

Ministry of Higher education
University of Tikrit
College of Basic Education / Al-
Shirqat



*An Introduction to Drama, One Act Play
and Hamlet*

English Department

Third Stage

First Semester

Instructor
Shakir Hussein

INTRODUCTION TO DRAMA

The meaning of Drama:

The word of *Drama* is originally a Greek word means 'action', something performed or done . Later it came to denote a literary work written to be acted or performed on a stage by actors who present the characters that live the action .

The action : is the essence of drama that indicates the events and changes that develop through the play.

Drama: is one of the social forms of art. This is due to the nature of its subjects and concerns that tend to study the dilemmas of man in his relations with others and with the surroundings. Drama, then is any work written to be performed on stage by actors.

The Elements of Drama:

- 1. Plot:** It refers to the story of the play. Plot is a literary term that refers to a series of related events of which the play is composed and by developing these events, the playwright arouses the audience, suspense and interest. A play may have more than one plot, when two or more fully developed lines of action are introduced in the same work.
- 2. The Main Plot:** is that part of the action which deals with the hero and other major characters.
- 3. The Sub-plot (The Secondary Plot):** is usually connected with another group of characters, and it has the dramatic value of supporting and illuminating our understanding of the main plot.

4. **Theme:** It is the central idea or concept that the play tries to dramatize in order to provide a characteristic view of life. The theme is either explicitly introduced or implicitly suggested. In order to realize the theme of any work we have to consider the dramatized experience in general as well as the details.

The central idea or ideas might be suggested by one of the characters who is the writer's spokes-man or implied in the action, relations and dialogue, and hence must be deduced by the audience.

+ **The atmosphere:** is the mood or feeling evoked by a play or part of a play, for example, gay, tense, dream-like, sinister etc...

+ **Catastrophe:** The tragic end of a play usually including the death or suicide of the tragic hero.

5. **Setting:** This term indicates the time and place of the action. The setting establishes a suitable and suggestive atmosphere for the dramatic presentation it might be realistic and faithful visual representation of the scene, or a symbolic suggestion.

6. **Characters:** They are the imaginary persons that the dramatist creates in such a way that forms our attitudes towards them. Our knowledge of the characters is received from what they say and do and what others say about them. Moreover, the stage directions provide another indicator of the characters appearance mannerisms and psychology. There are various forms of characterization. Generally speaking, characters are basically divided into major and minor characters. Yet, there are other terms to describe the kinds of character.

1) **THE PROTAGONIST AND ANTAGONIST:** The major character is usually called the hero or protagonist. This term refers to leading figure in the conflict against the antagonist who is the hero's

opponent.

2) **THE INDIVIDUAL AND TYPES:** characters the major characters are usually described and individualized in a life like manner. Whereas the type character is the one that the writer employs to personify one single aspect or quality of the character and so this character has a limited dramatic function.

3) **THE ROUND CHARACTER:** The round character is a complex, fully portrayed one that undergoes considerable development through the action of the play.

4) **THE FLAT CHARACTERS:** is based on limited qualities that don't allow any chance for growth or development.

7. Structure: The structure in drama is mainly based on dividing the work into acts and scenes.

❖ **The act** indicates the part of the development through the plot, whereas.

❖ **The scene** refers to the change in place and time of action. In most plays the structure is built of five acts. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries dramatists prefer a three acts-structure. In the five act structure, the action is divided into the following :

A. **THE EXPOSITION:**- information about the plot and about what has happened before the beginning of the play.

B. **THE RISING ACTION:** It is the complication of events and relations that results From the motives introduced in the exposition. In this part there is usually a great sense of disorder and confusion.

C. **THE CLIMAX:** It is the highest point of tension and suspects in the play and in the hero's fortunes.