

**Topic:** The Elements of Drama  
(using Cornell Notes)

**Essential Question**

How do readers use understanding of setting, characterization, stage directions, and plot to interpret the text?

# How can we define a Drama???

- Drama is a story or piece of literature involving characters, conversations, and usually some sort of conflict that is enacted onstage for a live audience.



# How do we identify the people Involved in a Drama?

- Playwright – the author of the play.
- The narrator is the person who tells part of the story to the audience (usually told in 3rd person omniscient)
  - (does not interact with characters; sets up the story the audience may need to know)
- Protagonist – The main character of the play.
- Antagonist – The character in conflict with the main character.
- Secondary Characters/Cast- all other characters other than protagonist and antagonist.

# How do we category the major Genres of Drama?

- **Tragedy** -- In general, tragedy involves the ruin of the leading characters (something depressing or disastrous happens).
- **Comedy** -- is lighter drama which is amusing and ends well

What can you infer about these graphic features?



# How does the set impact the plot?

- Construction/Scenery on the stage that shows **time/place/environment**
- Small movable items that the actors use to **make actions look real**



# How do we compare Acts to Scenes?

- Plays are often broken into acts, which are large chunks of the play often containing multiple scenes (smaller chunks).

How do we compare sentence structures?

- Plays have acts which are large chunks, and plays have scenes which are small chunks.
  - compound sentence
- Plays have acts, large chunks, and plays have scenes, small chunks.
  - compound sentence with appositives

# How do we recognize other parts of a play?

- Prologue- an introductory scene (usually where a narrator summarizes the main action or setting of the scene)
- Epilogue- an appendix (usually a concluding address) to a play

# How can we use **dialogue** to characterize protagonists and antagonists?



## F.A.S.T.R. and Character Traits!

F- eelings?

A-ctions?

**S- aying?**

T-houghts

R- elationship with others  
(character interactions)

- ▶ Dialogue-conversation between or among characters
- ▶ Dialogue brings characters to life by revealing their character traits (personalities and by showing what they are thinking and feeling) as they react (through dialogue) to other characters.



# How do we identify Stage Directions?



- Found in brackets [ ]
- Sometimes *italicized*

How do we use Stage Directions to infer key events about the plot or setting?

- Stage directions are instructions given in the text of a play.

1.) Staging Directions- these describe what happens on stage during the scene (entrances, exits, major movements of characters, fights)

2.) Scene Directions - are the basics of where and when a particular scene is set (TPE) (what is happening as the lights come up or what has happened between the scenes)

## (con.) Stage Directions

3.) Character Stage Directions- directions give a clue to the style of the line for the character's dialogue.

- EX:

- CITIZEN 1: Well, you've heard about gun-fighting good guys like Wild Bill Hickok and Wyatt Earp.
- CITIZEN 8: But we'll tell you a name that strikes even greater fear into the hearts of bad men everywhere.
- ALL (**except LARRY**): Lightning Larry!
- CITIZEN 2: We'll never forget the day Larry rode into our little town of Brimstone and walked into the Cottonmouth Saloon. He strode up to the bar and smiled straight at the bartender.
- LIGHTNING LARRY: (*with a huge smile*) Lemonade, please!



## EXIT TICKET

Partner A: So do you notice about the structure of a drama/play?

Partner B: So how do the stage directions impact the plot (sequence of events in the story)?