



DRAMA LIT TERMS GUIDED NOTES

DRAMA

- Literature in which plot and characters are developed through dialogue and action; literature in play form



ACT

- A major unit of action in a play; similar to a chapter in a book. Depending on the length, a play can have as many as 5 of these.



SCENE

- This unit in a play indicates a different time and place. Some acts have several of these.



TRAGEDY

- A dramatic work that presents the downfall of a dignified character or characters who are involved in historically or socially significant events; events are often set in motion by an error in judgment; usually ends in death.

ROMANCE

- A dramatic work that explores the complex side of love and centers around an obstacle that is preventing love between two people.



HISTORY

- A type of drama in which the events mimic/chronicle historical events and shares the same characteristics as a tragedy.



COMEDY

- A dramatic work that is light and often humorous in tone, usually ending happily with a peaceful resolution of the main conflict.



PLAYWRIGHT

○ A person who writes plays.



SCRIPT

- The written text of a play or film



STAGE DIAGRAM

- A diagram for actors and directors to help with stage directions and placement of characters, props, and movement. It is furthermore meant to show the levels of the stage.



STAGE DIRECTIONS

- Indicates how actors are intended to interpret the dialogue; serve as a guide to directors, set and lighting designers, performers and readers. Normally in italics and/or parentheses



DRAMATIC CONVENTIONS

- A set of rules which both the audience and actors are familiar with and which act as a useful way of quickly signifying the nature of the action or character.



ALLUSION

- An indirect reference to another literary work or to a famous person, place, or event.



PARADOX

- A statement that seems to contradict itself but is, nevertheless, true.



OXYMORON

- A figure of speech in which two opposite ideas are joined to create an effect.



SPECTACLE

- An event or scene regarded in terms of its visual impact; a visually striking performance or display.



COMIC RELIEF

- A humorous scene, incident, or speech that is included in a serious drama to provide a change from the emotional intensity; breaks the tension.



DIALOGUE

- Written conversation between two or more characters in either fiction or non-fiction; gives insight to the characters' qualities, personality traits, and reactions to other characters.



MONOLOGUE

- An extended speech by one character to another.



SOLILOQUY

- A speech in which a character speaks thoughts aloud; character is typically on stage alone and not directly addressing the audience.



ASIDE

- A dramatic device in which a character speaks his or her thoughts aloud, in words meant to be heard by the audience but not by other characters.



BLANK VERSE

- Unrhymed poetry written in iambic pentameter; each line has 5 pairs of syllables; imitates the natural rhythms of English speech.



IAMBIC PENTAMETER

- A metrical line of five feet, or units, each of which is made up of two syllables, the first unstressed and the second stressed.



TRAGIC HERO

- A character in a drama who is of noble birth heroic or potentially heroic qualities. Character is fated by the Gods or some supernatural force to doom and destruction or at least to great suffering.



FOIL CHARACTER

- Character who provides a striking contrast to another character

