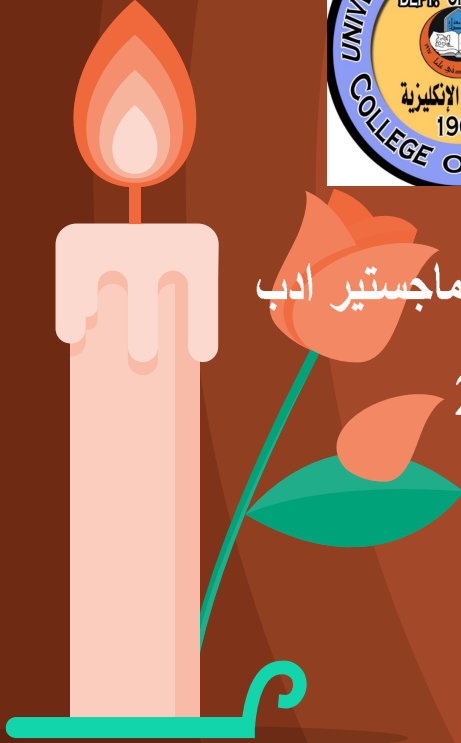


مسرح عصر النهضة

جامعة الموصل كلية الآداب قسم اللغة الانكليزية ماجستير ادب

كورس أول مسرح عصر النهضة 2024-2025

أ.م. غاده بكر مرعي





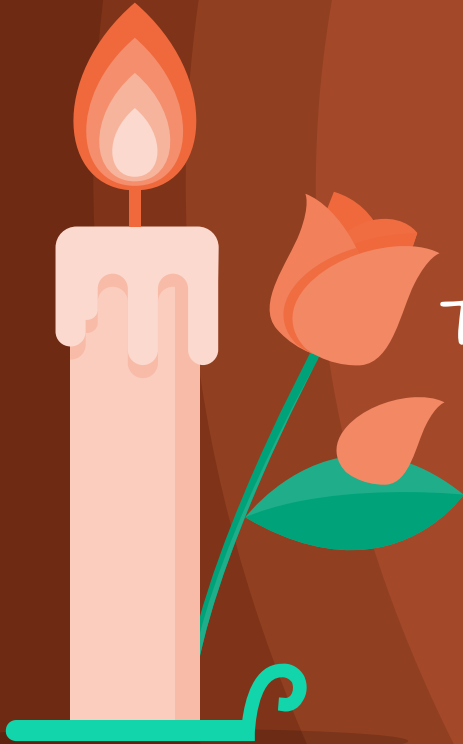
# William Shakespeare: *The Comedy of Errors*

Like many of Shakespeare's comedies, *The Comedy of Errors* begins with an inflexible law, and the human dilemma caused by the law's impersonal enforcement. Because of a history of enmity between Ephesus and Syracuse, the play proposes



The laws of the two cities  
prohibit travel between them.  
If any citizen of one is found  
in the other, he is bound to die.

The twin plot, like the storm at  
sea, contributes at once to the  
physical comedy and to the  
psychological or emotional  
unfolding of the plot





As a key element of force, mistaken identity leads to comic confrontations, where the audience enjoys its superior knowledge—tipped off by a key differentiating piece of costuming or casting.

The main plot of the play is comic, although it is framed by Egeon's death sentence and the menace of the advancing day. The action takes place in a public street and a market, in front of three houses.





★ *The Comedy of Errors*, or mistaken identities, leads Adriana to take the wrong man for her husband and the bachelor Antipholus to fall in love with his supposed wife's sister.

★ *The Comedy of Errors* offers a fascinating roster of female roles. Each character in her way a type that will recur in later Shakespeare plays: wife, sister, friend, comic servant







Perhaps unexpectedly, it is the w  
voices the more “feminist” sentiment  
unmarried sister who speaks up  
traditional wifely subservi

One of the great structural cleverness of t  
is that the mode of Farce lead the aud  
have confidence in its own superior kno  
we know there are two sets of twins,  
even know which is which.





But there is of course one great secret kept from the audience. The fact that Abbess is Egeon's wife, and the mother of the two Antipholuses, is revealed for the first time less than a hundred lines before the end of the play.



# William Shakespeare. King Lear

King Lear has often, and rightly, been regarded as a subline account of the human condition.

The play focuses at once on patriarchy and paternity, on the interaction between the role of the king and the role of the father.



For Shakespeare's time, the idea of fatherhood was central to notions of governance. The structure of the family household should take the same form as the political structure.

Lear is viewed primarily as a father, the head of the household, the father of daughters. His kingship recedes into a national world of fairy talented nightmare. The play begins with viewing a vision of social order.



A trumpet is sounded to declare the entrance of the powers of the state: King Lear, his sons-in-law and his daughters.

Eyesight, space and liberty—all key themes in the play, all elements of which Lear and his fellow sufferer Gloucester will be bereft by the play's end. Cordelia declares that she loves her father according to the bond of parent and child.



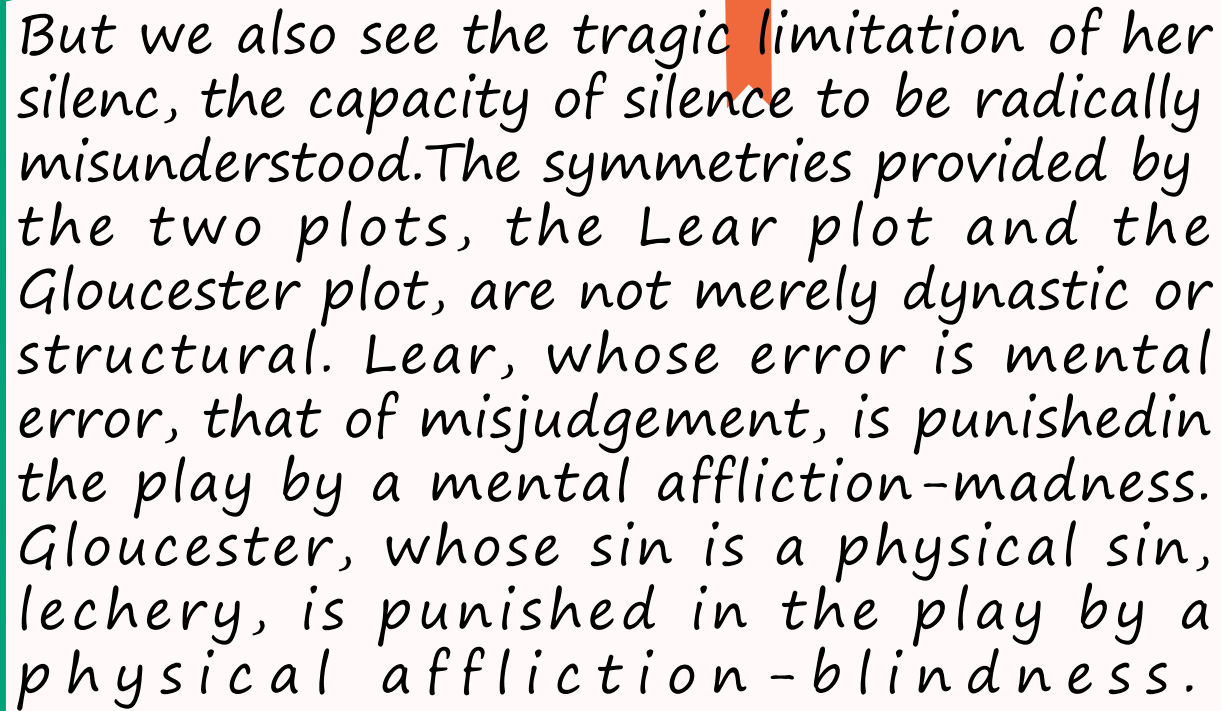
This is the exact “natural” meaning of love. But Lear mistakes the natural for the unnatural.

Cordelia’s rhetoric of silence will continue throughout the play, and will reach what is perhaps its most striking point when she herself becomes a condition of nature.

Once she sees her father suffering in the bewilderment, she appears as “sunshine and rain at once”

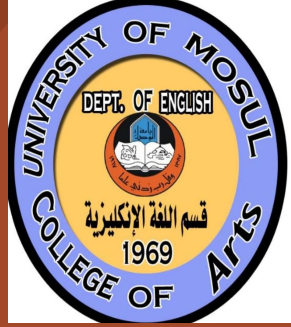






But we also see the tragic limitation of her silence, the capacity of silence to be radically misunderstood. The symmetries provided by the two plots, the Lear plot and the Gloucester plot, are not merely dynastic or structural. Lear, whose error is mental error, that of misjudgement, is punished in the play by a mental affliction—madness. Gloucester, whose sin is a physical sin, lechery, is punished in the play by a physical affliction—blindness.





المسرح الحديث

جامعة الموصل كلية الآداب قسم اللغة الانكليزية ماجستير ادب

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أ.م. غاده بكر مرعي





## Modern Drama: Introduction

Modern drama generally refers to plays written in the 19th. and 20th. centuries. It deals with real situations, real characters and real incidents, using the everyday language



This drama tackles the suffering of common man. Hence, we have anti-hero drama.



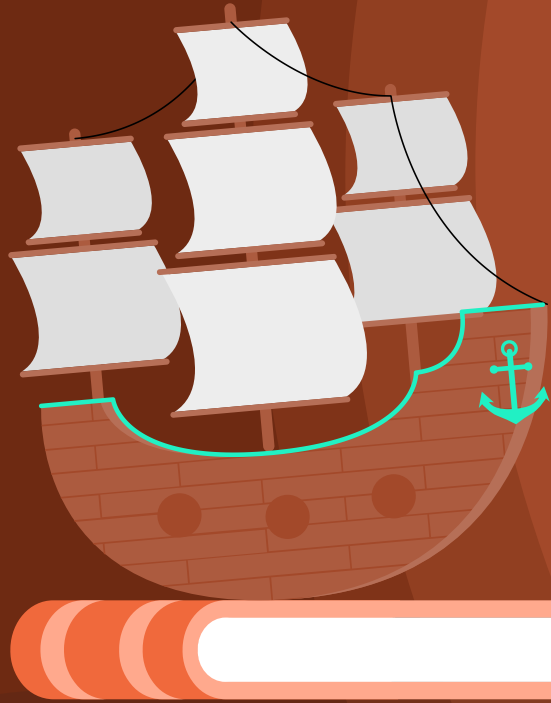


What recognizes traditional drama from modern drama ?

What differentiate traditional drama from modern one is basically the theme and style. Traditional drama dealt with supernatural elements, fate, heroic deed... Whereas Modern drama deals with realism, absurdism, surrealism, expressionism and naturalism.

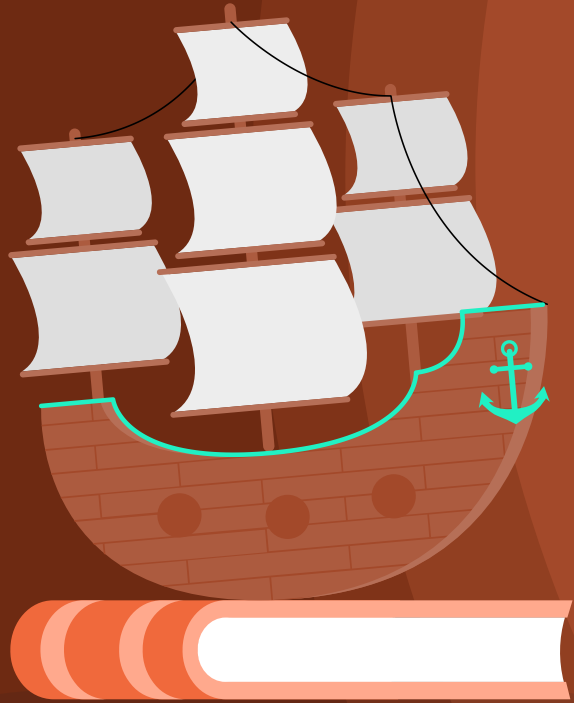


# How far Realism suited the domain of Drama ?



Drama basically involves direct observation of human behavior. Thus the need to use contemporary setting and time periods. Also, it usually deals with temporary life and problems. Common man and common situations were subjects for drama, not only the upper class elite is concerned.





Realistic drama quickly gained popularity as the everyday person is concerned and identified with the situations characters show on stage. The Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen is considered the father of modern realism in theatre. He displayed realism in a perfect way in his two masterpieces: *A Doll's House* and *Hedda Gabler*.



Naturalism, an extreme, heightened form of realism, appeared during the 19th. Century. It presents reality in as convincing and natural ways as possible so as the external details are highly emphasized. In terms of style, naturalism is an extreme form of realism. In Naturalism, stage time equals real time, costumes, sets and props are accurate and detailed.





# Henrik Ibsen. A Doll's House

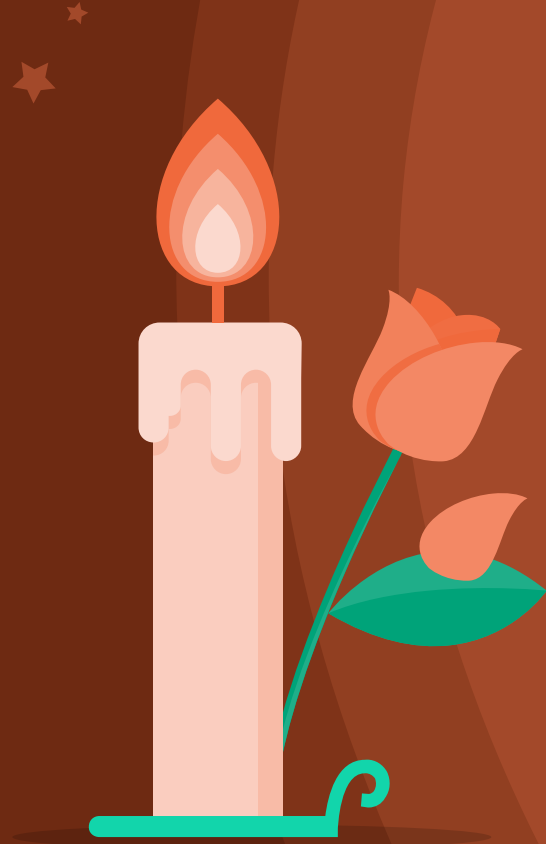
The deep structure of the play as a modern myth of self-transformation ensures its importance as a work that honors the vitality of the human spirit in women and men. More than one literary historian has identified the precise moment when modern drama began: December 4, 1879, with the publication of Ibsen's *A Doll's House*. It is about the slamming of the door as Nora Helmer shockingly leaves her comfortable home, husband and children for an uncertain future of self-discovery.



Nora is the richest, most complex female dramatic character since Shakespeare's heroines. Ibsen was the first dramatist since the Greek to challenge the myth of male dominance. Nora's slamming of the door announces the gender revolution. What led Nora to utter distraction is her natural feelings on the one hand and the belief in authority on the other hand.







The play deals with the moral conflict weighed down and confused by her trust in authority, she loses faith in her own morality and in her fitness to bring up her children. The bitter fact is that a mother in modern society retires and dies once she has done her duty by breeding and growing up the race.





The play is actually a tragedy on gender relations. Ibsen tackled the audience on an unprecedented topic: a contemporary respectable marriage. His husband justifies his treatment of his wife when he tells her that he would sacrifice his honor. In return, he asserts that millions of women like her among them, sacrificed their lives for love and family life.





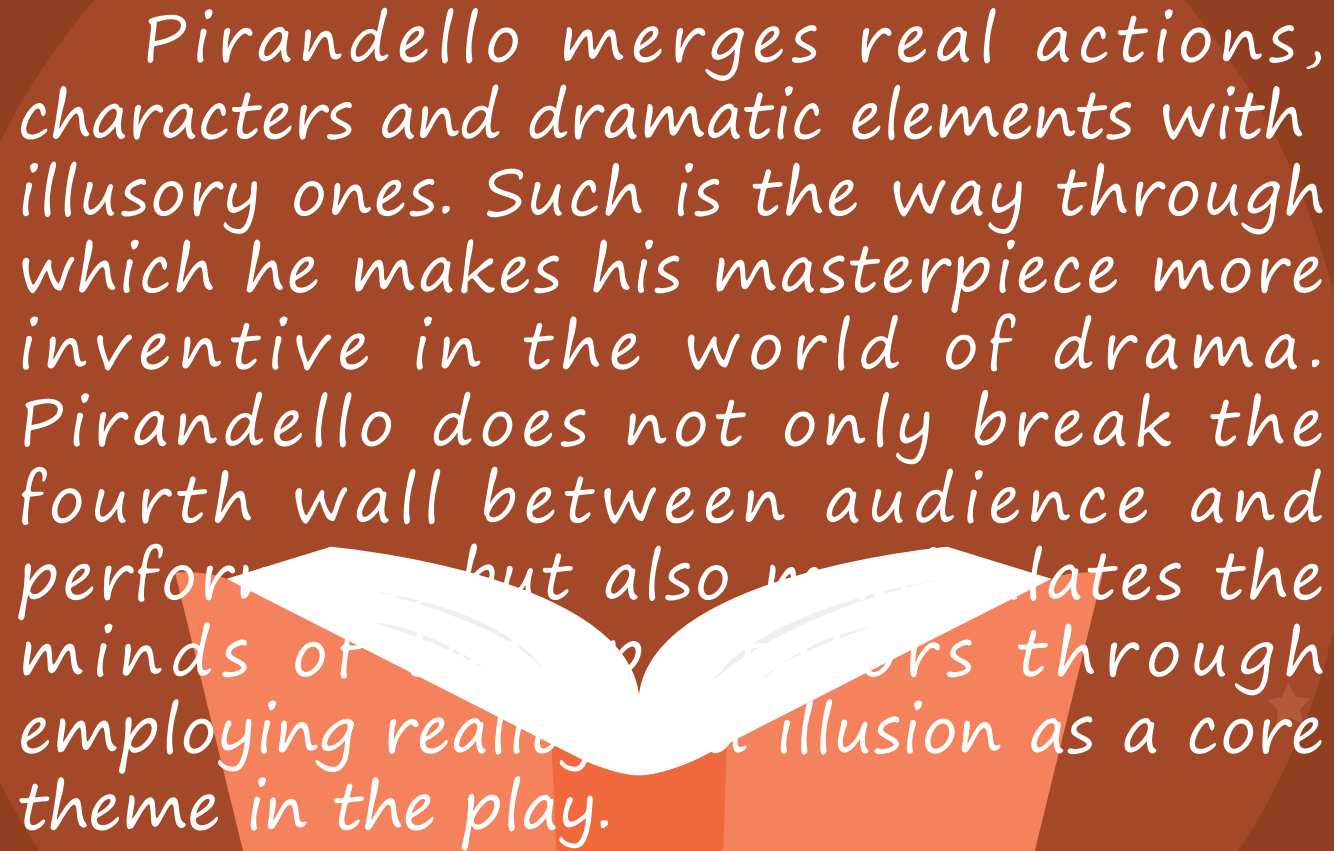
The play displays a message that man's authority in the home should not go unchallenged. The prime duty of anyone is to arrive at an authentic human identity, not to accept the role determined by social conventions. The play serves as a debate over feminism and women's rights. Ibsen opened the doors widely for the discussion about the absolute role of life for both women and men.



Luigi Pirandello. *Six Characters in Search of an Author*

The play discusses the search for an identity, which appears as the most decisive concern mimicking the absurdity of life or the existence of human being. In this play, the characters think that the right method to search for their identity is to go to the theatre where they can meet a director. He is, according to them, the only one capable of creating identities to them.





Pirandello merges real actions, characters and dramatic elements with illusory ones. Such is the way through which he makes his masterpiece more inventive in the world of drama. Pirandello does not only break the fourth wall between audience and performer, but also manipulates the minds of performers through employing reality and illusion as a core theme in the play.

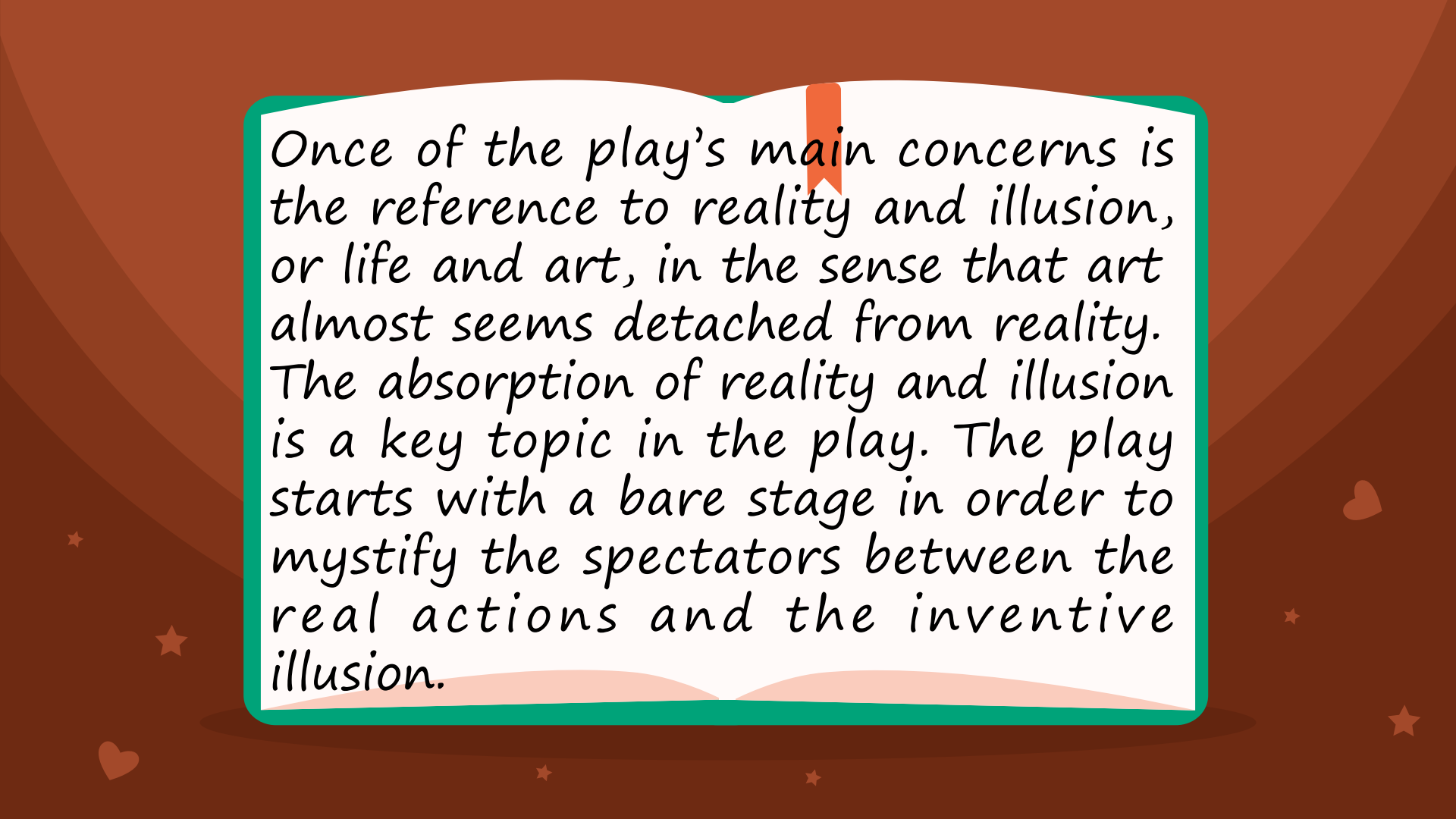
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Pirandello insists on the incompleteness of the characters' identities by presenting them with no real names. This is due to the fact that these characters are basically in need of an author to give them identities. The moment they gain this identity they will turn into somebody. Hence names turn to be given to them in reference to their existence.







Once of the play's main concerns is the reference to reality and illusion, or life and art, in the sense that art almost seems detached from reality. The absorption of reality and illusion is a key topic in the play. The play starts with a bare stage in order to mystify the spectators between the real actions and the inventive illusion.



Pirandello's characters wear masks to prevent them from any social integration. They find themselves defined by their original author in a way that is never pleasant to them. The characters suffer from depression that motivates them to search for an alternative. They have an internal conflict between their real personalities and their essential needs. The play is meta-theatre. It is an allegory of theatre. Pirandello mixes reality and illusion to create a new genre of writing drama: the meta-theatrical drama.