

2022

# ENGLISH DRAMA

## BUKU AJAR

The book is to provide the students with basic knowledge of drama in terms of both intrinsic elements and extrinsic elements




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## Preface

The purpose of this English Drama module is to give the students with fundamental knowledge of English drama in terms of both intrinsic elements and extrinsic elements. The students will learn theory of drama as a genre of literary works. The notion covers idea and its depiction which offer challenges to the students' critical thinking. Descriptions in regard to well-known playwrights and examples of their masterpieces are added on purpose to assist the students in understanding dramatic works. After using this book, the students are expected to be able to understand the definition and genre of drama, the historical development of drama, the literary elements of drama, and the dramatic masterpieces from well-known playwrights. This module is also designed to provide students with additional knowledge about specific elements of drama as performance. Therefore, the students are expected to have prior knowledge about dramatic performance. The improvement on the quality of this module is a must. So, criticisms and suggestions are highly appreciated.

RENCANA PEMBELAJARAN SEMESTER (RPS)

 <b>UNIVERSITAS BUMIGORA</b> <b>THE FACULTIES OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANIORA</b> <b>ENGLISH LITERATURE STUDY PROGRAM</b>					
MATA KULIAH	KODE	Rumpun MK:	BOBOT (sks):	SEMESTER	Tgl Penyusunan
ENGLISH DRAMA		Mata Kuliah Wajib	2	V	5 September 2022
OTORISASI	<b>Dosen Pengembang RPS</b>		<b>Koordinator MK</b>		<b>Kaprodi</b>
	Diah Supatmiwati Tanda Tangan		Tanda Tangan  Diah Supatmiwati Tanda Tangan		Tanda Tangan
CAPAIAN PEMBELAJARAN (CP)	<b>CPL-PRODI</b>				
	S9	Mampu mengelaborasi dan mengembangkan konsep-konsep teoritis dalam ilmu bahasa dan Sastra.			
	P3	Mampu mengaplikasikan bidang keahliannya dan memanfaatkan IPTEKS pada bidangnya dalam penyelesaian masalah serta mampu beradaptasi terhadap situasi yang dihadapi.			
	KU1	Mampu menerapkan konsep-konsep filosofi paradigmatis, teoritis, dan metodologis ilmu bahasa dan sastra dalam meningkatkan kinerja profesional sehingga dihasilkan karya yang kreatif, orisinal, dan teruji			
	KU2	Mampu menerapkan ilmu dan keterampilan berbahasa dalam bidang pariwisata dan budaya dalam mendukung NTB sebagai daerah tujuan wisata.			
	KU9	Memiliki wawasan kewirausahaan yang baik sesuai dengan karakter daerah.			
	KK4	Mampu mengaplikasikan konsep-konsep yang ada dalam teori komunikasi dengan menelaah fenomena social yang terjadi dan menerapkannya dalam penelitian yang berhubungan dengan ilmu Bahasa dan Sastra.			
	<b>CP-MK</b>				
	M1	The students are expected to be able to understand the definition and genre of drama, the historical development of drama, the literary elements of drama, and the dramatic masterpieces from prominent playwrights.			
	M2	The students are expected to have prior knowledge about dramatic performance			
	M3	The students are expected to have acquired ability to analyze the elements of plays found in English and American works listed on the syllabus.			
	M4	The students are expected to have positive attitudes to literary interpretation			
	M5				
DESKRIPSI SINGKAT MK	English Drama is a compulsory course; the course will study written plays during several historical periods, with an emphasis on contemporary issues, such as social, politics, ethnicity, and postmodern storytelling. This compulsory course provides students with the opportunity to explore the contents found in plays with emphasis laid on English and American works. To arrive at this objective, therefore, focuses on analysis on the elements of plays are given attention. Based on the topics to be covered in the whole semester, students				

	are expected to produce individual text analysis of the texts provided. Students' learning is assessed through mid-term and final paper, assignments, and class participation. English Drama fulfills a two-hour credit in the literatures area of the Core Curriculum, which has four stated objectives: critical thinking, communication, teamwork, and social responsibility.
<b>MATERI PEMBELAJARAN/POKOK BAHASAN</b>	<b>Definition of Drama,</b> <b>Developing of Drama,</b> <b>Genre/types of Drama.</b> <b>Intrinsic elements</b> <b>Elements of Drama Performance</b> <b>Drama Analyses</b>
<b>PUSTAKA</b>	<b>Utama</b> 1. Reaske, Christopher R. 1966. How to Analyze Drama. New York: Monarch Press, Inc. 2. Watson, G.J. 1983. <b><i>Drama: An Introduction</i></b> , London: Macmillan <b>Pendukung</b> 1. Bennett, Andrew and Royle, Nicholas.2004 <i>An Introduction to Literature, Criticism and Theory (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.)</i> . UK: Longman Pearson
<b>MEDIA PEMBELAJARAN</b>	<b>Perangkat Lunak:</b> Bumigora E-learning
<b>TEAM TEACHING</b>	Dr. Diah Supatmiwati, SS., M.Hum
<b>MATA KULIAH SYARAT</b>	Introduction to Literature

M g Ke -	Sub-CP-MK	Indikator	Kriteria & Bentuk Penilaian	Metode Pembelajaran (Estimasi Waktu)	Materi Pembelajaran (Pustaka)	Bobot Penilaian
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1	Students are aware of the subject's guide, references, materials, and expected learning outcomes.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are aware of the subject's guide, references, materials, and expected learning outcomes</li> <li>Students are familiar with basic knowledge of the subject and divisions of group presentation</li> </ol>	Students' engagement	Lecture & Discussion [TM:1x(1x 50')]	RPS What is Drama?	0
2	Students are able to explain the historical development of English drama	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are able to mention the periods of English drama from the classical Greek period to the modern drama</li> <li>Students are able to mention the characteristics of each period of English drama</li> </ol>	Students' engagement Individual task	Lecture & Discussion [TM:1x(1x 50')]	Development of Drama	
3	Students are able to explain genres or types in drama	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are able to define tragedy, comedy, tragicomedy, comedy of manner, comedy of humor, farce, and melodrama</li> <li>Students are able to mention similarities and differences between tragedy, comedy, tragicomedy, comedy of manner, comedy of humor, farce, and melodrama.</li> <li>Students are able to mention the characteristics of each genre or type of drama.</li> </ol>	Students' engagement Individual task	Lecture & Discussion [TM:1x(1x 50')]	The Genre/Types of Drama: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comedy</li> <li>Tragedy</li> <li>Musical</li> <li>Farce</li> <li>Satirical</li> <li>Historical</li> <li>Tragicomedy</li> <li>Realism Drama</li> </ul>	
4	Students are able to understand character and characterization as building blocks in	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are able to define protagonist, antagonist, foil, confidant, and caricature</li> </ol>	Students' engagement Individual task	Lecture & Discussion [TM:1x(1x	Intrinsic element: Character and Characterization	

	drama	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are able to mention the functions of protagonist, antagonist, foil, confidant, and caricature in drama</li> <li>Students are able to name characterization methods.</li> </ol>		50']		
5	Students are able to identify character and characterization in a drama text.	Students are able to identify characters and deep characterization methods in William Shakespeare drama <b>Hamlet</b>	Assignment	Practice Presentation [TM:1x(1x 50')]	Characters analyses in <b>Hamlet</b> by William Shakespeare	
6	Students are able to understand the plot as a building block in drama. Students are able to understand the concept of action and actors in drama performances Students are able to understand the concept of blocking	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are able to mention the definitions of plot, exposition, complication, crisis, falling action and resolution.</li> <li>Students are able to mention the functions of plot, exposition, complication, crisis, falling action and resolution in drama.</li> <li>Students are able to say the definitions of action, actor, and blocking.</li> </ol>	Students' engagement Individual task	Lecture & Discussion [TM:1x(1x 50')]	Intrinsic element: Action, Conflict and Plot	
7	Students are able to identify the plot in a drama text  Students are able to identify and explain blocking.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are able to identify the plot in drama <b>Macbeth</b> by William Shakespeare</li> <li>Students are able to identify and explain blocking in drama <b>Macbeth</b> by William Shakespeare</li> </ol>	Assignment	Practice Presentation [TM:1x(1x 50')]	Action, Conflict and Plot analyses Tragedy <b>Macbeth</b> by William Shakespeare	
8	<b>Midterm Test: Conduct validation and evaluation 20%</b>					
9	Students are able to understand the types of settings and themes in drama.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are able to mention setting and theme definitions</li> <li>Students are able to mention types of settings and theme in drama.</li> <li>Students are able to mention the function of the setting and theme in the drama.</li> </ol>	Students' engagement Individual task	Lecture & Discussion [TM:1x(1x 50')]	Intrinsic element: setting and Theme	

10	Students are able to identify settings and themes in drama text.	Students are able to identify the setting in the drama <i>Doll House</i> by Henrik Ibsen	Assignment	Practice Presentation [TM:1x(1x 50')]	Setting and Theme analyses in <b><i>Doll House</i></b> Feminism	
11	Students are able to understand on the dramatic nature, language and rhetoric	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students are able to mention the definitions, differences, and functions of dialogue, monologue, aside, and soliloquy in dramas</li> <li>2. The students are able to understand the language styles used in drama</li> </ol>	Students' engagement Individual task		The dramatic nature, language and rhetoric	
12	Students are able to conceptualize audience and stage drama performances	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students are able to mention the definition of audience and theatre</li> <li>2. Students are able to mention the relationship between the audience and the performance stage at the Classical Greek theatre, Elizabethan theatre, Neoclassical theatre, and Modern theatre.</li> <li>3. Students are able to mention the characteristics of Classical Greek theatre, Elizabethan theatre, Neoclassical theatre, and Modern theatre.</li> </ol>	Students' engagement Individual task	Lecture & Discussion [TM:1x(1x 50')]	Audience and Theatre	
13	Students are able to interpret a play text including its themes, characters, style, mood, structure and context. The ability to analyze a play text in relation to its social context and performance conditions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students are able to interpret a play text including its themes, characters, style, mood, structure and context.</li> <li>2. The ability to analyze a play text in relation to its social context and performance conditions</li> <li>3. Understand modern Plays <b><i>Glass Menagerie</i></b></li> </ol>	Assignment	Practice Presentation [TM:1x(1x 50')]	How to Analyze Drama: Modern Plays <b><i>Glass Menagerie</i></b>	
14	Students are able to interpret a play text including its	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students are able to interpret a play text including its themes,</li> </ol>	Assignment	Practice Presentation	How to Analyze Drama:	

	themes, characters, style, mood, structure and context. The ability to analyze a play text in relation to its social context and performance conditions	characters, style, mood, structure and context. 2. The ability to analyze a play text in relation to its social context and performance conditions 3. Understand Modern Plays <b><i>Death of a Salesman</i></b>		[TM:1x(1x 50')]	Modern Plays <b><i>Death of a Salesman</i></b>	
15	Reviews	Reviews		Lecture & Discussion [TM:1x(1x 50')]	Reviews	
16	<b>Final Exam: Conduct validation and evaluation 30%</b>					



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# Chapter 1

## What is Drama?

The aim of this chapter is to provide the students with definition of drama. The students are expected to understand what drama is and be able to distinguish drama from other genres of literature after reading an excerpt from a drama. The students are also expected to understand the overlapping meanings between drama and theatre.

### Meeting 1

Literature, in a broad sense, means compositions that tell stories, dramatize situations, express emotion, and analyze ideas. Since drama or play meets those characteristics perfectly, it becomes one of the literary genres which are very popular among readers. In fact, drama is literature designed for stage or film presentation by people or actors for the benefit & delights of other people, an audience and in this regard, unlike Fiction, the essence of drama is the development of character and situation through speech & action. In line with that, according to Reaske, drama is a work of literature or a composition which describes life and human activity by means of presenting various actions of and dialogues between groups of characters. Drama is furthermore designed for theatrical presentation; that is, although we speak of drama as a literary work or a composition, we must never forget that drama is designed to be acted on the stage. Thus, when we read a play, we have no real grasp of what that play is like unless we at least attempt to imagine how actors on a stage would present the material. Drama is written to be performed by actors and watched by an audience. The author of a play is called a ***playwright***. Everything a playwright writes must appear onstage. A play in written form is called a ***script***. The playwright must write the ***dialogue***, or what the characters say to each other in conversation, as well as the ***stage directions***, which tells how the play is to be performed.

### A. Definition of Drama

There are many definitions of drama. Martin Esslin in Anatomy of Drama has the following definitions of drama:

1. Drama can be seen as a manifestation of the play instinct as in children who are playing mother and father.
2. Drama is something one goes to see, which is organized as something to be seen.
3. It is an enacted fiction an art form based on mimetic action.
4. In arts, drama is the most elegant expression of thought nearest to the truth (reality).
5. It is the most concrete form in which art can recreate human situation, human relationship.

Aristotle's definitions sum up these and other numerous definitions of drama by different scholars. He defines drama simply as an imitation of an action. He links it to the mimetic impulse in human beings like children playing father and mother in a childhood play. This means that imitation is part of life. Human beings have the desire to imitate others, situations or events. However, Bertolt Brecht insists that drama is not just an imitation of action, but a tool for the demonstration of social conditions. It is not just an entertainment but an instrument of political and social change. From these definitions, we can conclude that drama is a way of creating or recreating a situation, an articulation of reality through impersonation or re-enactment. An action becomes drama if it is an imitation of an earlier action real or imagined. For instance, the story of a hunter who goes to the forest kills an antelope and takes it home even if he is dancing as he goes home, is not drama. It becomes drama if the same story is reenacted maybe as part of a festival. In the later case, some people (actors) will represent the hunter and the antelope to the audience for entertainment or education. A young man who aspires to be a hunter could learn, from the presentation, how to stalk an animal or how to aim the gun or bow while being entertained. This story could be represented through mime, dance or in dialogue.

## **B. Origins of Drama**

The word *drama* comes from the Greek verb *dran*, which means "to do or action" The earliest known plays were written around the fifth century B.C. *drama* produced for festivals to honor Dionysus, the god of wine and fertility. Many scholars trace the origin of drama to wordless actions like ritual dances and mimes performed by dancers, masked players or priests during traditional festivals or ceremonies. One account traces the origin to ritual. In the traditional society or in the primordial times, sometimes, the seasons did not come as expected. When this happened, men felt that they had offended the gods, so they devised means of appeasing these gods. That act of appeasing the gods is what we refer to as ritual. This ritual, as expected, involved a ceremony in which the priest played an important role at a designated location, mostly shrines. The priest would normally wear a special dress for the occasion. That role, the dress (costume), and the utterance or incantations are regarded as dramatic elements. Drama could therefore emerge from this. So, if it is presented for entertainment and there is an element of impersonation, imitation of an action, and re-enactment of an action, it is drama. Another account traces the origin to man's desire for entertainment. Here, during festivals or other ceremonies, they recreate the feats of some legendary or mythical heroes to entertain the people

Scholars are divided on the origin of drama. Some trace the origin to Greece but others insist that drama in its definitive form or pattern evolved from Egypt which is regarded as one of the cradles of civilization in the world. The latter group argues that it was borrowed by western merchants who developed and documented it, and who now trace the origin to Greece. However, the account of tracing the origin of drama to Greece is more plausible. The evolution is clearer and well-documented. Apparently, Greek drama evolved

from religious festivals (ritual) that were celebrated to ensure the fertility of the land and the well being of its people. These festivals were connected with the worship of the god Dionysius, a native god who like the vegetation dies and was reborn each year. The festival involved singing and dancing by a chorus of fifty men. The choral song, known as Dithyramb, was sung in honor of the god. The men danced around the altar of Dionysius in a circular dancing place called orchestra. Sometimes a story about the god was improvised by the leader of the chorus, though remaining part of the chorus. Sometimes he dresses like a character from mythology. At this stage, individual actors were not involved in the performances.

The dramatist, **Thespis**, is believed to have been the first person to introduce the individual actor and the element of impersonation in the 6th century B.C. During a particular performance, he stood out from the chorus and instead of singing in the honor of the god, he sang as the god. He performed between the dances of the chorus and he conversed at times with the leader of the chorus. Thus drama was literally born. Thespis, therefore appeared as the first actor, and when he broke away from the chorus, he added the dramatic potential of impersonation.



Figure 1 Thespis first actor

It is impersonation, because, instead of describing the god, Dionysius, or his actions, he pretended to be the god. Thus the performance changed from poetry performance to drama. **Aeschylus** added the second actor and this gave drama a new thrust forward because the additional actor enabled the dramatist to show in action a dramatic conflict rather than talk about it. **Sophocles'** addition of the third actor further enlarged the

### ***C. Functions of Drama***

Drama is said to have originated from ritual. It is an important branch of literature and the most concrete of all art forms. It is devoid of the distant intimacy of the novel, the

abstract message of fine arts, the incomplete message of music or the cryptic and esoteric language of poetry. It presents a story realistically through the actors to the audience. Drama is therefore used to entertain, inform and educate people. You can see that it is the most effective tool for mass mobilization by the government and private agencies. For instance, most campaigns against AIDS, DRUG ABUSE, CHILD ABUSE and so on, are presented in form of drama to educate, enlighten while at the same time entertain the people. Of all the creative artists, the dramatist is in the best position to mirror his society and to effect social reforms. This is because his work has a unique characteristic of presenting events in a vivid, picturesque and realistic manner. This helps to imprint social conditions realistically in the minds of the audience. Its message is therefore immediate. The rich and the poor, the young and the old, the literate and the illiterate enjoy and assimilate the message of drama once it is presented in the appropriate language as the actors live out the story (message) on stage. In most traditional societies, drama forms part of the communal rites. In Africa, reenactment of some feats like hunting, warfare, and other events, are usually part of bigger festivals. Some of these events are presented in form of drama to entertain the audience. In Greece also, drama formed part of a bigger festival. Greek drama is acclaimed to be the earliest recorded form of drama (5th century B.C). It is said to have originated from the Dionysian religious rites, and also remained a communal rite during the classical period. The dramatists of this age gave insight into the philosophy and religious beliefs of the ancient Greece. These early Greek plays treated life's basic problems with utmost honesty and attacked social ills using legendary and mythological themes. This helped to ensure sanity and equilibrium in the society.

#### ***D. Conclusion***

Drama is an imitation of an action. It is a branch of literature which is both literary art and representational art. As a literary art, it deals with fiction or an imaginary story that is presented through characters and dialogue. However, it is a special kind of fiction because it is designed to be acted out rather than narrated. When we read a novel or a short story, we understand and appreciate the story, through the narrator or author but in drama the characters live out the story for us. The playwright does not comment or explain anything. So, drama gives us a direct presentation of life experiences. That is why we say that it is a representational art. Drama, therefore, uses language in the form of gesture or dialogue to present or to re-present an action. Characters are used to present the story. These characters are called actors.

#### **Meeting 2**

#### ***E. Self Exercise***

1. In your own words, define drama.
2. What is the basic difference between drama and other genres of literature?
3. What is the role of Thespis in the origin of drama?

## Chapter 2

### Development of Drama

Students are able to explain the historical development of English drama  
Students are able to mention the periods of English drama from the classical Greek period to the modern drama. Students are able to mention the characteristics of each period of English drama

#### Meeting 3

Before turning our attention to particular aspects of drama, as well as to particular plays, it seems worthwhile to survey briefly the development of drama as a generic form. That is, when we speak of drama as a genre we must be aware of the different forms that genre has adopted over several thousand years. Let us explore briefly some of the ways in which dramatists have used the form for capturing moments of life.

#### A. The Beginnings

In the beginning drama commenced with religious celebration. Out of the various pagan rites and festivals arose the earliest dramas of an entertaining kind, specifically Greek Tragedy and Greek Comedy



Figure 2 Greek theater time lines

#### 1. Greek Tragedy

Greek Tragedy addresses itself to serious dimension of life and human character. The character in it is led into death, despair, or misery through some sort of error, either in himself or in his action. Its basic idea is man learns through suffering. Tragedy should have a purging effect: the audience should be purged of both pity and fear by the time a tragedy comes to an end. This is then is Greek Tragedy as explained by Aristotle. We still speak of the classical unities of time, place, and action which tragedies should have, and we still refer to almost all of Aristotle's theories.



## **2. Greek Comedy**

It was developed out of early religious celebration. It deals with a great deal of boisterous comment on affairs of state through political satire (old comedy) and it also deals with romantic situations (new comedy), and we generally witness potential lovers working from unhappy problematic situations into happy, comfortable ones. Then, as now comedies illustrated the traditional happy ending.

## **B. Decline of Drama**

Drama went into a period of decline around A.D. 400 (Roman Empire) Due to the Power of Christians. Acting has been deemed at times to be unchristian, idolatrous and depraved or, worse, boring. Actors themselves have frequently been seen to be one of the humbler classes and only towards the end of the 19th century did their status start to improve

## **C. Revival of Drama A.D. 900 - 1500**

### **1. Medieval Drama**



Figure 3. Hrosvitha

Hundreds of years later, It was a new creation rather than a rebirth. The drama of earlier times having almost no influence on it and it is for pleasure and teach religion for illiterate people In the late ninth and tenth centuries, there were musical presentations of certain church services, particularly the various masses. From these musical presentations came drama as the priests began to speak rather than sing the story. Eventually these musical presentations became independent of the church liturgy and medieval drama was established as a secular entertainment although religious subjects were still by far the most popular. Gradually the presentations were moved from the church to outdoors, particularly into open courtyards. The story of man and the life of Christ became the main subjects of all medieval drama. Hrosvitha (c.935-973) is important during the medieval theater because she was the first girl playwright Everyman.

### **2. Renaissance /Elizabethan Year 1500-1642**

Once Queen Elizabeth took the throne in 1558, the Elizabethan Era was born. This period is also called Renaissance period. Renaissance Drama is English drama written before

the Reformation and the closure of theatres in. It may also be called early modern English theatre or (inaccurately) Elizabethan theatre. Drama By the late of 16th century, it became the best time in the history of literature. There were various themes and various kinds of drama at that time. This was also the beginning of new kinds of play: the romantic comedies, the revenge murder drama, the court comedies, the pastoral plays as well as secular drama, many of which survive to the present day.

Playwrights such as Christopher Marlowe and William Shakespeare wrote some of the most well-known and popular plays of Western society in the Elizabethan era. English drama during the early part of the sixteenth century developed slowly, but during Shakespeare's youth the theatre scene exploded with vitality.

Throughout the middle Ages, religion was the subject matter of drama, but Marlowe, and later Shakespeare, found inspiration for their plays in Greek tragedies, morality plays, and English history.



CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Figure 4 Most Popular playwrights in Elizabethan Era

**Blank verse** was the preferred form of Elizabethan playwrights. Blank verse is unrhymed poetry that still contains a rhythm and meter. Shakespeare's thirty-seven plays can be divided into three categories: histories, tragedies, and comedies. Most of Shakespeare's plays were originally performed at the famous Globe Theater across the Thames River from London. Wealthy theater patrons watched plays from seats in the gallery. Those who could afford a penny for a play stood in the yard.



Figure 5 Globe Theater

Shakespearean costumes were colorful and elaborate versions of the dress of the time. Scenery was simple, nearly nonexistent, but the audiences who filled the playhouses came for the excellent entertainment—not the backdrops.



Figure 6 Scenery Shakespearean costumes

### 3. Restoration 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> Century

The period known as the Restoration began in 1660 when Charles II became king of England. Drama reached its height in sixteenth-century England; Shakespeare and his contemporaries entertained audiences from all walks of life. Drama In this period of time, heroic plays became extremely popular. It is a kind of tragedy or tragic comedy. The heroes were usually great military leaders, great lovers experiencing a conflict between their love and their patriotism

Theater of the seventeenth century included satiric comedies and tragicomedies. Comedy grew more sophisticated and less dependent on mistaken identity situations and sight gags. The **comedy of manners** was first written during the Restoration period as a reaction against the severity of Puritanism.

A comedy of manners is characterized by the following features:

- realism, satire, and cynicism
- focus on the manners, attitudes, and immorality of an upper-class society
- witty, polished dialogue
- plot frequently involving an illicit affair

In 1642, plays had to go underground when the Puritans, deeming them frivolous, made theater illegal. When the law was reversed in 1660, drama got back on track. For the first time, female actresses regularly played the female roles, as opposed to male actors.

**Sentimental comedy** grew in popularity during the eighteenth century. This type of theater came about as a reaction to the risqué nature of the comedies of manners.

The sentimental comedy or drama is characterized by the following features:

- Man portrayed as basically good.
- The few characters who are evil repent quickly.
- The writing has very little wit but lots of sentimentality.
- Characters are drawn from the middle class.
- Characters weep at the slightest distress to indicate their virtue.

#### 4. The Nineteenth and Twentieth Century's Drama

It is like the Elizabethan Drama: there were many varieties of plays. There was a strong interest in more serious plays although comedy also emerged. The heroic plays slowly led into the more extreme spectacle and excessive emotionalism of melodrama. Theatre became vastly popular, and there are many rebellious dramas. It used to be believed that a real tragedy must follow the Aristotelian Principle that a noble hero suffers a calamitous (dreadful) fall. Now, it's not completely followed. A wide array of playwrights from around the world offered their work to theatergoers during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century's. The **problem play**, which addresses a social problem, originated with playwrights Henrik Ibsen and George Bernard Shaw. The following table describes the contributions of some of the modern playwrights.

Modern Playwrights		
Name	Country	Contribution
<b>Henrik Ibsen</b>	Norway	Wrote <i>A Doll's House</i> , a social drama on the institution of marriage, in 1879. Considered the father of modern drama by many critics.
<b>Oscar Wilde</b>	England	Wrote several witty plays, including his most noted, <i>The Importance of Being Earnest</i> in 1895. The play satirizes British nobility and clergy.
<b>Anton Chekhov</b>	Russia	Wrote <i>The Cherry Orchard</i> between early 1901 and late 1903. The play depicts the life of a landowning family about to lose its precious cherry orchard.
<b>George Bernard Shaw</b>	Ireland	Wrote the problem play <i>Major Barbara</i> , which uses comedy and interesting characters to address the issues of money and ethics. Written in 1913, <i>Pygmalion</i> , one of Shaw's most popular plays, was later made into the musical <i>My Fair Lady</i> . That play satirizes male-female relationships and class divisions in England.
<b>Eugene O'Neill</b>	United States	Received the Pulitzer Prize in 1920 for <i>Beyond the Horizon</i> and later received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1936. He was the first American dramatist to win the prize. Before O'Neill, American theater consisted of mostly romantic melodrama, but O'Neill changed that. His plays, such as <i>The Iceman Cometh</i> and <i>Long Day's Journey into Night</i> , introduced serious, psychological drama to American audiences.
<b>Thornton Wilder</b>	United States	His most famous play, <i>Our Town</i> , uses no scenery and very few props, yet it earned a Pulitzer Prize in 1938. It remains a classic of American theatre to this day.
<b>Arthur Miller</b>	United States	His <i>Death of a Salesman</i> won a Pulitzer in 1949. The play, widely regarded as the first great American tragedy, rocketed Miller to national stardom.

## **5. Domestic Tragedies**

Domestic tragedies (bourgeois drama) are based on the lives of common, ordinary people. In the eighteenth century domestic tragedy reappeared largely as a compensatory reaction against the heroic plays of classical tragedies.

### ***D. Conclusion***

All in all, we should try to remember that drama develops out of the first pagan celebrations of the rites of Dionysius. The drama follows the original polarization of the emotions into tragedy and comedy but always finds itself forced into hybridized forms. Our understanding of the history of the development of drama serves as a general background of information on the one hand and as a means of directing attention to the spoken aspects of drama on the other

### **Meeting 4**

#### ***E. Self Exercise***

1. Discuss the following questions with your partner.
  - a. How can you explain about the history of drama by using your own scheme?
  
2. Reading assignment: Much Ado about Nothing by William Shakespeare
  1. What kind of play does Much Ado about Nothing belong to?
  2. Mention the characteristics of drama that you can find in Much Ado about Nothing

## Chapter 3

### Genre/types of Drama

Students are able to explain genres or types in drama. Students are able to define tragedy, comedy, tragicomedy, and comedy of manner, comedy of humor, farce, and melodrama. Students are able to mention similarities and differences between tragedy, comedy, tragicomedy, comedy of manner, comedy of humor, farce, and melodrama.

#### Meeting 5

In line with its development, drama has been divided into several genres. Although most playwrights are not concerned to the matter of drama classification, some playwrights do write plays in accordance with some theory of the formal principle for each genre. Thus, we need to know at least some prominent genres of drama. The following are brief explanations of some prominent genres summarized from Pickering & Hoepfer (1981:283-288).

#### **A. Tragedy**

Tragedy is a division of drama established by the Greeks. Aristotle (384-322 B.C.), the first and most influential literary theorist, promoted a famous definition of tragedy. According to Aristotle, tragedy is an imitation of an action of high importance, complete and of some amplitude; in language enhanced by distinct and varying beauties; acted not narrated; by means of pity and fear affecting its purgation of these emotions. This definition puts much of its emphasis on the tragic action, or story, which Aristotle thought should be serious, complex, and tightly structured. The Aristotelian definition accurately reflects the goal of most Greek, Roman, and neoclassical tragedy. However, it is too narrow to include many serious and important plays written during other periods. The equivalent form of tragedy, melodrama, emerged as a recognized type of theater in the 19th century. Melodrama presents sentimental, touching, and thrilling characters in a story which tends to be exaggerated. The characters in melodrama are, generally, stereotyped.

#### **B. Comedy**

Comedy refers to the drama designed primarily to amuse. A comedy typically deals with common people. It is dominated by a light tone that encourages laughter (or at least amusement or entertainment), and ends happily. Horace Walpole, the eighteenth century man of letters, once observed that "the world is a comedy to those that think, a tragedy to those who feel." Walpole's comparison is a good guide to the key differences between comedy and tragedy. The tragic hero is closely examined and portrayed as an individual

while the comic character is viewed intellectually from a distance and represents a broad human "type" – a young lover, a hypocrite, an elegant fop, etc. The tragic mode asks us to sympathize with the hero and imagine ourselves in his position while the comic mode suggests that we step back from life and look with amusement on the humorous predicament of others. The subject matter of comedy is often as serious as that of tragedy, but the comic playwright distorts events and personalities in order to remind the audience that the play deals with fantasy and not fact. The plots of comedy are usually based on twisted imagination of the author while the plots of tragedy are revelations of our emotional and psychological core. Some prominent subdivisions of comedy are romantic comedy, comedy of humors, comedy of manners, and farce.

A play is called romantic comedy when the main sources of humor in the play are the ludicrous complications of love. A play is called comedy of humors when the main sources of humor are on the ridiculous characteristics of the blocking figures (for example, the imbalances and the eccentrics). A play is called comedy of manners when the play makes fun of the manners and conventions of human behavior. The comedy of manners is a satirical performance towards the so-called establishment and social conventions. A play is called farce when the main sources of humor are on broad and often crude verbal humor. Farce is often considered as low level of comedy or play. It traditionally gains its effects from physical humor (that can even turn into violent) and from rude verbal jokes.

### ***C. Tragicomedy***

In Italy, certain critics and dramatists began mixing elements and aspects of the two traditional kinds of theater to create a third kind, called tragicomedy. Tragicomedy is a drama which mixes the convention of tragedy and comedy. In this type of drama the protagonist, as subject to a series of crises, manages to escape to celebrate a happy ending. The example of tragicomedy is William Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*. If genre of drama is related to the story line of a drama, school of drama deals with the style. Symbolism, realism, expressionism, naturalism, and absurd are some of many schools of drama which come to prominence in line with the growth of drama. Two of those schools, namely realism and absurd drama, are highlighted in accordance with the premises from Scanlan (1988:135-143) and Birkerts (1996:1438-1440).

### ***D. Realism Drama***

Realism drama is a type of modern drama that presents objective presentation of the details of everyday life. The realist shows us characters who are ordinary people, usually in a familiar domestic setting. One of the ways the reader can find his way through the variety of modern realism is to identify the major conflict of the work. In this case, there at least four important macro conflicts found in modern drama, namely male vs. female, the individual vs. social injustice, human consciousness vs. the mystery of life, and the personal dream vs. the

real world. Conflicts between male and female in realism drama are usually concerned with power struggles, social issues, and marital issues; for example the obstacle faced by the female in the form of the male power structure, as we can find in Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House*.

## **Meeting 6**

### ***E. Self Exercise***

Form a group consists of 3 (three) to 4 (four) people and discuss the following questions: 1. Why is Greek tragedy considered as "serious" play? 2. Why did the story of Christ and Saints become the main subjects of medieval dramas? 3. Why is Elizabethan drama considered as the best in the history of world literature? The questions require your arguments. So, write down your opinion and share it with other groups. b. If you have question about the development of drama, do not hesitate to ask your lecturer.

Read Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*. According to you, what genre does the drama belong? What school does the drama represent? State your arguments in 200-250 words and share it with your friends next week



## Chapter 4

### Character and Characterization

Students are able to understand character and characterization as building blocks in drama. Students are able to define protagonist, antagonist, foil, confidant, and caricature. Students are able to mention the functions of protagonist, antagonist, foil, confidant, and caricature in drama  
Students are able to name characterization methods.

#### Meeting 7&9

##### **A. Character**

Characters are fictitious creation. There are characters designed to fit the plot and there are the plots derived from the characters. Thus, a playwright must give distinguishable attributes to the characters a dramatic work so that the characters can be comprehensively identified by the audience. Referring to Morner & Rausch (1991:31-33), Birkerts (1996:22-24), and Reaske (1966:40- 47) the concept of character in drama can be summarized as follows. Characters are the people in the drama. These people are fictional and their personal qualities and actions are limited by their function in the drama. In terms of role, we are introduced with the so-called protagonist and/or antagonist characters. Protagonist (often called tragic hero in tragedy) is the central character in a drama whereas antagonist is a character that hinders the protagonist to achieve his goal. In addition, we may also find confidant, caricature, and foil characters in a drama. There is also the so-called choral character, a remnant of the chorus in Greek drama. Choral character is a character whose role is to comment on the actions of the main characters. Often used in plays to substitute for narrative comment, a choral character may represent

Since drama presents us directly with scenes which are based on people's actions and interactions, characters play a dominant role in this genre and therefore deserve close attention. The characters in plays can generally be divided into major characters and minor characters, depending on how important they are for the plot. A good indicator as to whether a character is major or minor is the amount of time and speech as well as presence on stage he or she is allocated. As a rule of thumb, major characters usually have a lot to say and appear frequently throughout the play, while minor characters have less presence or appear only marginally. Thus, for example, Hamlet is clearly the main character or protagonist of Shakespeare's famous

tragedy as we can infer from the fact that he appears in most scenes and is allocated a great number of speeches and, what is more, since even his name appears in the title (he is the eponymous hero). Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, by contrast, are only minor characters because they are not as vitally important for the plot and therefore appear only for a short period of time. However, they become major characters in Tom Stoppard's comical re-make of the play, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* (1966), where the two attendants are presented as bewildered witnesses and predestined victims. Occasionally even virtually non-existent characters may be important but this scenario is rather exceptional. An example can be found in Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, where the action centres around the arrival of the mysterious Godot, whose name even appears in the title of the play although he never actually materializes on stage.

## **1. Types of Characters**

There are different types of characters in drama. They include the protagonist, the dynamic character, the static character, the flat character, the round character, and stereotypes.

### **a. Types based on role**

#### **1. Protagonist/Hero**

He is the main character and at the centre of the story. He is called the protagonist or the hero. If he is pitted against an important character, like in *Hamlet*, the opponent is called an antagonist. In the play, *Hamlet* is the protagonist while King Claudius is the antagonist and the relationship between them is what we refer to as conflict. Usually the story revolves around him and in fact the story is about him. He is easily identifiable because he stands out over and above most other characters. Everything revolves around him as he influences the action that he is going through. He creates a world for himself which could be big or small, palatable or detestable. He lives to sustain or oppose what happens to him. His role is usually central to the development of the theme, and whatever happens to him or whatever he does has much significance to the outcome of the story. He is often referred to as the hero of the story or the protagonist and he is one of the major characters. His central position in the story places him in a very important position. The playwright therefore portrays him carefully. His many-sided and complex nature is presented in details. He helps to inject life in the story when he is properly presented. In *Oedipus Rex*, for instance, King Oedipus is the protagonist. He is not just one of the major

characters but he is the major character. The story that is told in the play is about the birth, the rise and the fall of King Oedipus. Sophocles uses him to show his audience that man is helpless before the gods. This means that a man cannot change his destiny no matter how hard he or the people around him. In the case of King Oedipus, his parents try to change his destiny by ordering, when he was born and they discovered that he has been doomed to kill his father and marry his mother, that he be thrown into the forest where he was expected to die but the servant spared his life and offered him to the shepherd. As he grows, he tries to change that fate but does not succeed. Instead he moves closer to it and eventually fulfils it.

Every story has a protagonist, even if there's only one character throughout the entire book. They're the main character in a story, and it's their journey that we, the readers, follow as the plot develops. Writers typically focus on the back-story and motivations of this character over all others as everything that happens ties back to them in some way. Some works of literature feature more than one protagonist, where the main character position is held by two or more characters. *Romeo and Juliet* is a good example of this, as we care about the fate of both characters in equal measure.

## **2. Antagonist**

Where there's a protagonist, an antagonist must follow. These character types are usually the villain of the story, but this isn't always clear straight away. The best way to think of the protagonist-antagonist relationship is: How does the antagonist cause conflict or chaos on the protagonist's journey throughout the story? Some of the clearest protagonist and antagonist combinations are often found in superhero stories, but anti-heroes can be found everywhere. Regina George in *Mean Girls* and Aaron Burr in *Hamilton* are two recent antagonists in popular culture who have just as many fans as the protagonists of their stories.

## **3. Deuteragonist**

Hermione Granger and Ron Weasley in *Harry Potter* are probably the best examples of deuteragonists in modern literature. They aren't quite the main protagonist, but they're close. You can think of the deuteragonist as the sidekick. The plot doesn't center on them, but they play important roles throughout the narrative, and the journey of the main character in the story wouldn't progress without them

#### **4. Tertiary Characters**

As we go down the character hierarchy, you'll find tertiary characters. They're the supporting players in the story who will weave in and out of the narrative, interacting with the main characters at various points, but not necessarily contributing much to the plot. When it comes to character roles, they're not especially crucial, but they help to bring a realistic element to the story and fill in any gaps as the protagonist deals with their conflict. The wider collection of toys in the *Toy Story* franchise are a good example of tertiary characters used in storytelling.

#### **5. Romantic Interest**

Not every story will have a love interest, but it's one of the more common character types used in literature. This one is fairly self-explanatory—these characters are the object of desire for another character, usually the protagonist (although some interesting love triangles can happen between a romantic interest, protagonist, and antagonist too). Daisy Buchanan in *The Great Gatsby* and Mr. Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice* are instances where the love interest forms a central part of the plot, as the protagonist deals with their internal conflict around their feelings for this character.

#### **6. Confidant**

We all need someone we can rely on and trust, and that's where the confidant comes in. These types of characters are often the deuteragonist as well, usually in the form of a best friend or trusted companion for the protagonist like a mentor or, in some cases, their love interest. Horatio from *Hamlet*, Mrs. Lovett in *The String of Pearls* and *Sweeney Todd*, and Missandei in *A Game of Thrones* all take on the role of confidant for their main characters. They provide wisdom and advice where they can, as well as being a comforting presence that the protagonist can go to during the height of their conflict.

#### **7. Foil**

The foil is one of the most interesting literary characters. Their primary purpose is to highlight certain qualities of the protagonist's personality or character, but in the opposite way. They may not be the main antagonist of the story, but the foil's traits will often clash with the main character in a way that helps us to see the protagonist more clearly and understand who they are. Foils have been used in literature for hundreds of years and Shakespeare was a particular fan of this character

technique. Brutus in *Julius Caesar* and Emilia in *Othello* are good examples of Shakespearean foils who help us see certain traits in the main characters.

### **b. Types based on quality**

#### Dynamic/ Round Character

This is a character that changes according to the course of events in the story. He may or may not be the protagonist or the hero. In most cases, he grows from innocence to maturity or from ignorance to knowledge, so he is consistently alert to his environment with its attendant problem and reacts accordingly. He is found almost everywhere in the story. In his own unique way, he participates actively as much as possible in the course of the action. He seems to have no special alignment to any group but tries not to lose his credibility or acceptability.

#### Static/Flat/Stock Character

Here the character is complex and does not change in any basic way in the course of the story. He is presented in outline and without much individualization. He is usually stable and is said to be static because he retains essentially the same outlook, attitudes, values and dispositions from the beginning of the story to the end of the story. He is the opposite of the round character but lacks complexity in terms of presentation. He is presented with a few and broad strokes. In most cases his activities are easily recognizable, so, his actions can be predicted. Such values and attitudes may be positive or negative depending on the playwright's intention. He can be a minor or major character as long as he is hardly transformed as the events of the story unfold. Stock characters are character types "that recur repeatedly..." (Abram 163) in dramatic composition "and so are recognizable as part of the conventions of the form."

Character types are created by playwrights to represent particular individuals in the society. They could be professionals, ethnic groups, tribes or nationalities. They therefore act and behave in accordance with the dictates of the person(s) they represent

### **B. Character Analysis**

The ability to create characters and to ensure that they blend/suit the action of the play is what we refer to as characterization. What is created is called character. Characters refer to the people who act the play. Drama is the most active form of

literary art and is presented in dialogue. It is not like the novel or poetry where the novelist tells a story. The story in a play is told as people talk to one another and interact in inter-personal relationships. These people are referred to as characters. Characters in a play must not necessarily be human beings. Animals or things can be used as characters. This depends on the intention of the playwright and the style he wants to adopt. In allegorical plays like Tess Onwueme's *The Desert Encroaches* or *Everyman*, a medieval play, animals and abstract qualities are used as characters. In the play, you can identify each character through his name, through what he says, what he does, what other characters say about him and what the playwright says about him. The playwright's comment is contained in the stage direction. The stage direction is usually enclosed in a bracket and in most cases written in italics. You can find it at the beginning of the scene or at any point in the play whenever the playwright want to give information about the character, his action, the environment, the mood or any other information that is relevant to the action and which is not embedded in the dialogue.

### **C. Characterization**

In order to understand dramatic characters, we need to make empathic connection with their behavior. By connecting with their moment to moment behavior we can find out who the characters are, where they come from, and what they are doing. At this point we can refer to the characterization. Below are some devices of characterization.

1. From name and physical appearance of each character (although this information is often unreliable); in the prologue or in the stage directions the playwright often describes the name of the character and the character in the physical sense. We learn from these stage directions what the character looks like and probably how he dresses; when a character walks onto the stage, it is obvious from, his appearance whether he is a meticulous or sloppy person, attractive or unattractive, old or young, small or large, etc. In other words, in the mere appearance of character we locate our first understanding of him.
2. Through the way a character speaks; dialect, word choice, and grammar all provide clues to a person's background and intelligence. Othello's "perfect soul" is partially revealed through his eloquence. On the other hand, Iago's idiomatic slang marks him as a "profane wretch" in the very first scene of the play.
3. Through individual's patterns of action over the course of the play; for example, Hedda Gabler, in Henrik Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler*, pacing is an indication of her sense of suffocating confinement in her role as a woman.
4. Through the way a character responds to others; for example in Shakespeare's *Othello*, when Brabantio seeks to arrest Othello, the latter averts a crisis with composure. Yet the violent temper of this eminent soldier eventually surfaces.
5. Through asides, soliloquies; we are likely to understand the characters best when they speak in short asides or in longer soliloquies. On these occasions the character is telling

the audience of his specific characteristics. If he is villain, he usually explains his evil intentions or at least his malicious hopes; if a lover, he offers poetic statement of devotion, etc.

6. Through hidden narration; one of the devices of characterization frequently employed is having one character in a play narrate something about another character. The narration is hidden in the sense that it is not that playwright's direct comment.

## ***D. Conclusion***

Characterization is a very important aspect of dramatic technique. It is through it that the dramatist presents his story. A good story can only be really good and interesting if appropriate characters are created to tell the story through their actions. The playwright tries to create characters that are as close as possible to reality. He ensures that the characters are consistent and are properly motivated.

## **Meeting 10**

### ***E. Self Exercise***

a. Work in groups and answer the following questions:

1. Why the protagonist in tragedy is also called tragic hero?
2. What are the differences between confidant, foil, and caricature? What is the function of these minor characters in a drama?
3. Is it possible that characters in a drama are non-human being? Explain your reason!
4. If a character, who is characterized as an untrustworthy person, speaks of another character's nature, can we – as a reader/audience – simply trust him/her by considering what he/she says as a method of characterization? Explain your reason!
5. The characterization from name and physical appearance are sometimes unreliable, why? Explain your argument!

Choose a character in *Death of a Salesman* you are interested in and give the reason why the character is interesting. Write down your opinion in 200-250 words and share with your friends next week!

## Chapter 5

### Plot, Conflict and Action

Students are able to mention the definitions of plot, exposition, complication, crisis, falling action and resolution. Students are able to mention the functions of plot, exposition, complication, crisis, falling action and resolution in drama. Students are able to say the definitions of action, actor, and blocking.

#### Meeting 11 & 12

##### **A. Plot**

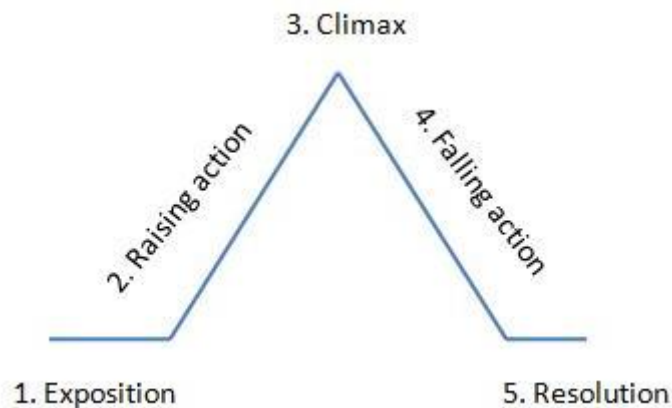
More than two thousand years ago the Greek philosopher Aristotle pointed out that the most important element of drama is the fable, what we call the story, or plot. Plot is the central aspect of all drama, for drama is primarily concerned with what happens. It means a series of incidents or episodes which follow after one another according to the dramatist's plan: every incident is connected- often in a very subtle way- to incidents which follow. The fable, said Aristotle, has to have a beginning, middle, and an end. As obvious as this observation seems, it emphasizes the dramatist's special need to engage an audience early and keep it engaged until the conclusion of the play. Recognizing the drama's strict time limits, Aristotle set down a number of conditions for developing the fable, or plot, in a clear and interesting way. According to Aristotle, the heart of the dramatic story is the agog, or argument, and the conflict surrounding this argument creates tension and incites interest. The two sides of the conflict, the pros and contras of the argument, are represented on stage by the protagonist and the antagonist. The protagonist may be one person or many, and the antagonist may be a person, a group, a thing, or a force (supernatural or natural). We often call the protagonist of a play its hero or heroine, and sometimes the antagonist it also the villain. The fundamental struggle between the protagonist and the antagonist is developed according to a set pattern that theater audiences have come to recognize and expect. In short, plays are made up of a series of sequential and related actions. The actions are connected by chronology. Conflict is the central struggle between two or more forces in a story, which may be internal or external.

##### **1. Plot Structure**

In a narrative or creative writing, a plot is the sequence of events that make up a story, whether it's told, written, filmed, or sung. The plot is the story, and more specifically, how the story develops, unfolds, and moves in time. This conventional structure can be varied, of course, but most dramatic literature starts from which the dramatist leads the



audience into the plot. A playwright can begin at the story's beginning and allow the audience to discover what is going on at the same time the characters do; or the writer can begin in the middle of things (in medias res), or even near the end, and gradually reveal the events that have already taken place. Plots are typically made up of five main elements:



### **a. Exposition**

The revelation of facts, circumstances, and past events, Establishing the essential facts about the characters and the conflict can be accomplished in a number of ways: from having minor characters reveal information through conversation to plunging the audience right into the action. Exposition can also be defined as the opening portion which provides the reader with the essential information on who, what, when, where

### **b. Rising action**

The building of interest through complication of the conflict. In this stage the protagonist and antagonist move steadily toward a confrontation. The part of a narrative preceding the climax. In this, the protagonist usually meets the complication of the plot to reach his goal

### **c. Climax**

The play's high point, the decisive showdown between protagonist and antagonist. The climax – the play's turning point – can be a single moment or a series of events, but once reached, it becomes a point of no return. It is also the greatest tension of the story. It often takes the form of a confrontation between the protagonist and antagonist.

### **d. Falling action**

It often gives the hints on what kind of ending that the story offers. It is also the unraveling of the plot, where events fall into place and the conflict moves toward final resolution.

## **e. Denouement**

The play's conclusion; the explanation or outcome of the action, the term denouement (literally an "untying") may be applied to both comedy and tragedy, but the Greeks used the word catastrophe for a tragic denouement, probably because it involved the death of the hero or heroine. It returns the characters to another stable situation. Whatever it is called, the denouement marks the end of the play: the lovers kiss, the bodies are carried off the stage, and the audience goes home.

Most dramatists employ this traditional pattern. Even when they mix in other devices, rearrange elements, and invent new ways to exhibit their materials, dramatists still establish a conflict; develop both sides of the argument, and reach a credible conclusion. After centuries of the after history, the basic structure of drama has changed very little. Catastrophe (in Tragedy): The catastrophe is the main action of the play and is often a death, usually the death of the hero or the heroine. The catastrophe, though depressing and usually unpleasant, satisfies because it fulfills the audience's expectations. It is almost always the logical result of the raising action and the falling action: the catastrophe is the death which the audience has expected for a long time.

## **2. Types of Plot**

We have tried so far to explain to you that plot is just the summary of the play's incidents. Although it includes the story-line, it refers basically to the organization of all the incidents into a meaningful pattern that has a beginning, middle and end. There are different types of plots and each is designed for a particular purpose. Some plots, for instance, are designed to achieve tragic effect and others the effects of comedy, satire, or romance. However all plays do not have what we might call good plots, that is, with the beginning, middle and end. So, we have different types of plots.

In a play, as said earlier, we have the main plot and subject (sub) plot. The main plot deals with the major events and the sub plot deals with other incidents which can be complete and interesting stories on their own. However, a skillful playwright uses the sub plot to advance our appreciation and understanding of the main plot. According to Abrams, "the sub plot serves to broaden our perspective on the main plot and to enhance rather than diffuse the overall effects" (129) of the play.

Aristotle divides plot into two – complex and simple plots. A simple plot is that in which the action is simple and continuous and in which a change of fortune takes place without reversal of the situation and without recognition. In a complex plot, on the other hand, the change is accompanied by a reversal of the situation or by recognition or by both. He also identified two types of plots (a) the unified plot and (b) the episodic plot. He refers to the unified plot as the well-made plot. In the unified plot, the incidents are presented in a logical order and there is a causal arrangement. What do we mean by causal arrangement? The play starts from the beginning followed by the middle and the incidents in the middle are consequences of what happened in the beginning and these are resolved in the end. It is

a kind of cause and effect presentation. The incidents will be so related that when anything is removed, it will create illogicality. In episodic plot, there is no causal relationship between the incidents. The only unifying factor is that the incidents are related or happening to one man. In unified plot, the removal of any incident affects the organic structure of the play, but in episodic plot, you can remove an aspect of the plot without changing or destroying the plot. It means, therefore, that the part that was removed is not necessary.

Death of a Salesman (one of the plays set for this course) has an episodic plot. It is made manifest more by the presentations of the incidents in Willy Loman's head, especially the appearances of his brother Ben. He recommends that a play should contain a single and not a double plot and condemned the episodic plot which is a plot in which the episodes have no probable or inevitable connection. He suggests that although plot is an imitation of an action, this must not be any action but an action in which the various incidents are constructed in such a way that if any part is displaced or deleted, the whole plot is disturbed and dislocated.

This is the unity of plot. A good plot must therefore not end haphazardly but must have a beginning, middle and an end, and should be well co-coordinated to give a coherent whole. The action which makes up the plot should be distinguished from a series of unrelated incidents because a plot must contain a logical unity within the play. It begins at a point and the middle raises the question which is answered in the end and that completes the action started in the beginning. All the incidents in the play are expected to contribute to the plot.

## **B. Conflict**

Irish playwright George Bernard Shaw once said "No conflict, no drama". Conflict is the basis of all good theatre and should therefore be an essential learning component in any high school drama course. Students of theatre must know from the outset that drama without conflict is usually very dull, indeed.

Conflict generally occurs when a character cannot achieve an objective due to an obstacle. This obstacle may be internal or external – between characters or between characters and their environment. Conflict can be shown in a variety of ways, for example through physical, verbal or psychological means. Conflict can be embedded in the structure of the drama (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, Drama Study Design, p.10) As stage plays begin their life as unperformed literature, let us examine the nature of conflict from a literary perspective.

### **Types of Dramatic conflict:**

## **1. Character vs. Self**

This is an internal conflict, meaning that the opposition the character faces is coming from within. This may entail a struggle to discern what the moral or “right” choice is, or it may also encompass mental health struggles. All other types of conflict are external—meaning that a character comes up against an outside force that creates the conflict.

## **2. Character vs. Character**

This is a common type of conflict in which one character’s needs or wants are at odds with another’s. A character conflict can be depicted as a straightforward fist fight, or as intricate and nuanced as the ongoing struggle for power in the HBO series *Game of Thrones*.

## **3. Character vs. Nature**

In a nature conflict, a character is set in opposition to nature. This can mean the weather, the wilderness, or a natural disaster. For example, in Ernest Hemingway’s *The Old Man and the Sea*, the main character, Santiago finally manages to reel in a fish after months and months of bad luck. He fends off sharks, who are trying to steal his prized catch, but eventually they eat the fish—leaving Santiago with only a carcass. This is the essence of the man versus nature conflict: man struggles with human emotions, while nature charges forth undeterred. Learn more about character vs. nature conflict in our complete guide [here](#).

## **4. Character vs. Supernatural**

Pitting characters against phenomena like ghosts, gods, or monsters raises the stakes of a conflict by creating an unequal playing field. Supernatural conflict also covers characters, like Harry Potter or Odysseus, who have a fate or destiny and struggle to accept the sacrifices that come along with it. Learn more about character vs. supernatural conflict in our complete guide [here](#).

## **5. Character vs. Technology**

In this case, a character is in conflict with some kind of technology. Think of the tale of John Henry, the African American folk hero. In American folklore, Henry was a former slave who worked as a steel-driver on the rail line. To prove his superiority over new technology, he raced a steam-powered rock drilling machine and won. However, he suffered a heart attack after winning the race. Learn more about character vs. technology conflict in our complete guide [here](#).

## **6. Character vs. Society**

A character vs. society conflict is an external conflict that occurs in literature when the protagonist is placed in opposition with society, the government, or a cultural tradition or societal norm of some kind. Characters may be motivated to take action against their society by a need to survive, a moral sense of right and wrong, or a desire for happiness, freedom, justice, or love. Learn more about character vs. society conflict in our complete guide [here](#).

## **C. Action**

In simple terms, action is the process of doing something or the performance itself. If somebody slaps you and you retaliate, there is an action. The series of events that constitute the plot in any literary work is referred to as action. It includes what the characters say, do, think and in some cases, fail to do. Action involves activity. This activity becomes more pronounced in drama where the action is presented in concrete form as the actors present the story to the audience for entertainment and education. In drama, especially during performance, you see the characters moving around to perform certain tasks, talk to one another, laugh, cry, fight, shoot or do any thing according to the needs of the moment. All these are dramatic actions. In the novel, you read the story as is told by the novelist and see the action in your imagination but in drama the dramatist presents the action through what the characters do or say. In fact it involves all the activities of all the characters in the play.

Drama is the only genre of literature in which the story is presented in dialogue from the beginning to the end. However, dialogue alone does not constitute dramatic action. What makes it drama is the action that is involved. Dramatic action includes facial expression, gestures and movements. So, what makes dialogue dramatic is the presence of action. It is only through action that the playwright can portray the human situations he chooses to dramatize. It is the action that propels the plot and helps to advance the theme. In simple terms drama is a story told in action by actors who impersonate the characters in the story on a stage.

Dramatic action is a "...series of incidents that are logically arranged by the playwright to achieve specific response like joy, pity, fear, indignation, ridicule, laughter, thoughtful contemplation, from the audience". (Brockett 68) Each character is specially created to fulfill the specific design of the dramatist. In *The Marriage of Anansewa*, for instance, Efua Sutherland deliberately created Ananse to be an intelligent, witty, crafty and easy-going man. His nature helps him to get not only a rich husband for his daughter but also ensures that the man who marries his daughter actually loves her. The playwright also advances her theme of excessive materialism and ostentation in Ghana through the easy-going nature and action of Ananse. If you have read the play, you will recall that Ananse, decides to go to church only when he became rich. It shows that people go to church to show off and display their wealth; according him:

The action in drama is usually organized in a climatic order with the scenes increasing in interest by increasing suspense and emotional intensity. In the play, from Ananse's action in the opening scene, when it appears that Ananse wants to sell his daughter Anansewa like 'some parcel to a customer', your interest is aroused. The next thing is to find out how he is going to do it. As the play progresses, and Ananse entangles himself in the mess, the suspense and emotional intensity is heightened. You can see now that dramatic action is constructed in such a way that it answers the suspenseful question, 'what happened'. Action

in drama involves gestures, facial expressions, inflexion of voice and movement. Some gestures and expressions actually present more actions than words.

Dramatic action also includes what the character fails to do. In Hamlet, the popular quote 'to be or not to be' refers to the action. Hamlet is contemplating on the proper action to take against his uncle who he suspects killed his father. He does not want to act until he is sure of it. He therefore organizes a play and presents a similar experience in the play. Luckily, he gets the desired effect as Claudius' reaction points to his guilt. It would have been possible for Hamlet to kill Claudius' immediately but that would have been the end of the play. So, Hamlet's inaction helps to increase the suspense and emotional intensity of the play.

## 1. Types of Dramatic Action

In the drama could be presented in the following three forms:

### a. Physical Action

The physical action in drama refers to the movements made by a character in the play. It is visible and may or may not involve dialogue. Physical action could in form of movements/gestures, mime or pantomime. These are explained in details below.

#### 1. Movement/Gesture

This includes the steps taken by the character while he is speaking or in the process of undertaking other tasks. Movement is used to describe mainly the actual movements like walking, running, pacing, kneeling, lying down, standing or sitting. Movement is simply the process of moving, change of place, position, or passing from one place to another. It involves the activities or whereabouts of a character or a group of characters. These movements are usually accompanied by dialogue. This differentiates it from mime and pantomime which are actions without words. Closely related to movement is gesture. Generally, gesture refers to body movements like position, posture, and expressions. Gestures are used by characters to express their thoughts, feelings, or as a rhetorical device. It could be used as a symbol to indicate intentions or evoke a response. Characters also use gesture a signal, motion, or an indication for his feelings or an action to taken by another character. In plays, you identify the movements and gestures through the dialogue and the stage direction. Can you identify the movement/gesture in this excerpt from The Marriage of Anansewa:

- AYA : [Entering to find him in this state] My son, is this weeping you're weeping?  
What is the matter?
- ANANSE : [Wringing out the handkerchief,] Mother!
- AYA : My stalwart son
- ANANSE : Mother. [He returns the handkerchief and acting like a man in conflict.  
Yells out:] Destroyers! Evil-doers! They won't rest until they have ruined me.  
Enemies whose outward appearance makes you think they are not  
enemies.
- AYA : [Wide-eyed with confusion] Enemies? It's that woman Christy, isn't it? The  
minute I met that woman here I felt instinctively that trouble marches  
alongside people of her kind.

ANANSE : [Bursting into fears afresh] Handkerchief! (Act 3, p52)

## 2. Mime

Another form of physical action is mime. Sometimes, certain actions are presented without words to show meaning for the purpose of entertainment by dramatists. This is mime. The Oxford Dictionary describes mime as a dumb show, mummer, pantomime, the use of gesture to indicate certain action or indication by sign language. It is regarded as a simple facial drama that is characterized by mimicry and the ludicrous representation of familiar types of characters. Mime is therefore the art or technique of expressing or conveying action, character, or emotion without words but using only gestures and movements. In other words, it is an expression of action or performance using such means. In a play, the actions in mime are usually enclosed in the stage direction and mostly in italics. Some of these mimes are flashbacks, that is those events from the past that are recalled to help explain certain things in the play but some of them are presented as part of the present action in the play. In *The Lion and the Jewel*, for instance, the mime on the arrival of the journalist in the village and the one on the road construction are used to recall past actions.

LAKUNLE: [A terrific shout and a clap of drums. Lakunle enters into the spirit of the dance with enthusiasm. He takes over from Sidi, stations his cast all over the stage as the jungle, leaves the right to-stage clear from the four girls who are to dance the motor-car. A mime follows of the visitor's entry into Ijunnle, and his short stay among the villagers. The four girls couch on the floor, as four wheels of a car. Lakunle directs their spacing then takes his place in the middle, and sits on air. He alone does not dance. He does realistic miming. Soft throbbing drums, gradually swelling in volume, and the four 'wheels' begin to rotate the upper halves of their bodies in a perpendicular circles. Lakunle, clownin the driving motions, obviously enjoying this fully. The drums gain tempo faster, faster, faster. A sudden crash of drums and the girls quiver and dance the stall. Another effort at rhythm fails, and the 'stalling wheels' give a corresponding shudder, finally, and let their faces fall on their laps. Lakunle tampers with a number of controls, climbs out of the car, and looks underneath it. His lips indicate that he is swearing violently. Examines the wheels, pressing them to test the pressure, betrays the devil in him by seizing his chance to pinch the girl's bottom. One yells and bites him on the ankle. He climbs hurriedly back into the car, makes a final attempt to restart it, gives it up and decides to abandon it. Picks up his camera and helmet, pockets a flask a flask of whisky from which he takes a swig, before beginning the trek. The drums resume beating, a different darker tone and rhythm, varying the journey. Full use of 'gangan' and 'iya ilu' The 'trees' perform a subdued and unobtrusive dance on the same spot. Details as a snake slithering out of the branches and poising over Lakunle's head when he leans against a tree for a rest. He flees, restoring his nerves shortly after by a swig. A monkey drops suddenly on his path and gibbers at him before scampering off. A roar comes from somewhere, etc. His nerves go rapidly and he recuperates himself by copious draughts. He is soon tipsy, battles violently with the undergrowth and curses silently as he swats the flies off his tortured body. Suddenly from somewhere in the bush comes the sound of a girl singing. The Traveler shakes his head but the sound persists. Convicted he is suffering from sun-stroke, he drinks again. His last drop, so he tosses the bottle in the direction of the sound, only to be rewarded by a splash, a scream and a torrent of abuse, and finally, silence again. He tip-toes, clears away the obstructing growth, blinks hard and rubs his eyes. Whatever he has seen still remains. He whistles softly, unhitches his camera and begins to jockey himself into a good position for a take. Backwards

and forwards, and his eyes are so closely glued to the lens that he puts forward a careless foot and disappears completely. There is a loud splash and the invisible singer alters her next tone to a sustained scream. Quickened rhythm and shortly afterwards, amidst sounds of splashes, Sidi appears on stage, with a piece of cloth only partially covering her. Lakunle follows a little later, more slowly, trying to wring out the water from his clothes. He has lost all his appendages except the camera. Sidi has run right across the stage, and returns a short while later, accompanied by the Villagers. The same cast has disappeared and re-forms behind Sidi as the villagers. They are in an ugly mood, and in spite of his protests, haul him off to the town centre, in front of the 'Odin' tree.

Everything comes to a sudden stop as Baroda the Bale, wiry, goateed, and tougher than his sixty-two years; he emerges at this point from behind the tree. All go down, prostrate or kneeling with greetings of 'Cabbies' 'Baba' etc. All except Lakunle, who begins to sneak off?] (14-15)

This is also a good example of the play-within-the-play. You know that the playwright has no time and space to explain or describe every situation and event as much as the novelist. That is why he uses the stage direction to present the action that could not be incorporated in dialogue.

### **3. Pantomime**

Pantomime is synonymous with mime. It is a term for silent acting; the form of dramatic activity in silent motion, gesture, facial expression, in which costume are relied upon to express emotional state or action. It was popular in ancient Rome where it was a dramatic entertainment in which performers expressed meaning through gestures accompanied by music. It also refers to some traditional theatrical performances originally significant gesture without speech, in mime, but now consisting of a dramatized fairy tale or stories with music, dancing, topical jokes and conventional characters frequently played by actors of the opposite sex. It is chiefly performed in Britain around Christmas. The actual pantomime opens on Boxing Day. Pantomime is also used to dramatise absurd or outrageous behaviour.

### **b. Reported Action**

In dramatic action, sometimes, it is not possible to present every action on stage. This could be as a result of the prevalent convention or because the action cannot be realized on stage. In the Classical Period, for instance, violence was not presented on stage. The playwrights were expected to maintain single settings indoor actions and violence were reported on stage. In King Oedipus, the death of Jocasta is reported on stage. In The Marriage of Anansewa, the taxi that takes Aya and Kweku to Nanka is not brought on stage because the stage cannot contain it. Also in Arms and the Man, the cavalry charge by Sergius is reported and not presented because it will be very difficult to bring a cavalry on stage.

### **c. Mental Action.**

Mental action is an action that takes place in the character's mind. In most cases, mental action is manifested in facial expressions



### ***D. Conclusion***

in a drama performance, this usually requires the essential ingredient of conflict. This applies to student works created by both improvising and scripting. In certain circumstances, dramatic works are developed in the classroom that are snippets, workshop presentations etc created for a very specific purpose. These may not require conflict. But as a golden rule, students of theatre should always remember George Bernard Shaw's famous quote "No conflict, no drama".

### ***E. Self Exercise***

Explain logical and illogical action in drama

Identify the conflict in Doll House

## Chapter 6

### Setting and Theme

Students are able to mention setting and theme definitions. Students are able to mention types of settings and theme in drama.  
Students are able to mention the function of the setting and theme in the drama.

#### Meeting 13

### A. Setting

Setting is the location of a play. It is the time and place when and where the action of the play takes place. Setting is very important in a play because it helps us to appreciate the background of the play. Also in productions it helps the designers to design appropriate locale, atmosphere, and costume for the play. You can identify the setting through the names of characters. When you read *The Marriage of Anansewa* or *The Lion and the Jewel*, you would know immediately through the names of the characters that the former is set in Ghana and the latter in Nigeria. Some playwrights use known landmarks through dialogue or in stage direction. Ola Rotimi uses landmarks a lot. Try to read his *Our Husband has Gone Mad Again* and through these landmarks you will know that the play is set in Lagos. Shakespeare uses known landmarks. Have you read *Hamlet*? In *Arms and the Man* it is more obvious as the playwright uses real life experiences to show that the play is set in Bulgaria. Can you identify its setting through the known landmarks? There are different types of setting.

#### *1. Types of Setting*

##### **(a) Geographical/Physical/Occupational:**

This is the actual geographical location of the story and whatever surrounds the place where the story is located. It also includes the manner of daily living of the people. This helps in locating the story; for example, it helps you to know if the action of the play takes place in an urban centre or a village, or a bush, or a market place and so on. You can identify the physical setting easily in some plays because the playwright mentions some known landmarks like the names of towns or other important places in the town. In the play, *Hamlet*, the physical setting is easy to identify because of the fact that two of the major characters in the play are addressed as the "Prince of Denmark" and the "King of Denmark". Physical setting also includes the manner of daily living of the people. This helps in locating the story; for example, it tells if the play has an urban or rural setting? The stage direction in the

opening scene of the play, *The Lion and the Jewel* shows that the play is set in a village and that the play starts in the morning as can be seen in the following excerpt. Can you identify some other landmarks that will help you to locate the play appropriately?

#### MORNING

A clearing on the edge of the market, dominated by an immense 'odan' tree. It is the village centre. The wall of the bush school flanks the stage on the right, and a rude window opens on to the stage from the wall.

There is a chant of the 'Arithmetic Times' issuing from this window. It begins a short while before the action begins. Sidi enters from the left carrying a pail of water on her head. She is a slim girl with plaited hair.

A true village belle. She balances the pail on her head with an accustomed ease. Around her is wrapped the familiar broad cloth which is folded just above her breasts, leaving her shoulders bare.

Almost as soon as she appears on the stage, the schoolmaster's face also appears at the window. (The chanting continues - 'Three times two are six', 'Three times three times three are nine' etc.) The teacher, Lakunle now disappears. He is replaced by two of his pupils aged roughly eleven, who make a buzzing sound at Sidi, repeatedly capping their hands across their mouths. Lakunle now re-appears below the window and makes for Sidi, only stopping only to give the boys admonitory whacks on the head before they can duck. They vanish with a howl and he shuts the window on them. The chanting dies away. The schoolmaster is nearly twenty-three. He is dressed in an old-style English suit, threadbare but not ragged, clean but not ironed, obviously a size or two too small. His tie is done in a very small knot, disappearing beneath a shiny black waist-coat. He wears twenty-three-inch-bottom trousers, and blanco-white tennis shoes.

LAKUNLE: Let me take it.

SIDI: No.

LAKUNLE: Let me: [Seizes the pail. Some water spill on him.]

SIDI: [delighted.] There. Wet for your pains. Have you no shame?

LAKUNLE: That is what the stewpot said to the fire. Licking my bottom? But she was tickled  
Just the same.

SIDI: The school teacher is full of stories This morning. And now, if the lesson is over, may I have the pail?(1-2).

Apart from the information you get from the stage direction on the setting, you can deduce from the short dialogue above that the play is set in a village. In most cases, it is in the village that young girls go to the stream to fetch water especially in the morning.

#### **b Temporal/Historical Setting:**

This is the period in which a story takes place. This includes the date, the season, and the general atmosphere in the locale like war, fuel scarcity, democratic or military rule. This, like the physical setting, could be deduced from the dialogue or from the stage direction. It could be stated in some commentaries, especially the ones on the background of the play. Sometimes, some publishers include the

commentaries in the play. In *Arms and the Man* for instance, the opening part of Act 1, a date is given in the stage direction. This gives the reader a clue to the historical setting of the play. It says:

ACT 1 Night: A lady' bedchamber in Bulgaria, in a small town near the Dragoman Pass, late November in the year 1885. Through an open window with a little balcony a peak of the Balkans, wonderfully white and beautiful in the starlit snow, seems quit close at hand, though it is really miles away. The interior of the room is not like anything to be seen in the west Europe. ...(15)

### **(c) General Environmental Setting:**

The social, moral, emotional, mental and religious backgrounds of the story. This is highlighted through dialogue, stage direction and the characters interpersonal relationships. In *Arms and the Man* for instance, George Bernard Shaw presents a graphic picture of the Bulgarian way of life. (The playwright "was able to pin the action down to actual geographical locations and to a real life war. He took care to incorporate descriptions of Bulgarian life" The playwright admits that many aspects of the play were based on actual facts. (Introduction to *Arms and the Man*)

## **B. Content/Theme**

In the analysis of a play, the first issue that comes to mind is the theme. Theme is the main idea in a play that permeates the entire play. How do you identify the theme of a play? Themes are identified through the dialogue, actions and manifestations in the actions of the major characters as they interact with other characters in the play. The interpersonal relationships of the characters help to highlight and advance that particular idea. Themes in drama include corruption, love, revenge, and many others. The theme is the message which the playwright wants to send across to his audience and a play could have more than one theme. The playwright could draw his germinal idea from an incident or event in his contemporary society. It could also be drawn from history, legend, myth or folklore but the important factor is that there is a message he sends to the audience.

Most playwrights try to make their societies better through the exploration of the negative impacts of these ideas in the societies. A playwright is normally influenced by his background and this is reflected in his plays. In Nigeria many contemporary playwrights explore the themes like military dictatorship, insecurity unemployment, bad leadership, bribery and corruption. You will agree with me that these and more are the vices that plague the contemporary Nigerian society The playwright is said to be the conscience of his society, a teacher and an entertainer. He therefore strives to educate, inform and entertain his audience. This explains why he presents his theme through an interesting story and chooses the most appropriate dramatic form. For example, Bernard Shaw decides to dramatise the themes of love

and war through comedy, while Shakespeare presents his theme of revenge through tragedy. The theme of the story is what gives it significance because without a recognizable and definable theme, a story will be trite and pointless. A clearly focused theme is the story's "motivating force". In Oedipus Rex for instance, the theme is man's quest for his identity.

The sub-theme is man's helplessness in the hands of fate or the gods. If we take the main theme, we will see that Oedipus' search for his true parents leads him to kill his father and marry his mother, while his search for the cause of the plague in his kingdom and the murderer of King Laius leads to his search for his own identity. The search for his own identity leads to his doom. Everyman explores the summons of death for mankind and man's readiness to meet his creator. In explicating this theme, the play dramatizes the struggle between virtue and vice for supremacy in a man's life. The question of man's ultimate fate is also explored. It concludes with the fact that only man's good deed is important for his salvation.

Consciously or unconsciously, every playwright has his theme in mind in choosing the style to adopt. The characters, the setting, the language, the plot, are chosen in such a way that should advance the major theme of the story. However, you must bear in mind the fact that a story may have one or more themes. It is also possible that each reader may discover a different theme or a multiplicity of themes in the same play. You should not worry about this. Literature is open to different interpretations and as literary students, you should be able to identify your position and substantiate it with facts from the play. You can see that in the example of Oedipus above, I used the first theme of man's search for his identity. If I decide to use the theme of man's helplessness as the major theme, I will state how Oedipus was born and there was a prophecy that he will kill his father and marry his mother. His parents believe that they can avert the curse by killing him. Unfortunately the servant who was asked to kill him gives him to a shepherd who in turn hands him over to his childless master. Oedipus is brought up in Corinth but unfortunately, he tries to run away from the same curse (fate) when he realizes that he is doomed to kill his father and marry his mother. In running away from fate, he fulfills that prophecy.

The theme of a play could be given in one word but ideally it is presented in sentence or statement. A play could be complex and it might be difficult to give the theme or the central idea in one word. However, you should realize that whether it is in one word or in one sentence, you must explain it further based on the play. You should also be in a position to identify other themes, if the play has other themes. Usually the theme is identified after you must have read the entire play. Finally, theme is the controlling idea in a play which the reader extracts consciously as he reads the text. It could be literal or symbolic. It is that idea or message which the playwright wants to share with or convey to his audience. In most cases, the theme emerges after the exploration of the entire play. Some plays have more than one theme. The major one which stands out is the main theme while the others are called the sub-themes.

## **C. Subject Matter**

The subject matter is the topic of discussion in the play. It is easier to get the subject matter from the title of the play. Theme is the central idea of the play while the subject matter is the object of discussion from which the theme is extracted. It means therefore that the theme is subsumed in the subject matter. In *The Lion and the Jewel*, for instance, the subject matter is the fame of Sidi (the Jewel) a young and beautiful girl and her seduction by the Bale (the Lion) who is sixty two years old. In *The Marriage of Anansewa*, the theme is love but the subject matter is the marriage of Anansewa. From the two examples, we conclude that the subject matter is indeed the object of discussion which other events and incidents in a text or work help to highlight. This is the statement the play makes about the social world. In most cases, plays treat common human problems and make statements that have universal validity or relevance for all ages. Each playwright treats any of these human problems from his own perspective to give it a touch of originality and uniqueness. This is the style.

## ***E. Self Exercise***

List and discuss the themes in *Arms and the Man*.

## Chapter 7

### The dramatic nature, language and rhetoric and Drama Performance

Students are able to conceptualize audience and stage drama performances  
Students are able to understand on the dramatic nature, language and rhetoric

#### Meeting 14

The understanding on the dramatic nature, language and rhetoric will help us understand more the specific characteristics of drama. We can also see by examining these features that there many aspects in drama which need to be noticed and emphasized. Thus, the explanation of each is praiseworthy.

#### ***A. The Nature of Drama***

The uniqueness in drama is related to the fact that it has two kinds of audience: those who read the manuscript and those who watch the performance. Each of this type of audience needs specific attitudes and knowledge to be able to enjoy a play either as a text or as a performance. Thus, defining the nature of drama means the revelation of the text as well as the performance. Both are interesting to discuss.

##### 1. The Text

The text of a play is the printed (or handwritten) play. As there is no narration or description in drama, its most notable features are dialogue, monologue, and stage directions. By understanding this, we can study the written language of a play in order to arrive at certain conclusions regarding the play's artistic values, which must be examined easily through reading the play.

2. Dialogue is the conversation of two or more characters.

3. A monologue is spoken by a single character that is usually alone onstage.

4. Stage directions are the playwright's instructions about facial and vocal expression, movement and action, gesture and body language, stage appearance, lighting, and similar matters.

The three aspects mentioned above play important roles in delivering the actions and events in the play

## ***B. The Performance***

In drama performance, the audience must be willing to accept certain things in the imagination. For example, if several years pass between one act and the next while the curtain has been lowered for only ten minutes, the playgoer must accept the passing of time. The audience must also accept the fact that when one character whispers to another, it must be loud enough for everyone in the theater to hear; while it should also be noted that the so-called "asides" which the other characters are not supposed to hear are obviously delivered in loud enough voices for them to hear. Those are called dramatic conventions, which the audience has to keep in mind to help them visualize mentally the way the play works when performed on stage.

## ***C. Language, Imagery, and Style***

The language, imagery, and style used by the dramatist may convey intimate details about the characters' lives and their deepest thoughts such as their loves, hatreds, hopes, and plans. To bring such revelations before the audience, dramatists employ words that have wide-ranging connotations and that acquire many layers of meaning. They also make sure that the words of their characters fit the circumstances, the time, and the place of the play. For example, Miller's Willy Loman speaks the language of modern America, and Shakespeare's Hamlet speaks Elizabethan blank verse. Besides, dramatists employ accents, dialects, idiom, or jargon to indicate character traits. For example, the gravediggers in Hamlet speak in an English lower-class dialect that distinguishes them from the aristocratic characters in the play. The words used by the characters also define the relationships within the play. This is because the language used by a particular character when talking to one person in the play will be altogether different from the language he uses when talking to another character. For example, the way in which Othello talks to Cassio defines the relationship between them as one existing between commanding officer and subordinate officer, while the way in which Othello talks to his new bride defines his marriage relationship. As we see the different kinds of language employed by the same character throughout the play, we are led both to an understanding of the rounded personality of that character and to an understanding of the relationships he has with other characters. Certain aspects such as a simile (in which we have a literally presented analogy between two things introduced by "like" or "as"), a metaphor (in which we have an implied analogy between two things) are designed to draw our attention to certain characteristics of one thing through an association of that thing with other things. Often we will find in drama the alternation of light and darkness. Here images support certain moral values, as light tends to become associated with goodness and

## ***E. Self Exercise***

Identify the language, style and imagery used in Glass Menagerie



## Chapter 8

### Drama Analyses

1. Students are able to interpret a play text including its themes, characters, style, mood, structure and context.
2. The ability to analyze a play text in relation to its social context and performance conditions

#### Meting 15

There are important things need to be done previously in analyzing drama that is defining the play and describing its elements. By doing this one can really grasp the core idea related to what is really happening in the play.

#### ***A. Defining the Play***

As there are many different kinds of drama, it is only logical that we begin our analysis of a play with an extended definition. This does not simply mean to say that we point out that the play is a comedy or a tragedy, but rather that we attempt to describe accurately the particular world of a particular play. We should try to think of all the dimensions of any drama and then briefly describe the way these dimensions are discovered in a particular drama. In defining a play we can do the following.

#### ***B. Describing the World of Drama***

This is the most essential task of a student in a drama class: to explain and describe the world of the play. We can take Arthur Miller's Pulitzer Prize-winning play, *Death of a Salesman*, and begin our definition of the play by mentioning that it is a dark drama which illustrates the despair of an unsuccessful human being. From beginning to end, Miller takes the audience into a very somber world possessed by the main character Willy Loman. As Loman relives his life constantly, he almost ceases to live at all, and his final suicide only magnifies the kind of lifeless world in which he has lived. Thus, we can say that the world of the play is dark and dreary: there is much anxiety and little hope. Miller has presented a world intentionally miserable and unsatisfying, and at the same time meaningful.

#### ***C. Describing the Kind of Play***

We have to recognize the importance of placing a play in the generic sense. It is important to explain in the beginning of any analysis that the play does belong to the type known as this or that. Then we may even want to note that the play accordingly makes use of certain conventions common to this kind of play. For example, if it is a heroic play we can notice that the hero is typically a great lover and warrior, and like so many heroes of heroic plays is torn between love and duty. In other words, the process of defining the play- which is how every

analysis of every play should start- is aided by reference to the kind of play and the conventions of that kind of play. In this case we can also note the expected conventions of it and the extent to which the playwright makes use of them.

#### ***D. Describing the Physical World of the Play***

It would be pointless to enter immediately into a discussion of the play without some brief explanation of the physical world in which it takes place. This means, first of all, explaining the location. Where does the action take place? Do we move from one part of the world to another as in *Antony and Cleopatra* or do we stay in one home almost the whole time as in *Death of a Salesman*? If the location has some symbolic or historical significance, this should be explained at the beginning. Furthermore, we also need to denote the time of day. What is the length of the play? Are there intervals of time between scenes? Acts? Does the whole play take place in the classically specified twenty-four-hour period? In so doing, by placing the play in time and space, we are clarifying the larger world with which the playwright is concerned, that is, the world of action and character. If we did not comment on the location and the passage of time of the play, we would assume too much in our reading.

#### ***E. Describing the Elements of Drama***

The major literary aspects of drama are the text, language, characters, plot, structure, point of view, tone, symbolism, and theme or meaning. In analyzing drama we need to understand each of these. Thus, you can determine, for example, one dominating idea embedded in the play; find out the major as well as the minor characters, their roles, and the relationships among them; reveal some sort of correlation between the action and the theme by asking, for example why certain events are more important than others; discover how diction, figurative language, imagery patterns, and even logic are used in the play. Symbolism can also be significant ideas when analyzing dramas as symbolism may give us the core meaning of the story or determine our deep understanding of it. Each of the elements of drama will be described further in the next chapter

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