

DRAMA

Welcome to the drama unit of 8th grade Magnet English! Over the next few weeks, you will become intimately acquainted with a theatrical work which has received widespread critical acclaim as a masterpiece of theater. The culmination of our study of the drama will be a performance of selected scenes from each drama.

Reader's Theater:

We will be reading the plays in class in a "Reader's Theater" setting. You will select which roles are being read by which students (and the roles will rotate daily), then you will act out the entire play as you encounter it for the first time. You will be standing and moving around a makeshift stage as you read and act. Sure, the performance will be rough. Concentrate more on the story during the Reader's Theater, but remember that this is a play and it is meant to be performed.

When you have finished reading your section for each day (approximately one third of the play), you will sit with your lit-circle groups and attend to the thought-provoking questions and activities found herein.

After reading, discuss the following questions in your lit circles. *Take notes* on what your fellow group members say. For homework, using your notes, write a well-developed essay which is informed by your discussion. **DO NOT** answer the discussion questions in your essay; rather, use the ideas from your discussion to craft an assertion which you can defend. Also, please do not summarize the plot. Your essay should be a minimum of 1.5 pages typed.

Day 1: Introduction and Plot

1. What is established in the opening scene of the play? How did the playwright establish those things?
2. What role does setting play in the drama? How would the drama be different if the setting were different?
3. What motivates each of the main characters? What are their hopes, dreams, desires, etc.? Do they (hopes, dreams, etc.) differ or conflict among characters?
4. What are the essential conflicts which are introduced in the play? How might they be resolved? What clues does the playwright provide which might foreshadow potential solutions?

Day 2: Analysis

1. What are the major dramatic events in the play and how have the characters handled those events?
2. What motifs and/or symbols are in the play? How do you know?
3. How does the playwright establish character? How is each character distinctive?
4. Aside from direct dialogue, how is character revealed?

Day 3: The Human Condition

1. How do the symbols, motifs, or ideas relate to the human condition? i.e. How have you seen these things represented in other texts or media?
2. How does the play transcend the stage to comment on society?
3. Do you agree with the playwright's assessment of the human condition?

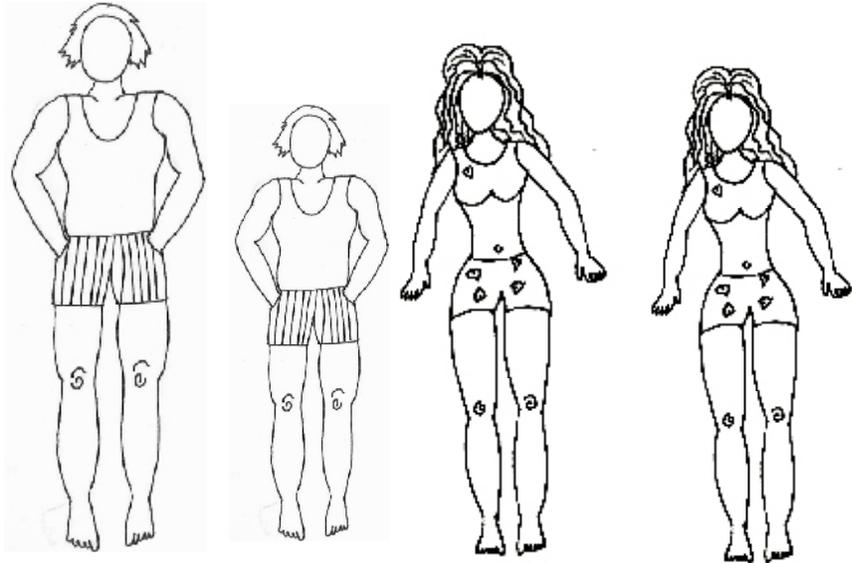
Final Analysis:

1. Which characters were static and which were dynamic? How?
2. How did the playwright incorporate use of time to manipulate the plot?
3. How is the essential conflict resolved? Are all conflicts resolved? Were the resolutions predictable? How?
4. In looking at the information flow, when did the audience know things that some characters didn't? When, if ever, was the information revealed to the other characters? Why or why not?

Dramatic Planning:

Costume:

Consult with your group members, sketch out a few costume ideas here. Label each costume part and be prepared to defend its inclusion. Be sure that each main character is sketched by at least one group member.



Props:

List here any props that will be required. You may also want to consider props which might not be in the text, but which will enhance character development.

Props List:

Person/People who use prop

Set design:

Using the limited resources of our classroom space, design a set which can be staged within the 4 minute break between each play.