



# DRAMA (2<sup>ND</sup> YEAR) INTRODUCTION TO 16<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY ENGLISH DRAMA PART 1

**Prepared by:**

**Lect. Huda Abdullah Abdulateef**

# OUTLINES

- 🎭 History of Drama
- 🎭 Drama
  - 🎭 Origin
  - 🎭 Definition
  - 🎭 Elements

# HISTORY OF DRAMA



**Greek Drama: 400-500 B.C.\***  
(tragedy, comedy, amphitheatres,  
annual competitions)



**Romantic Era: 1800-1880**  
(Keats, Byron, Shelly)



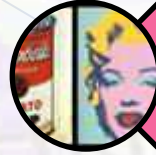
**Medieval: The Middle Ages 1200-1500  
A. D.**  
(Liturgical, morality; example: *The  
Castle of Perseverance*)



**Modern Era :1880-1960**  
(absurd, regular drama, Beckett,  
Pinter)



**Elizabethan & Jacobean: 1500-1642**  
(Christopher Marlowe, William  
Shakespeare and Ben Jonson )



**Contemporary Age: 1960-Present**  
(Parody, Tom Stoppard's  
*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern  
Are Dead*)



**Restoration & 18<sup>th</sup> Cent. Drama:**  
1660-1800 (John Brute's *The Provoked  
Wife*)

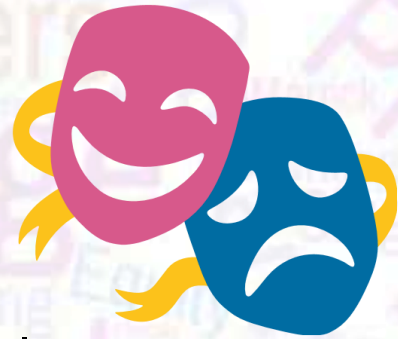
\* The terms Before Christ and Anno Domini are used to label or number years in the Julian and Gregorian calendars.  
The meaning of B.C. is Before Christ.  
The meaning of A. D. is Anno Domini or a Year referring to the year of Christ's birth.

# DRAMA: ORIGIN



- 🎭 The word **“drama”** is derived from the Greek word **“dram”** means to do, to perform; a kin to Greek **“drainein”** means to be ready, to do and technically it means deed, action on the stage.
- 🎭 This meaning indicates that it has a particular relation with action.

# DRAMA: DEFINITION



**Drama** is **an imitation of life** in which dialogues and acting are in full consonance with real life where **acting and performance** occupy the first place and **dance and dialogues** occupy the second place.

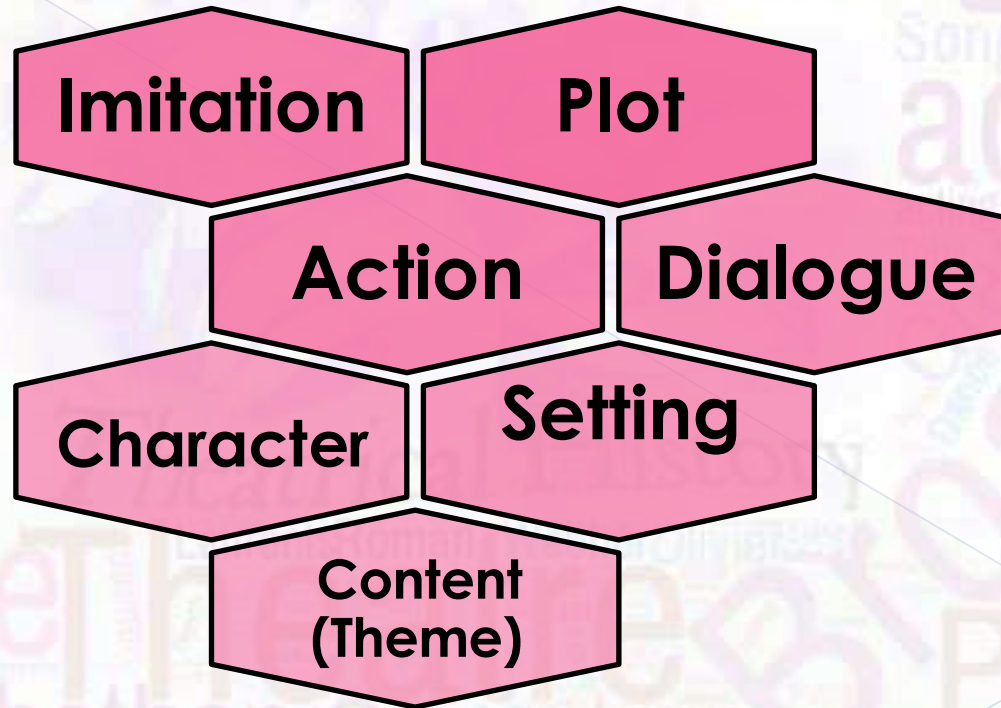
# DRAMA: DEFINITION



**Aristotle**  
**Greek Philosopher**

- 🎭 According to Aristotle, drama is simply 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.

# ELEMENTS OF DRAMA



# (1) IMITATION

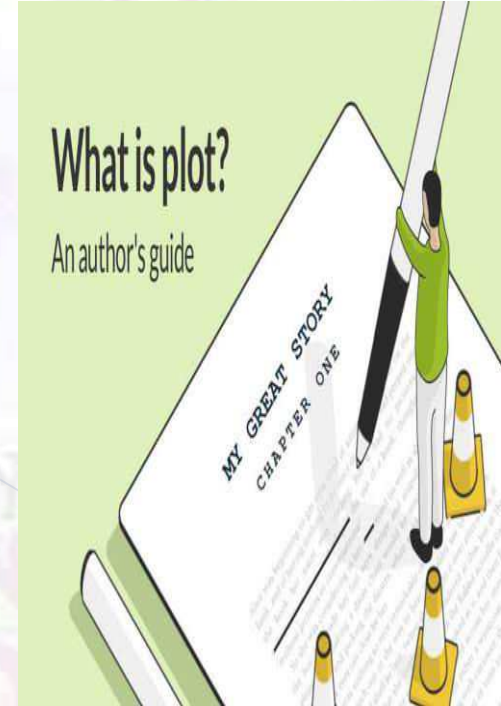


In simple terms, imitation means the act of copying somebody or something. It is an act of copying the way somebody talks and behaves, especially to entertain.

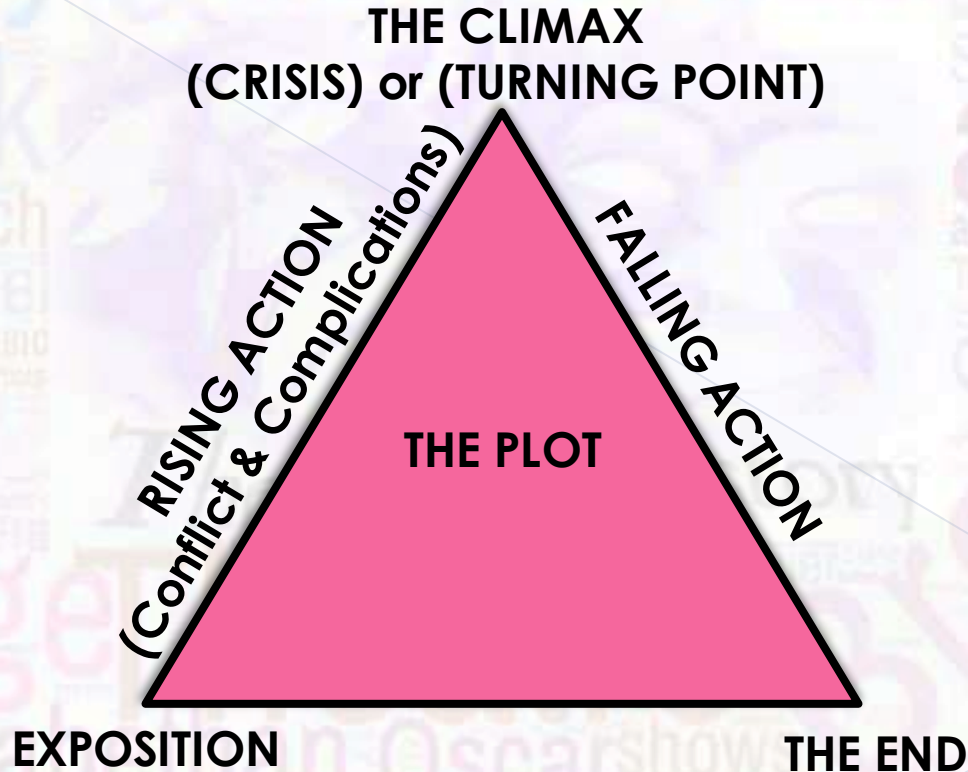


## (2) PLOT

- 🌸 A literary term refers to the arrangement of sequence of events in any literary work there is beginning, development, a climax and a conclusion.
- 🌸 This is not always the same in every literary work. According to Aristotle, plot is the imitation of the action. It is the arrangement of the incidents. Usually, there is main plot and sub plot(s) in plays.
- 🌸 In dramatic plot, unlike in the novel where the author describes the characters and incidents they are involved in, the playwright presents the characters in action.
- 🌸 This means that plot in drama develops through what the characters do or say, what is done to them, and or what is said about them or to them.



# STRUCTURE OF PLOT



# STRUCTURE OF PLOT

## EXPOSITION

- The beginning contains the exposition or the setting forth of information about earlier events, the identity of the characters and the present situation.

## RISING ACTION (Conflict & Complications)

- Another aspect of the beginning is the point of attack which is the moment at which the main story starts as a potential conflict is identified (can be called rising action).
- This is more obvious in classical plays usually, is focused early on the potential **conflict** or **a question** and its resolution leads to the end of the play. Such plays start with the inciting incident.
- This incident** is usually an occurrence that sets the main action in motion.
- The middle is made up of series of complications. **A complication** is a new element which changes the direction of the action. It leads to the discovery of new information.

## CLIMAX (CRISIS)

- The series of complications culminate in crises and climax.

## FALLING ACTION




- The part of a literary plot that occurs after the climax has been reached and the conflict has been resolved.

## THE END


- The end or denouement is the last part of the play. Here issues are unraveled, untied and resolved.

# (3) ACTION & DRAMATIC ACTION

## ACTION

-  Action is the process of doing something or the performance itself.
-  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.

## DRAMATIC ACTION

-  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.

# (4) DIALOGUE



- 🌸 Dialogue is a discussion between two or more people. In literary works, it refers to a composition in a conversational form.
- 🌸 In the novel it is incorporated in the story, that is, as the story progresses, the novelist gives two or more characters the opportunity to discuss or comment on certain issues and the story continues in prose form.
- 🌸 However, in drama, the entire story is presented in dialogue.
- 🌸 Dialogue is a highly specialized form of conversation that is designed to suit various contexts and modes of drama.

## (5) CHARACTERS



Characters refer to the people who act the play. 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.

# (5) CHARACTERS



Characters in a play must not necessarily be **human beings**. **Animals** or **things** can be used as characters.



**Human  
Beings**



**Animals**



**Objects**



\* This depends on the intention of the playwright and the style he wants to adopt.

# TYPES OF CHARACTERS

## 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.



# (5) CHARACTERIZATION



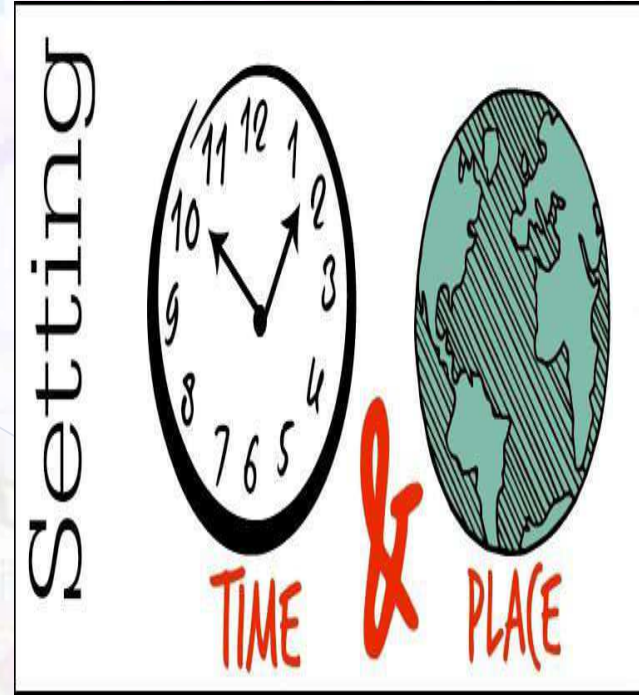
**Characterization** is the playwright's imaginative creation of characters that can effectively dramatize his story.

The action of the play is presented through such characters.

The playwright's ability to craft the play in such a way that each character blends well in the plot is called characterization.

# (6) SETTING

- It 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.
- We can identify the setting through the names.



# (7) CONTENT/THEME



- 🌸 Theme is the main idea in a play that permeates its entire.
- 🌸 The theme of a play can be 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.

# FURTHER READING

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[accessed 1 September 2019]

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[accessed 9 September 2019]



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**Plays Musical**

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**Mundo**

**Laurents Roman Webber Oliver**

**Gypsy**  
**festival**

**costume Sondheim**

**Comedy Tony Rodgers**

**her**  
**ned**

**Merrick**  
**writing**  
**Sing**

**Equity**

**Song**

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**my**

**Greek**  
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# DRAMA (2<sup>ND</sup> YEAR) INTRODUCTION TO 16<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY ENGLISH DRAMA PART 2

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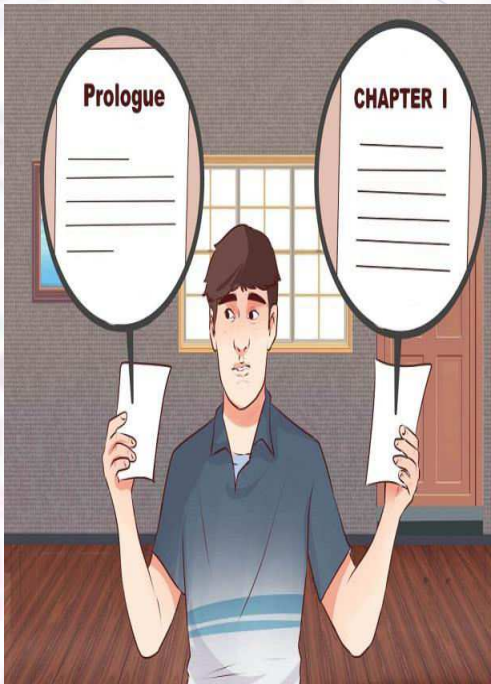
# OUTLINES

## Dramatic Conventions

-  Prologue
-  Epilogue
-  Interlude
-  Soliloquy
-  Aside
-  Chorus /Narrator
-  Play-within-the Play



# PROLOGUE

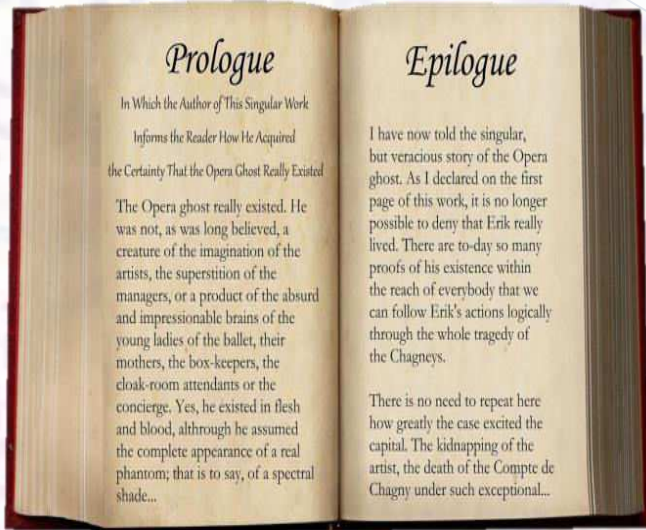


This is the introductory part of the play. It could be an opening scene, a speech or an address.

In most cases, it introduces the action and makes a statement on what the audience should expect in the play.

In many plays the prologue foreshadows the events in the play and sometimes gives a background to the play, for example Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*.

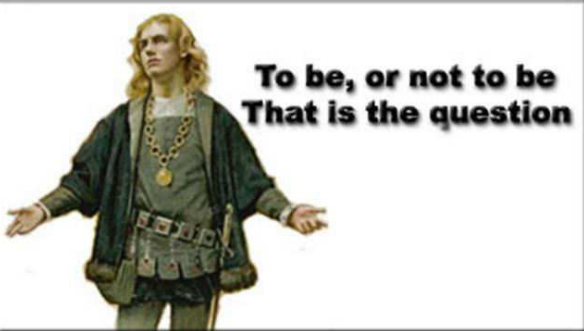
# EPILOGUE



This is the direct opposite of the prologue. It is presented at the end of the play.


It sums up the action of the play and in some cases,

makes a statement (an advice or a lesson to be learnt) on the action or events presented in the play.



**To be, or not to be  
That is the question**

# SOLILOQUY



**To Be  
Or  
Not To Be**  
by  
William  
Shakespeare

/sə'li:ləkwi/ - so-lil-o-quy

## soliloquy

(1) (noun) *speech you make to yourself;* (2) (noun) *a (usually long) dramatic speech intended to give the illusion of unspoken reflections;*

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Soliloquy is a speech made by a character when he is alone.

The audience hears it but the other characters are not expected to hear it.

It is very common in Renaissance plays.

# ASIDE

- ❖ Aside is a dramatic convention in which a character speaks to himself or makes a comment in the presence of another character.
- ❖ However, that other character is not expected to hear the comment but the audience hears it.

What is an aside?



ASIDE

# CHORUS /NARRATOR

## CHORUS /NARRATOR

- 🌸 The use of chorus is a dramatic convention that was adopted by playwrights, especially in the Classical Age, to comment on the events of the play.
- 🌸 In any play that has a chorus/narrator, the playwright uses it to supply the information that could not be woven into the dialogue. In many cases it serves as the authorial voice.

## PLACE OF CHORUS

- 🌸 The chorus is not usually part of the main cast so does not participate actively in the action of the play.
- 🌸 In most cases they stand or sit by the side of the stage and make their comments at the appropriate time.
- 🌸 In *Oedipus Rex*, the chorus is made up of the elders of Thebes.

## DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE CHORUS AND THE NARRATOR

- 🌸 The narrator performs the same function as the chorus.
- 🌸 The difference is that usually the chorus is made up of two or more characters while the narrator is only one character.
- 🌸 Each playwright uses the chorus or the narrator to suit his purpose.

# PLAY-WITHIN-THE PLAY



A very good example of the play-within-the-play is *The Mousetrap* in *Hamlet*. Shakespeare uses the technique to confirm the claim made by the ghost.

As the name suggests, a play-within-the-play is a play that is created in another play.

Usually it is a complete play with a beginning, middle and an end.

It has its own theme which in many cases is related to the theme of the main play.

It is created for a particular purpose.

# FURTHER READING

Rafiq, M., 2019. *Origin of Drama in English Literature* . [Online]

Available at:

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costumes Sondheim





# DRAMA (2<sup>ND</sup> YEAR) INTRODUCTION TO 16<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY ENGLISH DRAMA PART 3

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# OUTLINES

- 🎭 Elizabethan (Renaissance Drama)
- 🎭 General features
- 🎭 Authors & Works
- 🎭 Dramatic Conventions of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century Drama




# ELIZABETHAN (RENAISSANCE DRAMA): GENERAL FEATURES

Climax came during the Elizabethan Age:


- 🌸 Queen Elizabeth supported the arts more than any other ruler of the time.
- 🌸 Threats of closing the theatre due to the plague were often stopped because of her.
- 🌸 Financially assisted some troupes and theaters.
- 🌸 Drama became the national literary manifestation of the time: the theatres were open to everybody.
- 🌸 Moralities and interludes were still a living memory, since they had instilled a great interest in drama in the people.
- 🌸 A new interest in classical drama had been introduced by Humanism.

# AUTHORS AND WORKS






## Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593)

-  Introduced important use of blank verse.
-  Shakespeare's main competition.
-  Author of *Doctor Faustus* (story of a man who sells his soul), *Tamburlane the Great* and *The Jew of Malta*.

## Ben Jonson (1572-1637)

-  Master of English comedy.
-  Author of *Volpone*, *The Alchemist* and *Every Man in His Humour*.

## William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

-  The greatest dramatist of all time.
-  The characters form the center of interest in Shakespeare's plays.
-  Iambic pentameter/blank verse.
-  Author of *Romeo and Juliet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth* and others.
-  Also wrote 154 sonnets.

# Dramatic Conventions of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century Drama

## VARIOUS CONVENTIONS

- The drama was conventional, not realistic: poetry was the most obvious convention,
- others included asides, soliloquies,
- boys playing the roles of women,
- battles (with only a few participants) and duels might result from an exchange of words,
- the daylight convention (many scenes are set at night, though the plays took place in mid-afternoon under the sky),

## TIME, EAVESDROPPING & EXITS

- a convention of time (the clock and calendar are used only at the dramatist's discretion),
- the convention of "eavesdropping" (many characters overhear others, which the audience is privy to but the overheard characters are not), and movement from place to place as suggested by the script and the audience's imagination.
- Exits were strong, and when everyone departed the stage, a change of scene was indicated.

## SCENERY, COSTUMES AND DANCING

- There was relatively little scenery. Scenery was mostly suggestive; for example, one or two trees standing in for a whole forest.
- The elaborate costumes—for which companies paid a great deal of money—supplied the color and pageantry.
- Minimal scenery and limited costume changes made the transitions between scenes lightning-fast and kept the story moving.
- There was often dancing before and after the play—at times, during.

# Dramatic Conventions of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century Drama

## CLASSES, COURTIERS & FOREIGN COUNTRIES

- A healthy proportion of Elizabethan plots revolve around the upper classes.
- At the top of the food chain are the king and queen, or duke and duchess.
- Attending these folks at court were those nobles known as courtiers. Courtiers could be wise advisors, evil villains, honorable friends, revenge seekers and practical jokers.
- The plays very often take place in foreign countries, especially Italy, though Spain and ancient Greece can also serve as settings.

## WOMEN, MEN & COMIC CHARACTERS

- Women were simply expected to be easily seduced, due to natural weakness in their character. And yet, there are numerous examples of saint-like women, who are frequently the most admirable characters in a play.
- Men, too, could be honorable or sluttish.
- There is no shortage of comically self-important characters; dull-witted fools; drunkards; and beggared citizens and abused servants.
- These were all sources of humor.

## CLOWNS OR FOOLS OR JESTERS

- And of course, many plays feature characters known as "clowns" or "fools": these were, broadly speaking, characters licensed or known to be deliberately humorous. They could be officially appointed court jesters, or simply servants with parts written to be "wisely-foolish." Such characters could be used to comment on the wisdom, or lack thereof, of the other characters.
- Actually, the clowns were the great headliners of the Elizabethan stage prior to the rise of the famed tragedians of the late 1580s. Every company had a top clown along with the tragedian—Shakespeare's company was no exception. The clowns also played many of the great comic characters.

# Dramatic Conventions of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century

## Drama

### ELIZABETHAN STAGE, DISGUISE, KEEP A WATCH

- The Elizabethan stage had a platform which was located higher than stage level at the back of the stage – the “balcony”, if you will. Actors could appear and speak from the balcony.
- Characters often would wear disguises to affect some plan or another.
- keep a watch out for self-referential dialogue: that is to say, characters frequently compare their situations to the stage.

### SOLDIERS & FOLLOWERS

- An employed soldier was a happy soldier. Men who made a living at arms were useful members of society only when there was a war on. Once a war ended, and the soldier dismissed from service, he could be expected to become a parasite, usually a beggar, or, if he was lucky, the dependent of a pitying man of wealth.
- Men and women of wealth, power or influence would be expected to have “followers”.

### MASQUE

- Existing before Elizabethan England and also outliving it, the masque was normally performed indoors at the King or Queen's court. Spoken in verse, a masque involved beautiful costumes and an intellectual element appropriate for the mostly educated upper class. Masques were allegorical stories about an event or person involving singing, acting and dancing. Characters wore elaborate masks to hide their faces.



# Dramatic Conventions of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century Drama

## PRESENTATIONAL ACTING STYLE

- It is generally agreed by scholars Elizabethan acting was largely presentational in style. Plays were more overtly a "performance" with clues the actors were aware of the presence of an audience instead of completely ignoring them as part of their art. Movements and gestures were more stylised and dramatic than one might ordinarily expect in a modern naturalistic or realistic drama, speech patterns were heightened for dramatic effect, and the use of conventions such as the aside, prologue, epilogue and word puns directly connected characters to the audience watching. The aside, the prologue, the soliloquy and the epilogue were all variations on a character's direct address to the audience when staged.

## DIALOGUE

- Elizabethan plays commonly consisted of dialogue that was poetic, dramatic and heightened beyond that of the vernacular of the day. While often the lower class characters' speech was somewhat colloquial (prose), upper class characters spoke stylised, rhythmic speech patterns (verse). Shakespeare took great care in composing dialogue that was sometimes blank (unrhymed), but at other times rhyming (couplets) and often using five stressed syllables in a line of dialogue (iambic pentameter).

## PLAY WITHIN A PLAY & STAGECRAFT

- This Elizabethan convention was a playwriting technique used by Shakespeare and others that involved the staging of a play inside the play itself. It was not a flimsy convention, but rather one that was used judiciously and with purpose.
- In terms of stagecraft, Elizabethan dramas used elaborate costumes, yet quite the opposite for scenery. Acting spaces were largely empty (bare stage) with isolated set pieces representing many of the same and minimal use of props (a single tree equalled a forest, a throne for a King's palace).

# Dramatic Conventions of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century

## Drama

### OATHS AND VOWS

- Oaths and vows were sacred.
- Any oath or vow made directly to Heaven or God was seen as inviolable.
- A character's willingness to break a vow, or to tempt another to break a vow, was a good measure of the moral code of the character.
- A particularly important vow was the contract for marriage.
- When a man and woman swore to marry each other, especially in front of witnesses, their vows were considered unseverable, with serious repercussions returning on those who flippantly broke them. Indeed, such promises were legally enforceable.
- Respectable adults kept a continuous and close watch on their reputations.
- Men would not stand for any insult, explicit or implied; to be accused of cowardice was especially shameful.

### Oaths and Vows



### COMPRESSION OF TIME

- If you pay close attention, you will notice a technique playwrights frequently used to dramatically build tension, a tactic we might call compression of time.
- “Compression of time” exists when an impossible number of things occur in a brief amount of “time”.
- Also, when the physical traits of a character are commented on, we may assume that the role was likely written for a particular actor who had those traits.

# FURTHER READING

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