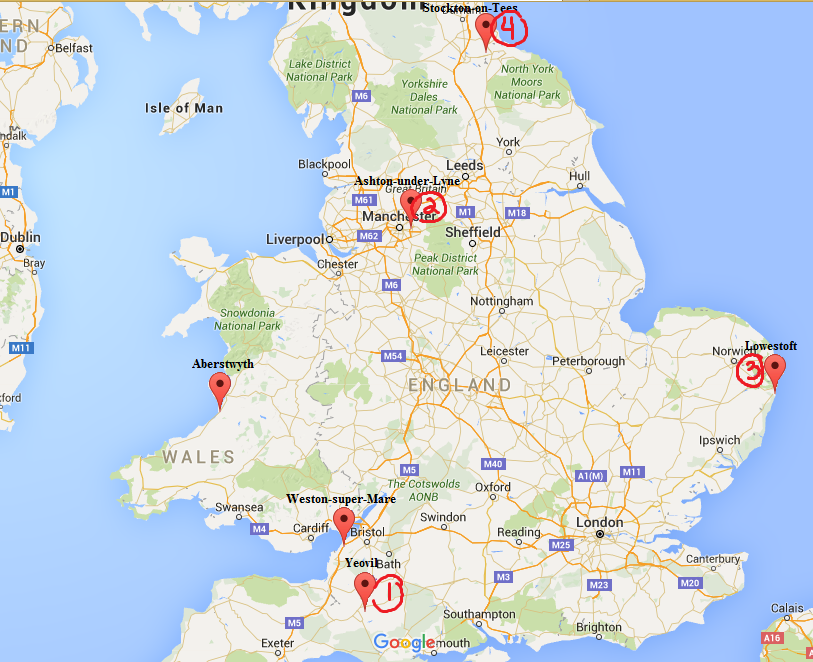
FUN FACT: Posset mills aren’t real, but posset is was originally a popular British hot drink made of milk curdled with wine or ale, often spiced, which was often used as a remedy. In the 16th century the drink evolved into a cream, sugar and citrus-based confection, which is still consumed today as a cold set dessert similar to syllabub. And a mill is a a building fitted with machinery for a manufacturing process. Therefore, the house is a 16th century cream manufacturing plant.

**Geography of England**

Need to Knows: With the show, the characters travel a total of about 16 and a half hours. Spain is 18 hours away from England. YOH-ville, A-ber-IST-with, but the “th” is kind of weird. It’s not crisp, it’s like the th in “the” not the th in “with.” Basingstoke is BASE-ing-stoke. There’s a sharp “s.”

Weston Super Mare, Yeovil, Ashton-under-Lyne, Aberstwyth, Stockton-on-Tees, and Wales are all listed on this map. The only city mentioned in the play that is not on this map is Peebles, where Dotty and Selsdon used to do the weekly rep. It’s all the way up in Scotland. It’s about 400 miles away, around an 8 hour drive.

Sardinia is briefly mentioned in act three, it’s an island in the Mediterranean where sardines are very common, and the island is thought to be the place where sardines got their name in the first place.

In Act One they start out in the fictional Grand Theatre in the real town of Weston-super-Mare. According to Garry’s rant in act one, they go to Yeovil (“YOH”-ville) the week after, and are then in Ashton-on-Lyne (LINE) for Act Two. Somewhere in the middle of acts two and three, they go to Old fishmarket Theatre Loestoft, as is indicated by Tim’s slip of the tongue at the top of act 3, and act three takes place twelve weeks after act one begins in Stockton-onTees

The total travel time is 16 and a half hours, which is the equivalent of driving up to Manhattan from Orlando.

Spain is about an 18 hour drive away from England, which is about the distance from Orlando to Albany.

The fictional house is described as being 25 miles outside of London, and the real Basingstoke HM Revenue office is anywhere from an hour to hour and a half drive, depending on which direction the 25 miles are in.

Here’s a map of England, to help you visualize just how far this tour is travelling.

**Etymology of the Characters**

Need to Knows: Flavia is either FLAH-vee-uh, or FLAY-vee-uh. The pronunciation should be kept consistent throughout the show.

“Mowbray” is actually pronounced “MOH-bree”

“Lejeune” is “LUH-joon” LEH-joon is not technically wrong, however the word is French, and they tend not to keep that vowel open.

Michael Frays one again demonstrates his nerdiness in the etymology of a lot of his characters.

Flavia is an [Ancient Roman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Roman) name meaning “blonde” from the [Latin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latin) word “flavus”, meaning “golden, blonde”. The name is most commonly used in [Italy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italy), [Romania](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romania), [Brazil](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brazil) and in [Spanish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spanish_language)-speaking countries. The name is pronounced either FLAH-vee-uh or FLAY-vee-uh.

The origins of the name Belinda are semi unknown, but the bel is thought to come from the French “belle,” and the linda is thought to come from either the German “lind,” as in “serpent” or “dragon,” but also “linde” as in “soft” or “tender.”

Mowbray has ties to Norman French locational origins, but was a name of nobility in England, belonging to friends of William the Conquerer, back in 1066. The name translates as literally as 'the muddy place on the hill', a humble beginning for an aristocratic surname. It is pronounced MOH-bree.

Ashton, Brooke’s last name, is English, and it comes from a word meaning “Ash tree town.” Brooke comes from the surname Brook, meaning “one who lives near a brook,” so her name means “One who lives near a brook in an ash tree town,” which is a fair description of her mental state most of the time.

Garry’s name is a pretentious spelling of Gary, which comes from the German name for a spear. The name Lejeune was taken to Germany by Huguenot refugees. It is often translated as “young.” Take that as you will.

Poppy’s first name comes from the name of the red flower the poppy. Her last name comes from two different last names, Norton and Taylor. Norton comes from the English meaning “north town,” and Taylor comes from the actual word tailor, the name indicating that the person was a tailor. Her last name means “A tailor from a northern town.”

Frederick is the English form of a German name meaning “peaceful ruler,” and his last name Fellowes isn’t actually a name, but a word, meaning “a person of equal rank, position or background.” Freddie’s name basically means “a peaceful ruler who views his subjects as peers.”

Dotty is short for Dorothy, which originates from the name Dorothea, the feminine version of a latin name meaning “a gift from god.” Her surname comes from a town of the same name. Essentially her name means “A gift from god originating from Otley.”

Lloyd comes from the welsh word for “grey,” and though the origins of the last name Dallas are semi mysterious, the name potentially comes from a word meaning “dwelling by the meadow,” which is essentially what Lloyd does during most of act one.

Tim’s name comes from Timothy, which comes from a word meaning “glory and honor to God,” and his last name Allgood was originally spelled Algod, furthering the theme that Lloyd is God. Furthermore, the name could point to the idea that he keeps tripping, and he’s sleep deprived, but he’s “all good.”

**Page 11 Decoded, along with character descriptions**

Basically, the house is old, but renovated, Brooke is young and hot, and the Burgular is really cool as a person, but is not entirely all there, and is kind of out of date.

On page 11, a lot of real estate terms are used to describe the set of the play Nothing On, and later in the script, similar real estate terms are used to describe the characters.

The opening page describes the set as a delightful sixteenth century “posset mill.”This isn’t actually a real estate term, though it is made to sound quaint but homely. In the fake program in the back, it’s described as such:

*Posset* (milk curdled with ale or vinegar) was one of the first foods to be processed by industrial methods. In the 16th century, virtually every villager had its posset-mill, though only few have survived. Theit functioning was based on the common observation that milk tends to curdle more readily on thundery summer days. In a posset-mill, production was maintained throughout the year by allowing the milk to run into a heated curdling chamber where a flow of incoming ale or vinegar was ingeniously harnessed to operate a kind of simple theatrical thundersheet. The product was then packed in small “yoggy pots,” made fromm the scrota of wild yogs.”

Though it is true that posset is a type of curdled milk, I was completely unable to verify the rest of the information, so it is most likely completely ficticious. Further, based on this description, a posset mill as described here would not have two bathrooms a bedroom an airing cupboard and a service flat at all—its purpose was making posset, not housing people! The house is probably intended for theatrical purposes to have no meaning behind it, deliberately frivolous and pretentious, as Roger is a pretentious person.

Everything else in the description is very self explanatory. It simply describes what rooms there are in the house.

In Vicky’s character description she id described as “A desirable property in her early twenties, well built and beautifully maintained throughout,” which essentially means she’s attractice, has a nice body, and is more than capable of applying her hair and makeup well. Selsdon is described as having “great character, but is in need of extensive repair and modernization.” In real estate modernization refers to technology, and in this case, they’re saying selsdon is out of the times, and slow.

**The God theme throughout the whole thing Lloyd= God**

Need to Know: Lloyd holds himself in supreme command of all the actors and techs and everyone. The actors and techs kind of agree that he is superior and holy, but Lloyd is a lying adulterer who really doesn’t have his crap together.

This theme is carried out in subtle places, including the etymology of Tim’s name—Timothy is a name meaning honor and glory to God, and his last name Allgood was originally spelled Algod.

The above is the basic what, and this is the why, and the how. First of all, Lloyd talks about himself in third person and calls himself God, and makes many allusions to the bible. Furthermore, in Act One, Gary talks about going “God knows where, then God knows where else.” This is mainly used as an ironic comedy device, as Lloyd curses like a sailor, takes substantial ammounts of valium, is doing two girls at once, and during acts 2 and three, has no clue what in the world to do to make things work out alright for the show. He holds himself in such a godly regard in the sense that he has control over everyone, he created the “world” show.

**Pants vs Trousers**

DO NOT call pants pants when you’re being English. In England, trousers are pants, and pants are underwear.

**Cool Science Stuff!**

**WHAT 48 HOURS OF SLEEP DEPRIVATION DOES TO THE BODY, A TIMELINE**

A timeline of the progression of the symptoms:

**14 hours:**Our brains are telling us to turn the lights out. We may yawn a lot, begin to develop headaches and our eyes may become red, itchy and feel heavy.

**16 hours:** We start to feel light-headed and may have trouble keeping our eyes open. We find our arms to be heavy to lift by themselves and the headaches begin to get more and more intense.  
**20 hours:**20 hours awake is when our body starts going into protection mode. Our brain can't

roperly sort and staple all the day's events because it is too busy powering our alertness, reactions, and various other things like what we say, what we do and mechanical processes like blinking and breathing consciously. This causes the headaches to worsen as a way of our brain telling us to get to sleep as soon as possible.

**26 hours:**Anything over and above 26 hours without sleep is simply quite dangerous for you. You may begin to lose your co-ordination and find it hard to keep your balance, you develop short-term memory loss and have trouble recalling things you recently did and said, and you may start to hallucinate. When this starts happening, it’s the signal to sleep straight away.

**30 hours:**At 30 hours we begin to lose our sense of smell and touch. This is because the receptors in our hands and noses aren't functioning properly due to the lack of rest we have recieved. Your brain is still trying to do a million things at once, so partially losing sight or your sense of hearing after 30 hours awake is not uncommon.

**40 hours:**After 40 hours awake our body goes into fight or flight. It releases adrenaline as a way of not giving us a thrill, but to stay awake. Our body can no longer rely on the accumulated 'rest' it's recieved, as it hasn't recieved any for nearly two days straight. Hallucinations become more vivid and microsleeps (involuntary 5-10 mins of deep sleep) may occur.

**48 hours:**After 48 hours (2 full days of being awake) our brain starts to get deprived of its own energy. Not food or water energy, but mental energy to carry out its natural processes. This is why after 48 hours we may lose control of our arms, may not be able to walk at all, and may have involuntary spasms that could include all or parts of the body. Hallucinations become very lifelike at this point and we begin to slur our talking as our tongue loses energy and is not being powered by the brain anymore.

**THE PROCESS OF GETTING AND APPPLYING CONTACT LENSES, AND WHAT THEY ARE LIKE, AND WHAT HAPPENS WHEN SOMETHING GETS BEHIND THEM**

First of all, getting contact lenses is hassle enough. You have to take an additional eye exam to be fitted for a contact perscrption, then you get your contacts, and have to be trained on how to use them, and how to clean them et cetra.

To put the contacts in you, after making sure your hands are clean, put the lens on your index finger, and use the other hand to pull your eye open, put it in, kind of low on the eye. You then blink a few times in order for the lens to center itself onto your eye.

Doing this improperly could result in eye infections. Also, getting something under a contact lens can potentially scratch your cornea, and if your cornea becomes scratched, you can’t wear contact lenses until it heals.

As for the vision problems that would require the contact lenses, the most common vision problems are refractive errors, which basically means that due to the shape of a person’s eye, light doesn’t get focused directly in the retina of the eye. The most common are near and far sightedness; near-sightedness being only able to see up close, and far-sightedness being only able to see distances. These are corrected quite easily with glasses or contact lenses.

There’s also astigmatism, which is when the pupil of the eye is in more of an oval shape instead of a perfect circle. (You wouldn’t be able to tell this without equipment, it’s not visible to the human eye.) Astigmatisms differ depending on the person, but they typically cause blurry vision, eye strain, and headaches. Sometimes a person with an astigmatism may not be able to wear contacts, but since Brooke does, it can be assumed that she doesn’t have it that bad.

The other main common eye problem is presbyopia, which is essentially your corneas becoming less flexible, and not being able to focus and re-focus your eyes as quickly as you should be able to. Almost everyone gets this condition through the natural process of aging, but some people have it worse than others, typically people with other eye problems. There is no actual cure for this, but treatments include eye surgery and getting either glasses or contact lenses.

**THE TYPES OF FEARS**

In the show, Lloyd talks about Philip having a fear of letting go of groceries, and the actors on stage chime in about why he would be afraid. So of course I did some research.

There are a few primary types of fears—there are genetic fears, experiential fears, and phobias. To clarify- Phobias and fears are NOT the same thing. Say you’re walking alone at night and a dog bites you. You’re scared in that moment, but you don’t necessarily have a permanent fear of dogs. If that dog were chained up, you wouldn’t be afraid of it. There’s a phrase, and I forgot who said it, but the phrase essentially goes like this: “Most fears are really just common sense with some emotion behind them.”

Genetic fears come from the fears of our ancestors, and they really aren’t so much genetic as fears passed down by word of mouth, like mother like daughter and the likes. Genetic fears include the fear of the dark, and some large animals.

Experiential fears are fears that you develop due to experiences you have in your lifetime. For example, if you were in a housefire, and were injured, you would probably develop a fear of fire after that, because your brain tells you “That hurt you before! Stay away!”

Phobias are irrational fears. They typically have no actual cause, and are often viewed by society as being frivolous. A great example of a phobia is arachnophobia. It’s the fear of spiders. Most people who have arachnophobia have never actually been bitten by a spider, and they most likely didn’t develop that fear from any type of incident, and probably weren’t taught to fear spiders by their parents.

**THE MEDICAL SCIENCE OF HEMOPHOBIA AND DIZZINESS AND FAINTING AT THE SIGHT OF BLOOD AND HOW NOSEBLEEDS WORK**

The fear of blood, called hemophobia is often caused by direct or vicarious trauma in childhood or adolescence. Though some have suggested a possible genetic link, a study of twins suggests that social learning and traumatic events, rather than genetics, is of greater significance. Most people have a fear of their own blood, but a lot of people do fear all types of blood, even pictures and videos with blood in them.

Some sufferers of hemophobia experience a typical phobic reaction characterized by an increase in blood pressure and heart rate. Other sufferers experience an atypical phobic reaction characterized by a decrease in blood pressure and heart rate, causing paleness and weakness. They may even faint (which is called vasovagal syncope). If this happens, the best course of action is usually to get that person calmed down enough for their blood pressure to get back to where it should be, and a good indicator that they’re okay is whether or not the color has returned to their face, and they can walk without feeling dizzy.

There was no commonly-recognized phobia of violence, so Freddy’s “Thing about violence” is just a thing about violence.

**HOW WHISKEY HELPS NERVOUS EXHAUSTION—OR DOES IT??**

It doesn’t. Alcohol can *cause* nervous exhaustion. Lloyd is ignorant.

“The words, my love, am I getting some of them right?”

THE WORDS

\*DISCLAIMER\* If you know what every single one of these words means, FANTASTIC. I am not including these words because I think you’re all a bunch of incompetent morons, I’m including them because maybe someone won’t be a hundred percent clear on exactly what something means.

**RECURRING WORDS**

**Letting the house,** reappearing throughout the script, noun  
Renting the house to someone for longer term use

**House Agents** reappearing throughout the script, noun  
British term for real estate agents

**Technical Rehearsal vs. Dress rehearsal** Mentioned in like all of act one.  
Technical rehearsals are rehearsals that are basically a run-through of the entire show, with the actors, for purposes of working on everything and polishing it. Some technical rehearsals are only cue-to-cue. Dress rehearsals are full run throughs of the show, run as if it were opening night, for purposes of making sure everything is already polished. Technical rehearsals are typically more informal, and if it’s a cue-to-cue there can be a lot of sitting around and waiting.

**Words**, said on just about every page I act one, noun,

What we call lines

**Weston Super Mare**

A town in southern England. It’s not a major theatre town, but there are a few live theatre venues. Lloyd’s comment about how bashing the manager in the head with the vase will finish off live theatre in Weston-super-Mare is probably accurate because there isn’t all that much live theatre there.

**Bastard**, page 15 said by Garry in reference to Lloyd, noun

An unpleasant or despicable person. In America, calling someone a bastard is more of an insult, whereas in Britain, it’s almost more of a factual term, and the connotations differ depending on the situation. Calling someone an unlucky bastard in America has a different meaning than calling someone an unlucky bastard in Britain.

**ACT ONE**

Page 16

**Are you there**, said by Lloyd to Brooke

In this instance, meaning “Are you *all* there,” as in being mentally aware of the situation

**must have cost a bomb,** said by Vicky, idiom

it must have been very expensive.

**Arab Sheikh, Oil,** said by Roger, mentioned throughout

The term “sheikh” literally means a man of vast power, and nobility, and it is used strictly for the royal families of the Middle East. The title carries the meaning leader, [elder](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elder_(administrative_title)), or [noble](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nobility), especially in the [Arabian Peninsula](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arabian_Peninsula) within the [Tribes of Arabia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tribes_of_Arabia), where *shaikh* became a traditional title of a [Bedouin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bedouin) tribal leader in recent centuries. The Sheikh probably became a Sheikh due to the wealth he gained from oil. A shiek in an Arab country would be treated like royalty.

Page 17

**Self-contained service flat,**

a self contained service flat is a separate living quarters for the service, which is Mrs. Clackett. It would have its own kitchen and bathroom, but probably not much else, as Mrs Clackett “goes home at one o’ clock on Wednesdays” and is only there for “the royal whats-it-called on the telly.”

**the usual offices**

This term refers to bathrooms, and some theorize that the term came about because sometimes people refer to a toilet seat as “the oval office.”

**the royal, you know, with the hats covered in fruit,**

I could not figure out what this means. I think it’s fictional.

Page 18

**showing a prospective tenant over the house,**

This means that they’re showing the house to someone thinking of renting it, not buying it.

**WC suite**

W. C. Stands for water closet, a room containing a flush toilet, and a WC Suite is a bathroom with a shower.

Page 19

**Grilled turbot** off the bone, said by Lloyd

A large English fish.

Page 20

**she’s been in the family for generations**

In Britain it is not that uncommon that a housekeeper be tied to the house and not the family they are working for.

Page 21,

**we’ll enjoy having you, won’t we?**

This is a double entendre that only makes sense if you catch the British term *having you.* In Britain, having someone basically has the same meaning and connotation as f\*\*\*ing someone. When Mrs. Clackett says “and we’ll enjoy having you, won’t we?” she’s indicating that she knows what they’re getting up to and that she doesn’t care, and maybe even that she’ll join them later.

**Black sheets,** said by Vicky, reappearing throughout

Black sheets are thought to “be sexy” and “attract the ladies,” but more importantly, black sheets are less likely to stain.

**Airing cupboard,** said by Roger, mentioned throughout

A closet containing some type of heater. It’s called an airing cupboard because it is a cupboard (closet) for the airing (air heating/cooling system throughout the house).

Page 23

**be fruitful and multiply,** said by Lloyd

An allusion to a Bible verse that originally meant “have a nice life and have kids.”

**he had six days of course, we only have six hours**

In the Judeo-Christian Bible, God made the world in six days, and took the seventh day, the Sabbath day as a day of rest. Lloyd is alluding to these verses, and implying that putting on the show is analogous to creating the world. Lloyd compares himself to God for most of the show.

**Stockton-on-Tees,** said by Dotty, mentioned throughout

A town in northern England, it is not necessarily a “theatre town” in the sense that West End and Broadway are considered theatre towns (they aren’t, but that’s not the point), but there are a fair amount of theatres there.

**Valium,** said by Lloyd

Valium (a.k.a. Diazepam) is a drug used to treat anxiety issues, alcohol withdrawal, or muscle spasms by affecting off-balance chemicals in the brain. Side effects typically include drowsiness, muscle weakness, or loss of coordination. Possible side effects include confusion, hallucinations, unusual thoughts or behavior, unusual risk-taking behavior, decreased inhibitions, no fear of danger, depressed mood, hyperactivity, agitation, aggression, hostility, weak or shallow breathing, a feeling like you might pass out, muscle twitching or tremors. Valium appears to be used in this case to calm Lloyd down, and keep him sane, so it’s safe to say that he took the valium for anxiety, and since he is glad to have taken it, he probably experienced the “no fear of danger” side affect.

Page 25

**rehearsal room**

Rehearsal rooms are commonly used in professional productions as the set is being built. The one described in the show has an open setting, and you can see everyone, much like our rehearsals in the Lobby for the past few days.

Page 26

**lavatories,** said by Dotty

bathrooms

**scenery dock,** said by Dotty

where the set was built

**prop room,** said by Dotty

where the props are stored

**paint store,** said by Dotty

Where any paint used on the set or set dressings or backdrops is kept

**Stalls,** said by stage directions, Selsden Dotty and Lloyd, reoccurring throughout

The lower private balcony seats.

Page 27

**How Killing** said by Selsdon, slang

Meaning “How funny”

**Post Prandial Snooze** said by Selsdon

Post prandial means after lunch, so Seldson wants a post-lunch nap

Page 28

**the company’s VAT,** mentioned by Lloyd

VAT stands fot Value Added Tax. So there’s the VAT you, as a businessperson, charge your customers (“output tax”), and there’s the VAT you get charged when you consume (“input tax”). If the amount of the output tax is more than the amount of the input tax, then you send the difference to HM Revenue and Custums. (HM stands for His/Her Majesty’s. This is why British boats start with HMS.)

Page 30

**tremulously,** said by Lloyd

shakingly

**irrevocably,** said by Lloyd

done in such a way that it cannot be undone pronounced EER-EHv-Oh-CUB-lee, with the emphasis on EHV, not OH. People will commonly say the word as if it were “ir-REE-voh-cably,” and this is not technically incorrect, but it is a much more uncommon way of saying the word, and thus people believe it to be wrong.

Page 31,

**Inland Revenue,** said by Philip, but reappearing everywhere.

HMRC, His/Her Majesty;s Revenue and Customs. This is in short the IRS of England. Everyone hates them because they involve the two things people hate the most—math, and having to give someone else your money.

**aired the beds,** said by Mrs Clackett and Flavia, reappearing throughout

airing the bed is a process intended to “freshen up” a bed that hasn’t been used in a while, and taking out the “staleness” of the sheets.

Page 32,

**Tax exile,** said by Philip, reappearing throughout.

A person with a large amount of income who choses to love in a country with low income tax rates

Page 33

**holidays,** said by Mrs, Clackett

meaning vacation

**pigeonhole,** said by Mrs. Clackett and Philip, reappearing throughout

a small compartment where letters and messages can be left to be read/dealt with later

Page 34

**prosecuted for incitement** said by Selsdon, reappearing throughout

to be put in jail for committing the illegal act of provoking illegal behavior

Page 37

**its like a Sunday school outing,** said by Mrs. Clackett

A Sunday school outing is a trip taken by a Sunday school class, typically in order to better connect with God.

Page 38

**final notice, steps will be taken, distraint, proceedings in court,**

The contents of this letter indicate that Inland Revenue has numerous times told the Brents that they need up pay up on their income tax. The steps that will be taken are the distraint (the seizing of someone’s personal property in order to obtain payment needed) and the proceedings in court, which is essentially a threat to put the Brents in jail for tax evasion. Philip opened the Income Tax letter, and then tries to glue it shut because if the letter was never opened, he can use that to further his claim of resident abroad—he doesn’t live there, and therefore doesn’t receive mail there.

Page 39

**Tarty** said by Flavia, reoccurring throughout, adjective

An informal term for dressing provocatively and in poor taste. The American equivalent would be “slutty.”

Page 44

**Goose pimples,** said by Vicky, reappearing throughout

Goosebumps.

**oil-fired central heating** said by Roger

Heating oil is normally used in a ‘wet’ heating system where an oil-fired boiler heats water, which provides central heating via radiators and hot water through the taps in the home. The boiler is most likely in the airing cupboard of the house, as airing cupboard are meant to hold furnaces, and hot water heaters, and the likes.

Page 47

**Don’t play the fool** said by Flavia

Meaning “don’t pretend to be an idiot,” play being the theatrical definition, as in playing a role.

Page 48

**method for breaking in,**

the most common methods of breaking into houses are lock picking, and breaking through a glass window or door so as to access the handle. As the door doesn’t have a window, Selsdon opts for the window option.

**bullion vaults,** said by Selsdon, reoccurring throughout

buillion is a term for gold or silver, so a bullion vault is a vault that has beefed up security so as to protect the gold or silver

**breaking into paper bags,** said by Selsdon, reoccurring throughout

he’s making a joke, because paper bags break so easily.

**Myra Hess playing through the air raids,** said by Lloyd, reoccurring

Myra Hess was a famous British pianist, most famous for her adaptations of classic Mozart and Beethoven pieces. She was also famous for playing for soldiers during the Second World War, when due to concert halls being blocked off, she arranged lunchtime parties in order to play music for the troops.

Page 50

**TV/microwave oven,** said by Selsdon, reoccurring throughout

Televisions made from the 60s to the early 2000s had a back on them and plastic covering that made them look like microwave ovens.

**paranormal phenomena,** said by Roger, reoccurring throughout

abnormal occurrences found by empirical evidence; meaning a person didn’t just say they saw a ghost, a scientist gathered a bunch of data on this ghost and found nothing.

**dematerialized,** said by Roger

to vanish out of thin air.

Page 52

**Human beings to terrify,**

This could be a reference to his bankrobbing days, as one of the most common ways to rob a bank is to hold the patrons hostage as a partner gets money from the teller or manager, terrifying everyone to the point of inaction in order to make a clean getaway.

Page 53

**Marbella,** said by Philip

A town in spain, presumably the one in which Philip and Flavia are “resident abroad.”

Page 54

**999** said by Roger, reoccurring throughout

British 911 works the same way.

****Page 56

**china tea service,** said by Flavia

fine porcelean china tea set (see picture)

**his wife and dependents**

his wife, who is financially bound to him, and dependents, who are financially dependent on him. These things get taken into account when Inland Revenue decides how much money to take away from people.

Page 57

**gold taps,** said by Selsden, reoccurring throughout

The handles on a faucet

Page 60

**Ballcocks** said by Selsden

a valve that automatically fills a tank after liquid has been drawn from it. Used, for example, in a flush toilet, a ballcock has a float on the end of a pivoting arm that opens the valve when the arm drops.

**smalls,** said by Mrs. Clackett

British term for underwear

Page 62

**Potentates** said by Lloyd

A monarch or ruler, especially one with absolute power

Page 64

**tea break** said by Lloyd

a break for the purpose of drinking tea, especially herbal tea with stress-inhibiting qualities.

Page 65

**Wanly** said by stage directions, Poppy “smiles wanly”

In a pale manner

**ACT TWO**

Page 69,

**tannoy,** said by stage directions, reoccurring throughout

the intercom system in a theatre that goes through to the dressing room and other backstage areas

Page 70

**Beginners,**

The call to places for people who appear first in the show (For example, in Mary Poppins, this would have included Bert and the Banks family).

Page 71

**First house, second house,** said by Poppy and Tim, reoccurring throughout act two

Announcements made to let the audience know when to take their seats

Page 72

**sucking boiled sweets,** said by Lloyd

boiled sweets are hard candy, like lollipops and Jolly Ranchers. Boiled sweets in this case could be a sarcastic reference to cough drops.

**Maderia,** said by Lloyd

Maderia is a Portuguese archipelago (set of islands), so the Duke of Clarence is most likely filming a tourist commercial, encouraging people to come and spend money there.

**nervous exhaustion,** said by Lloyd

AKA Neurasthenia, the weakness of nerves in the body due to anxiety and sleep deprivation.

*THERE’S AN ERROR ON THE SCRIPT—It should read LAID up, the term late up has no meaning that I could find.*

Page 74,

**farsical,** said by Tim

meaning “of the farce”

**digs,** said by Freddie

An actor’s temporary lodgings during the run of a show in a certain location.

Page 76

**Oxfam,** said by Tim, reoccurring throughout act two

An international NGO that works to decrease poverty and improve quality of life of people in poverty.

Page 78

**Toffees,** said by Lloyd, reoccurring throughout act two

Meaning sweets, candies

Page 80

**Halfwit** said by Frederick, reoccurring throughout act two

Meaning a person with only half intelligence; a foolish or stupid person

Page 82

**OAPs** said by Lloyd and Tim

Old Age Pensioners—they get reduced ticket prices for almost anything, busses, trains, theatres, etc.

Page 83

**You two could have Freddie’s old brain!** Said by Lloyd

half each could refer to medically having half each, meaning one side would be emotional and artsy and the other get crap done and be logical, which, in Lloyd’s view is an improvement.

Page 88

**Ministrations** said by stage directions

Provisions of assistance or care

Page 92

**earnest colloquy** said by Lloyd

an honest conversation

Page 103

**Indefinitely** said by Lloyd

Without a definitive end

Page 106

**Keels** said by stage directions

To turn over on one’s side

Page 113

**fire bucket,** said by stage directions, reoccurring throughout

a bucket that can be filled with water in order to put out a fire.

For more information: http://www.pcpa.org/studyguide/noisesoff.html