The Elements of Drama

Theater Arts

Essential Question

 How is drama different from prose or poetry?

 How is drama different from television?

Drama

- Comes from the Greek Word,
 "Dran"
- Means "To do" or "To Act"
- The Doing/Acting Makes Drama

What is Drama?

"Drama is life with the dull bits cut."

-Alfred Hitchcock



What Makes Drama Unique?

Drama has one characteristic peculiar to itself—it is written primarily to be performed, not read.

Drama is a **Presentation of Action...**

...through actors

(the impact is direct and immediate)

Drama is a **Presentation of Action...**

...on a **stage** (for a captive audience)

Drama is a **Presentation of Action...**

...before an **audience**(suggesting a communal experience).

Theatre



Where a play takes place

- Audience Etiquette
 - No unnecessary movement or noises
 - No cell phones, talking, standing, walking, etc.

•Why?

- Shows respect for the actors, the playwright, and the play
- Allows actors to concentrate and perform their best



 Playwright-the author of a play (script)

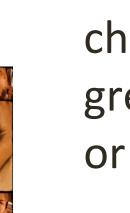
Actors-the people who perform

Types of Drama

 Comedy is a form of drama that has a happy ending. Humor comes from the dialogue and situations.



Types of Drama



 Tragedy is a form of drama in which events lead to the downfall of the main character, often a person of great significance, like a king or hero.

- Script- the written pages of a play.
- Scripts are divided into Acts and Scenes.
- Scripts for stage and screen have strict but very different formats.

We will study scripts specifically in a few weeks.

 Acts- long sections of a play, made up of multiple scenes, usually designed to separate the play into its main parts and to give the audience a "break" from the performance.

 Scenes- shorter sections of a play, usually each scene occurs in one location at a specific time.
 Multiple scenes make up an act.

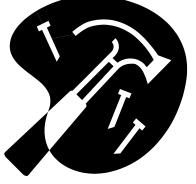
Set

 Construction on the stage that shows time/place



Props

Items used onstage by actors







Dramatic Speech

 Dialogue- two or more people talking



Monologue- one person talking

Soliloquy - one person speaking their thoughts out loud for the audience

Stage Directions

- Found in brackets [] or parenthesis ()
- Describe scenery, action, and how characters speak

UR	UC	UL
Upstage Right	Upstage Center	Upstage Left
R	С	L
Stage Right	Center	Stage Left
DR	DC	DL
Downstage Right	Downstage Center	Downstage Left

Conflict



 The internal or external struggle that creates dramatic tension.

External Conflict

Character vs. Character

When one character has a problem with another character in the story

External Conflict

Character vs. Nature

When the character is opposed by a natural force

External Conflict

Character vs. Society

When the character has a problem with the society--such as laws, culture, or social norms

Internal Conflict

Character vs. Self

When the character struggles with a decision or his/her own identity.

Characterization

 Is the playwright's technique for revealing the PERSONALITY of a character.

Direct or Indirect



Direct Characterization

 When the playwright TELLS the audience what the personality of a character is.

 Usually found in character description under "Cast of Characters"

Direct Characterization

Cast of Characters

GIRL: An early teen, on the cusp of change; strong and determined with overcompensating swagger.

MAN: In his 30's, lost in a broken world, hardened by the road; a father learning to talk to his daughter.

Indirect Characterization

 When the playwright SHOWS the audience things that reveal the personality of the character

Can be described by the STEAL method

S.T.E.A.L.

- Speech
- Thoughts
- Effect on others
- Actions
- Looks

SPEECH

GIRL

Maybe the water's still on.

MAN

Don't get your hopes up.

GIRL

Yeah.

MAN

Plenty of water in the ocean though.

THOUGHTS

MAN

No. I'll go. Wait here.

[MAN EXITS. GIRL finds picture of their family and stares longingly at photo.]

Effect on Others

MAN

The whole world is different.

GIRL

Think the ocean's still there?

MAN

[MAN stands.]

Maybe. There's only one way to find out.

[MAN and GIRL shoulder their packs and EXIT.]

Actions

GIRL

It's all different now. What happened before doesn't matter. We aren't those people anymore.

[GIRL tears up paper and lets the pieces fall to the ground.]

Looks

AT RISE:

GIRL and MAN ENTER, DOWNSTAGE of proscenium, STAGE LEFT. They are dressed in travel-worn clothes and carry large packs.

Narrative

a story with a beginning, middle and end

Plot

The series of events that make up the story