Lesson focus: To examine the role of the 'low' comedy in the play.

Opening exercise: Make a list of as many different types of comedy as you can.
- The class could give a modern example of each kind
  (This website gives a useful checklist: www.buzzle.com/articles/types-of-comedy.html)
- Which types are most popular in the group?
  - Do any seem old-fashioned?
- What stock characters or situations are there?
  (Characterisation in Dr Faustus > Comic characters Robin, Rafe and Vintner > Stock characters and the Elizabethan theatre)
  - Students could be referred to the Commedia dell'arte tradition.

Textual examination: Look through the comic scenes (scenes 2, 4, 6, 8, 9B):
- Find examples of the types of comedy listed in the Opening Exercise
- Draw up three columns (either on paper, individually, or together on the board)
  - One column briefly describes the comic event or comment
  - The second gives scene and line references
  - The third lists the type of comedy used
  (Doctor Faustus - Synopsis and commentary > appropriate scenes)

Discussion ideas: Distribute the examples found in scenes 2, 4, 6, 8, 9B around the group:
- Students discuss the possible purpose of each use of comedy
- They could choose from this list (some examples may cover more than one of these suggestions, and students might find other possible reasons):
  - Comic relief
  - To show time passing
  - To echo key themes (which ones? See The themes of Doctor Faustus)
  - To parallel Faustus himself
  - To add to the criticism of the Roman Catholic church.
- What would the play lose without these scenes (which some critics have claimed were not written by Marlowe)?
  (Structure of Doctor Faustus > Structure by act and scene > structural contrasts)

Recreative task: Choose one of the comic scenes (perhaps these could be shared around the class, or all do the same one and compare approaches)
- Create a set of director's notes which show how the comedy could be brought out. This could include:
  - A storyboard
  - Suggestions about which famous actors could play the roles
- Students could consider relocating the play to a different time or place in order to help bring out the humour
  - Would this work in the serious parts of the play, too?
  (The context of Doctor Faustus > The theatrical context)

Critical task: Many critics have found the play to be uneven in quality. Do you consider that removing the comic scenes would improve the overall quality of the text?
(Critical approaches to Doctor Faustus > The contemporary critical reception of Doctor Faustus)
(Doctor Faustus: Approaching essays and exams > Sample questions on Doctor Faustus no.8.)

Extension task: Look at a Shakespeare play that you know well
- How does Shakespeare use comedy in this text?
- Does he employ any of Marlowe's comic devices and / or intentions?
- Where do you consider Shakespeare is more, or less, successful?
Lesson focus: To examine how well the play fits into the Gothic genre.

Opening exercise: If possible, show the opening few minutes of the film *The Seventh Seal* by Ingmar Bergman
- Discuss the atmosphere created and the idea of a deal with the devil
  - If you cannot obtain the film, find the opening on YouTube, or simply outline the set-up (see http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0050976/)

Textual examination: Give out copies of Worksheet Bi) (best copied onto A3 paper)
- Students should find examples of the various Gothic features in the play
- Small groups could be allocated certain scenes each.
  (Doctor Faustus > Synopsis and commentary > appropriate scenes)

Discussion ideas: Discuss and compare findings
- Are there any other gothic features beyond those on the sheet?
- Would you describe the play as Gothic?
  (Imagery and symbolism in Doctor Faustus > Blood: damnation and grace)
  (Aspects of literature > Aspects of the Gothic)
- A group sheet, based on the best examples, can be photocopied and distributed to all students.

Recreative task: Design a stage setting for the play, bringing out the Gothic aspects in particular
- There could be one scene or several different ones
- If possible, make a model in a cardboard box
  - This could be for a modern or Elizabethan theatre
  (The context of Doctor Faustus > The theatrical context > Design of theatres)

Critical task: Explore the dramatic use Marlowe makes of occult and supernatural elements in *Dr Faustus*.
  (Imagery and symbolism in Doctor Faustus)

Extension task: Compare *Dr Faustus* with other plays of the same era which include horror and extreme emotions
- You could look, for example, at *Macbeth* by Shakespeare or *The Changeling* by Middleton.
  (Doctor Faustus > Timeline)
  (Developments in drama > Mystery and morality plays)
### Elements of the Gothic

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gothic features</th>
<th>Scene/line refs.</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<td>REFERENCE TO DEATH</td>
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<td>USE OF THE SENSATIONAL</td>
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<td>SUSPENSE/FEAR</td>
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<td>STRONG FEELINGS / EMOTIONS</td>
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<td>VIOLENCE</td>
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<td>IMAGES OF DARKNESS</td>
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<td>IMAGES OF HELL, SATAN ETC.</td>
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<td>BROODING, GLOOMY ATMOSPHERE</td>
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<td>RECURRING MOTIFS / SYMBOLS</td>
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<td>ABSOLUTE POWER</td>
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Lesson focus: To explore the relevance of the Seven Deadly Sins:
- To Marlowe’s audience
- To a contemporary audience.

Opening exercise: Allocate the Seven Sins around the group. Provide a pile of newspapers and magazines
- Students cut out appropriate words and images to portray their particular sin and stick these onto a large sheet of paper
- Display these posters and discuss them.

Textual examination: Read aloud Scene 5 from Lucifer’s entry up to the appearance of the Seven Deadly Sins
(Doctor Faustus > Synopsis and commentary > Scene five)
- How do the devils manage to change Faustus’ mind after he called on his saviour to save his soul?
(The themes of Doctor Faustus > Human and psychological themes)
- How would you stage this short section?
- Students could physically demonstrate the ‘blocking’ of this section to one another, and discuss alternatives
(The context of Doctor Faustus > The theatrical context)

Discussion ideas: Faustus apparently finds that the Sins ‘delight my soul’:
- If you were directing a production, would you make this pageant attractive to the audience or not?
- In what contrasting ways could you present the Sins?
  - What different effects would these have?
- Think about audience response
  - Today
  - In Marlowe’s time
(The context of Doctor Faustus > Religious / philosophical context > The Renaissance)

Recreative task: In pairs, invent an eighth sin which is particularly suited to the modern age
- Write a speech in which it might introduce itself
- If possible, perform these
  - What costume and props would you use?
  - What sound or lighting?
(The context of Doctor Faustus > Religious / philosophical context)

Critical task: Does the parade of the Seven Deadly Sins simply provide a traditional spectacle for Marlowe’s audience, or is it an important part of Marlowe’s psychological presentation of the downfall of Faustus?
(The context of Doctor Faustus > The theatrical context > Mystery and morality plays)

Extension task: Research the significance of the Seven Deadly Sins in medieval belief, art and literature
- Students could prepare a short presentation on this topic
(The context of Doctor Faustus > Religious / philosophical context)
Dr Faustus: (d) Marlowe’s style

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Lesson focus: To examine Marlowe’s particular style of writing.

Opening exercise: Allocate Faustus’ opening speech (up to Wagner’s entry) sentence by sentence around the group
- After a few minutes’ preparation, read the speech aloud, each student reading their allocated sentences as they arise
- Following each sentence, the student should make a comment, still in Faustus’ voice though in modern English
  - Most students will need to write this down in order to achieve reasonable fluency.
  - The comment should explain or expand the sentence, showing, as it were, Faustus’ thoughts or his reasons for the statement
    - For example, at the end of the first sentence, you could say, ‘It’s time to make a decision. I’m sure that there is one particular area that I can be an expert in.’
- Discuss any interesting responses.
  (Doctor Faustus > Synopsis and commentary > Scene one)

Textual examination: Give each student one piece of card for each sentence which they have read out
- They should write their sentence on a card, and add a comment about the style or language of it underneath, perhaps in a different colour
  - E.g. for that first sentence, they could comment on its length, the way he addresses himself by name, or the use of the word ‘divine’
- Fasten these, in order, on the board, and discuss findings
  - If prompts are needed, look at the list given in the Extension task.
    (Not all those features are in these two speeches.)
  (Imagery and symbolism in Doctor Faustus > Patterns of imagery and play)

Discussion ideas: Read Faustus’ final speech (Sc. 13) sentence by sentence
- Contrast it with the first speech
  - Are the same poetic techniques used?
  - Why / Why not?
  (Doctor Faustus > Synopsis and commentary > Scene thirteen)
  (Imagery and symbolism in Doctor Faustus > Imagery in the final scene)

Recreative task: Write an extra speech for Faustus, in blank verse, trying to use several of Marlowe’s features of style
- This speech could be spoken from Hell, after the end of the play, or at some other point
  (Characterisation in Doctor Faustus > Faustus)

Critical task: Marlowe has been accused of writing a series of set speeches rather than convincing lines for characters. How do you respond to this criticism?

Extension task: Allocate scenes to those available. Using the following list of possible poetic techniques, students should find examples of each in their scenes and report their findings:
- Verse or prose
- Imagery
- Classical references
- References to time
- Hyperbole
- Repetition
- Rhyme
- Varied line lengths
- Punctuation
- Sentence length / use of clauses
- Rhythm: fluent or broken lines
- For guidance see
  (Critical approaches to Doctor Faustus > Analysing a passage)
Lesson focus: To examine Marlowe’s picture of Hell, as it is presented in the play.

Opening exercise: Discuss what the word ‘Hell’ means to students
- If possible show them pictures, both contemporary and from previous ages, including around Marlowe’s time
- What would be the students’ personal hells?
  - The idea of whether hell is physical or mental might arise

Textual examination: Read aloud, in pairs, the section of Scene 3 from Mephistophilis’ entrance to his exit
- Each pair should write, on a large piece of paper, words and phrases which are related to Hell in the scene
  - They could use both quotations and their own words
- The same pairs now look through Scene 5
- Add to the sheet any more words which contribute to the picture of Hell
  - Include as many ideas as possible
- If there is time, students can also look at Scene 12 (the Old Man’s speech from line 38ff) and Scene 13 (line 100ff)

Discussion ideas: Each pair should highlight the two or three words/phrases which they think are most important in the play
- Share these ideas around the class

Recreative task: How would you create the vision of Hell in Scene 13 on a modern day stage?
- Present a pitch demonstrating your concept to a director, in which you justify your ideas and choices

Critical task: ‘For a modern day audience, which is unlikely to believe in Hell and damnation, the play has little real power to move them.’ What is your response to this assertion?

Extension task: Research the pictures of Hell given in other plays, particularly the medieval mystery and morality plays
- Can you find any more recent examples of Hell in drama?
Lesson focus: To explore how the minor characters support and illustrate the major characters and the themes of the play.

Opening exercise: Each student should think of a story they know well (play, film or novel)
- If possible, they could be warned in advance to think of, or bring in, their example
- Each should pick two or three minor characters and suggest what purpose they have in the structure of their story
- Collect on the board the roles which such characters play.

Textual examination: Allocate the scenes of the play around the group
- Take account of the fact that some are much longer than others!
- For each scene, prepare a set of cards as follows:
  - Put the name of each minor character which appears on a separate card
  - Add to each card the purpose(s) that character seems to have
  - Also write the scene number on the card
- Collect in the cards and fasten together cards which concern the same character (ie: those who appear in more than one scene).

Discussion ideas: Spread the cards out and ask students to sort them into groups according to the purposes written on them
- Discuss findings
  - The themes of *Doctor Faustus* > The handling of themes in *Doctor Faustus*
  - What does this say about the structure of the play?

Recreative task: Attitudes to Faustus
- Students work in groups of three
- Two are allocated minor characters (preferably two which do not meet in the play) and the third person is the interviewer
- Give students about 15 minutes to devise an interview
- Try to show what the characters think of Faustus and of some of the themes of the play
- Listen to the results
  - A variation would be to make Wagner the interviewer.

Critical task: Choose any two minor characters and show how important they are in the dramatic structure of the play.

Extension task: If you were to produce a thirty-minute animated version of *Dr Faustus* (similar to those which have been done of Shakespeare’s plays) which of the minor characters would you keep in, and why?