

Elements Of Drama/Theatre

Some Fundamental Elements

The Elements of Drama

Elements of Drama: The elements of drama, by which dramatic works can be analyzed and evaluated, can be categorized into three major areas: literary elements, technical elements, and performance elements.

literary elements

technical elements

performance elements



Literary Elements

Plot: the series of events that take place in a play. There are 6 stages in a **plot structure**:

Initial incident- the event that “gets the story going”

Preliminary event whatever takes place BEFORE the action of the play that is directly related to the Play

Rising action: a series of events following the initial incident and leading up to the dramatic climax.

Climax: the turning point or high point of a story, when events can go either way

Falling action: the series of events following the climax.

Denouement or Conclusion : another term for the ending-it is the French word for “unraveling”).





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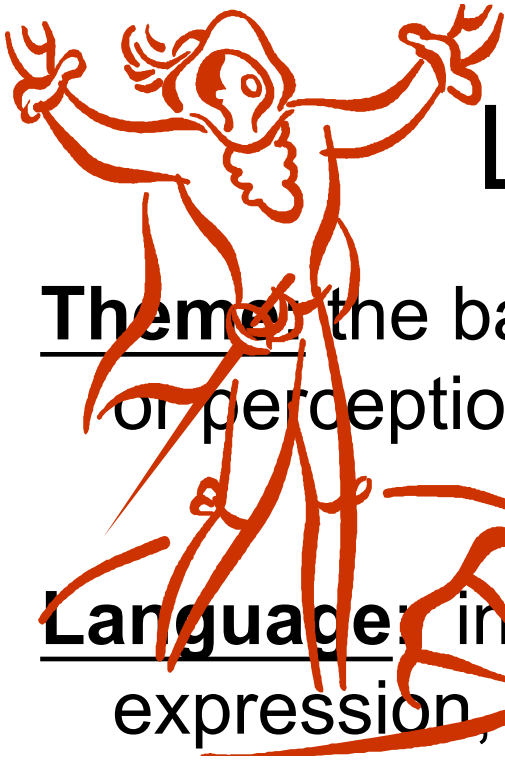
Person portrayed in a drama, novel, or other

Exposition is the “who, when, where and what” part of the play.

Story organization: beginning, middle, end

Conflict: the internal or external struggle between opposing forces, ideas, or interests that creates dramatic tension.

Suspense: a feeling of uncertainty as to the outcome, used to build interest and excitement on the part of the audience.



Literary Elements

Theme: the basic idea of a play; the idea, point of view, or perception that binds together a work of art.

Language: in drama, the particular manner of verbal expression, the

diction or style of writing, or the speech or phrasing that suggests a class or profession or type of character.

Style: the shaping of dramatic material, settings, or costumes in a deliberately nonrealistic manner.

Literary Elements

Soliloquy: a speech by a single actor who is ALONE on stage

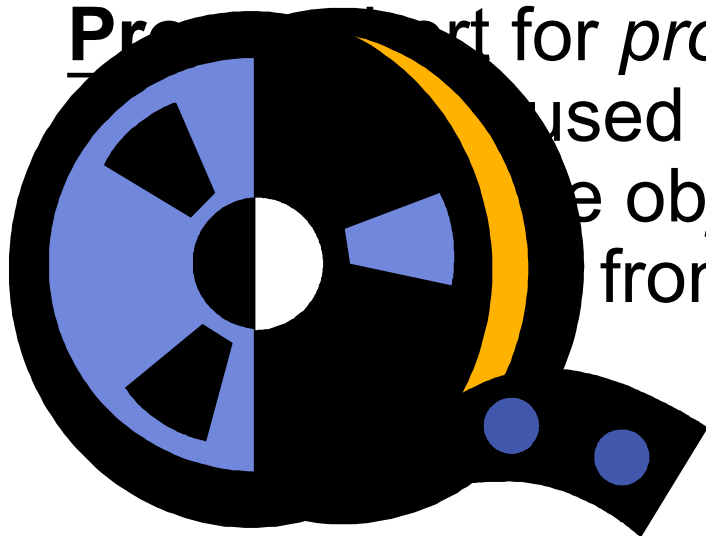
Monologue: a long speech made by one actor; a monologue may be delivered alone or in the presence of others.

Technical Elements

Scenery (set): the theatrical equipment, such as curtains, flats, backdrops, or platforms, used in a dramatic production to communicate environment

Costumes: clothing and accessories worn by actors to portray character and period.

Properties: short for *properties*; any article, except costume, used as part of a dramatic production; the object that appears on stage during a play, from a telephone to a train.

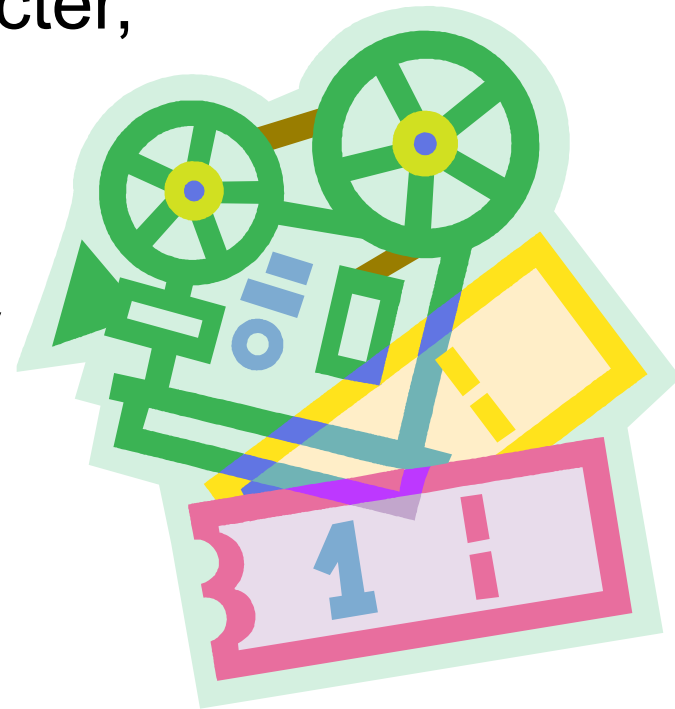


Technical Elements

Lights: the placement, intensity, and color of lights to
Help communicate environment, mood, or feeling

Sound: the effects an audience hears during
performance to communicate character,
context, or environment

Makeup: costumes, wigs, and body
paint used to transform an actor
into a character.



Performance Elements

Acting use of face, body, and voice to portray character

Character motivation: the reason or reasons for a character's behavior; an incentive or inducement for further action for a character

Character analysis: in responding to dramatic art, the process of examining how the elements of drama—literary, technical, and performance—are used

empathy: the capacity to relate to the feelings of another.



Performance Elements

Speaking: the mode of expression or delivery of lines

Breath control: proper use of the lungs and diaphragm muscle for maximum capacity and efficiency of breath for speaking

Vocal expression: how an actor uses his or her voice to convey character

Inflection: change in pitch or loudness of the voice.

Projection: how well the voice carries to the audience

Speaking style: the mode of expression or delivery of lines

Diction: selection and pronunciation of words; clarity of speech.



Performance Elements



Nonverbal expression:

Gestures any movement of the actor's head, shoulder, arm, hand, leg, or foot to convey meaning

Body alignment physiologically correct posture and use of the body to ensure the maximum capacity and efficiency of breathing and movement

Facial expression physical and vocal aspects used by an actor to convey mood, feeling, or personality

Character blocking the path formed by the actor's movement on stage, usually determined by the director with assistance from the actor and often written down in a script using commonly accepted theatrical symbols

Movement stage blocking or the movements of the actors onstage during performance; also refers to the action of the play as it moves from event to event.

Steps of the Playwright's Work

- Playwriting and creating drama for each playwright is distinctively different. Plays can develop out of any combination of starting points and patterns.
- The processes by which drama is created for each playwright can be varied in the steps used to create the text.
- You will now see a simple list in a progressive order, but order can change depending on each playwright's characteristic style and preferences for writing...

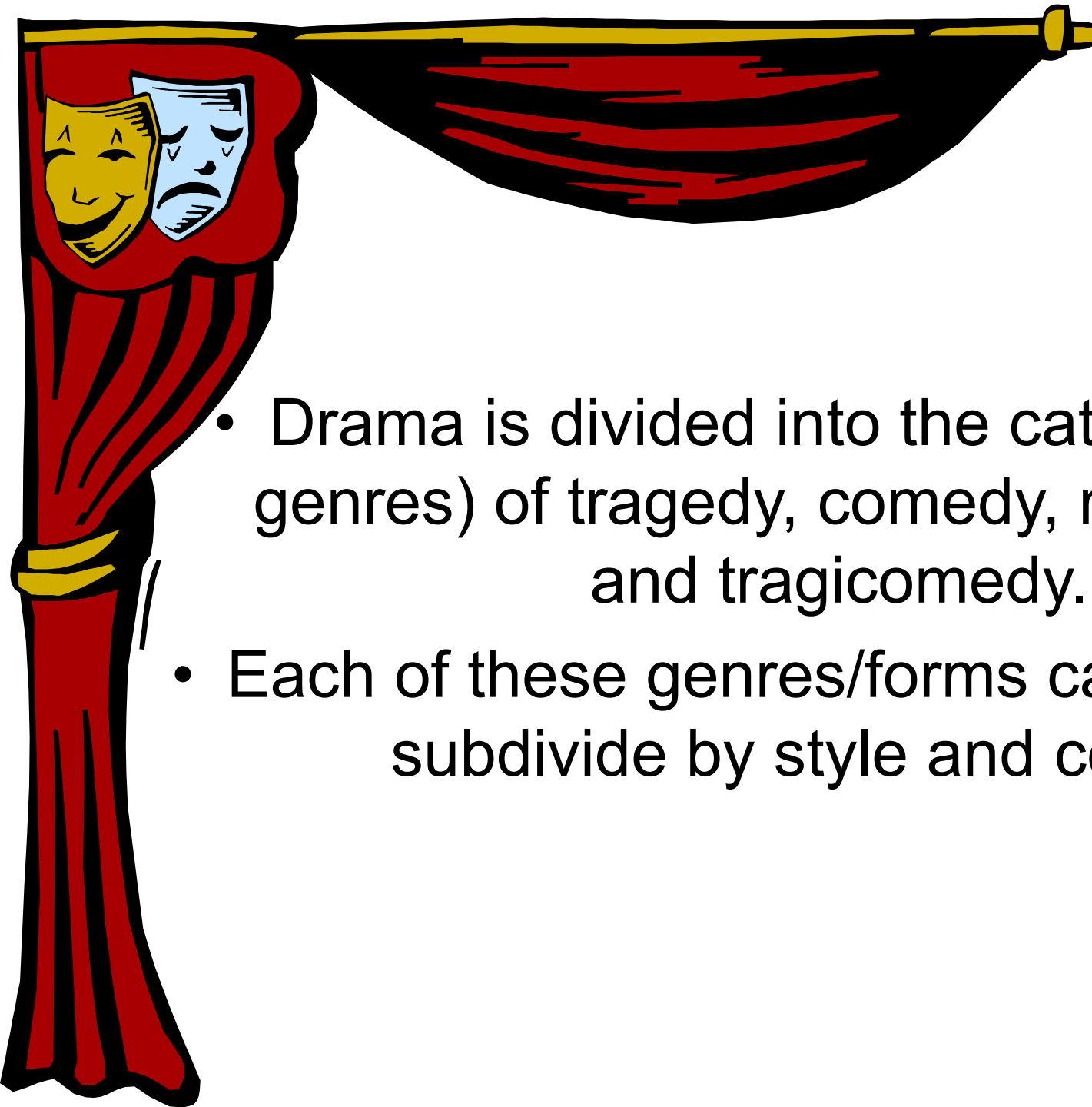
Steps of the Playwright's Work

- 1. Coming up with Thought/Theme/Ideas to be expressed through the work.
- 2. Determine the Genre and Style of the work.
- 3. Outlining Basic Action of the working and creating Plot.
- 4. Establish the Structure of the play and overall framework.

Steps of the Playwright's Work

- 5. The development of Characters presented in their work.
- 6. The creation of Dialogue and the Language of the characters.
- 7. Creating Music: This can involve the Rhythm of the language or actual Musical Composition and the Lyrics to the songs.
- 8. Establishing Spectacle: The visual and environmental elements of the work.
- 9. Research of Subject Matter and Relevant Issues presented in the play.

Genres

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- Drama is divided into the categories (or genres) of tragedy, comedy, melodrama, and tragicomedy.
 - Each of these genres/forms can be further subdivide by style and content.

Tragedy

- An imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude.
- Presented in the form of action, not narrative.
- Will arouse pity and fear in the audience.
- Creates an affect of purgation or catharsis of these strong emotions by the audience.
- Serious themes

Tragedy

- Deals with profound problems
- Universal problems
- Protagonist – center of the drama – great person (usually of upper class).
- Good person that can be admired, but has a tragic flaw that leads to their downfall
- Usually too much pride
- Usually self-aware and accepts the inevitability of his fate
- Takes full responsibility of his/her actions

Tragedy

- Cause-Effect relationships
- At the climax of the drama, the audience will have learned a lesson – leaves uplifted and enlightened, despite the serious tone of the performance.

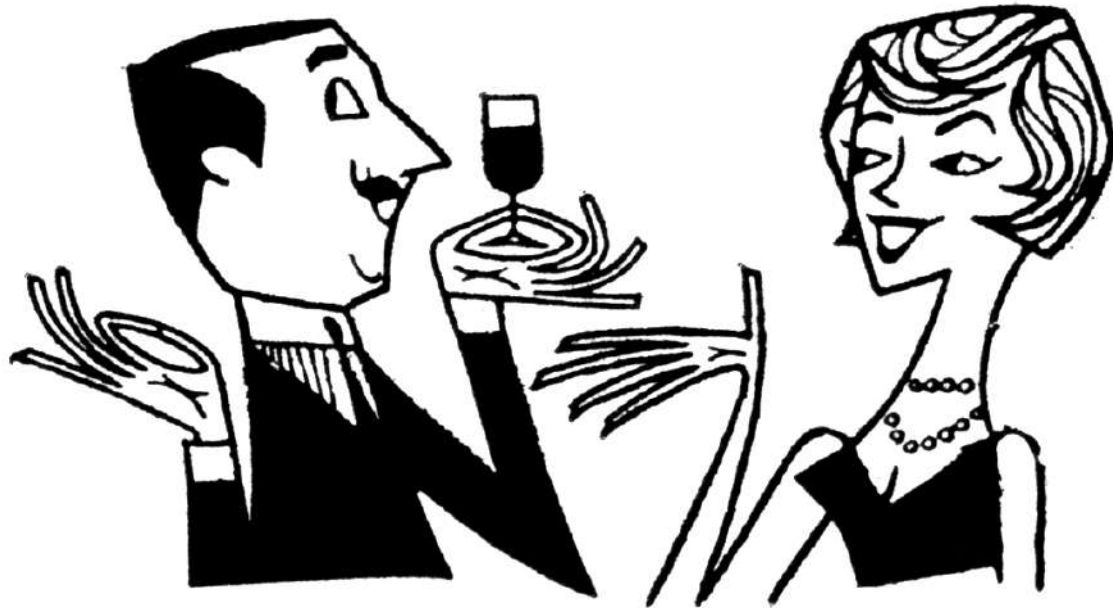
Comedy

- Usually physical and energetic.
- Tied up in rebirth and renewal; most comedies end in weddings, which suggest a union of a couple and/or expected birth of a child.
- Usually absence of pain and negative problems/qualities
- Behavior is usually ludicrous and sometimes absurd.

Comedy

- Although entertaining, it also teaches the audience not to act in ludicrous or absurd ways.
- Many types: romantic comedies, sentimental comedies, dark comedies, comedy of manner, and just pure farce (mockery).
- Comic devices used: exaggeration, incongruity (absurdity), surprise, repetition, wisecracks, and sarcasm.

Ethos, Pathos & Logos



Audience Persuasion

Quick Definition

- **Ethos, Pathos and Logos are modes of persuasion used to convince audiences. They are also referred to as the three artistic proofs (Aristotle coined the terms), and are all represented by Greek words.**

Ethos

- **Ethos** or the ethical appeal, means to convince an audience of the author's credibility or character.
- An author would use ethos to show to his audience that he is a credible source and is worth listening to. Ethos is the Greek word for "character." The word "ethic" is derived from ethos.

Ethos

- In order to convince people To agree with you, you need to establish you are worth listening to...
- Trustworthy
- Knowledgeable
- Likeable
- Respectable

Pathos

- **Pathos**, or the emotional appeal, means to persuade an audience by appealing to their emotions.
- Authors use pathos to invoke sympathy from an audience; to make the audience feel what the author wants them to feel. A common use of pathos would be to draw pity from an audience. Another use of pathos would be to inspire anger from an audience; perhaps in order to prompt action.
- Pathos is the Greek word for both “suffering” and “experience.” The words empathy and pathetic are derived from pathos.

Logos

- **Logos** or the appeal to logic, means to convince an audience by use of logic or reason.
- To use logos would be to cite facts and statistics, historical and literal analogies, and citing certain authorities on a subject.
- Logos is the Greek word for “word,” however the true definition goes beyond that, and can be most closely described as “the word or that by which the inward thought is expressed.”
- The word “logic” is derived from logos.