

Shakespeare Plays: Vocabulary

Comedies: The plays that have a happy ending, usually involving marriage for all unmarried characters and a tone and style that is more light-hearted than Shakespeare's other plays.

Tragedies: A play that does not have a happy ending. The main character usually has an admirable but flawed character or experiences barriers to his/her happiness in the world around him/her. The audience is able to understand and sympathize with the character.

Histories: The plays based on the lives of English Kings. These plays usually deal with political issues that were relevant in Shakespeare's time even though they take place in the past (long before Shakespeare was even born).

Imagery: Sensory words or phrases that create mental pictures

Metaphor: figure of speech comparing two unlike things without using like or as

Simile: figure of speech comparing two unlike things using like or as

Theme: message about life that an author conveys in a literary work

Dramatis Personae: A Latin expression for "cast of characters". It means literally, "the persons of the drama" and is used at the beginning of scripts for plays as the title of the list of characters.

Act: One of the main divisions of a play or dramatic work in which a certain definite part of the action is completed.

Scene: A portion of a play that passes without change of location or time, or important change of character. A scene is a subdivision of an act and therefore smaller.

Aside: A remark made by a character in a play which the other characters are not supposed to hear.

Soliloquy: A speech by a person who is talking to himself or herself, or reveals his or her thoughts without addressing a listener.

Pathos: An author's attempt to evoke a feeling of pity or sympathetic sorrow for a character.