

Theatre History Paper #1

Plot Analysis

Dr. Larsen

All papers must be in the current MLA style. You can find MLA stylebooks in the library or at the bookstore. If you think you are going to be a humanities or liberal arts major, you might want to purchase this.

This paper is to be 3-5 complete pages. If you follow MLA style, you will know that the format is 12 pt type, double space.

1. Begin with a general introduction and include: What was your opinion of the play? What is the concept/moral of the story?

2. THIS IS THE LARGEST PART OF THE PAPER. Brief analysis of the **Plot** - the sequence of events and the connections between them (causal) that comprise the unified dramatic action. Plot elements to consider and identify in your analysis specifically include **inciting incident** or incidents (the event or event that "lit the fuse" before the on-stage action of the play begins); **exposition** (the background information required for audience understanding of the action); **foreshadowing** (indications of what action may happen, underscores what is important action to follow); **protagonist's goal** and the major **dramatic question** (what does the major character want, and how does that relate to the basic question about the way in which the action will unfold?); **point of attack** (where the action of the play begins, the first major complication); **complications** (changes in the course of action in the play, linked to the terms reversals and obstacles); **climax** (usually the greatest intensity of action; the scene in which the major dramatic question is answered and the protagonist discovers whether or not her or his goal will be realized) **resolution** (the conclusion of the action, the restoration of sense of balance).

- To write for Dr. Larsen: Use the terms provided!
- Tell me: 1 – what it is, 2 – where it occurs in the script, 3 – why you think so, 4 – prove it
- At least 2 examples of each

3. How does this play fit into the history of the time? What was happening at the time the play was written? Set in? What were the themes and how do they fit into the time the play was written? Was

there something that happened to the playwright that might have inspired this script? (REALLY IMPORTANT FOR THEATRE HISTORY)

4. End with a response: What was your experience of reading this play script? Could you visualize it? Is it timeless (could you produce it now)? Why or why not? Did it make you want to see it? act it? direct it? If so, how would you do those things?