

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer Key: Subtext and Spectacle: 10th Grade Advanced Playwriting Quiz

Deconstruct radical dramatic structures and synthesize complex subtext through the lens of non-linear narratives and Brechtian alienation effects.

1. In contemporary drama, a 'non-linear' plot structure often utilizes which narrative device to challenge the audience's perception of cause and effect?

Answer: B) Anachronistic vignettes and fragmented timelines

Non-linear plays, like Caryl Churchill's 'Top Girls', use fragmented timelines to force the audience to synthesize meaning through thematic connections rather than chronological progression.

2. When a playwright employs 'subtext,' they are primarily crafting which element of the theatrical experience?

Answer: C) The unspoken underlying objectives and tensions between characters

Subtext is the 'action' beneath the dialogue; it is what the character truly wants but isn't saying, a technique pioneered by realists like Anton Chekhov.

3. Identify the term for a character's internal struggle that prevents them from achieving their super-objective: _____.

Answer: C) Internal Obstacle

While external obstacles are physical barriers, internal obstacles are the character's own fears, flaws, or moral contradictions.

4. In 'Epic Theatre,' the 'Verfremdungseffekt' (alienation effect) is designed to make the audience lose themselves in the emotional reality of the characters.

Answer: B) False

Bertolt Brecht's alienation effect is intended to do the opposite: it keeps the audience emotionally distant and critically aware so they can judge the social message.

5. Which of the following describes a 'Static Character' in a way that suggests sophisticated dramatic intentionality?

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Answer: B) A character whose refusal to change serves as a commentary on a rigid social system

In advanced playwriting, a lack of change is often a deliberate choice to highlight the crushing nature of the environment or the character's tragic stubbornness.

6. In a script, an 'aside' differs from a 'soliloquy' because an aside is _____.

Answer: C) A brief comment made to the audience while other characters are present

An aside is a quick breaking of the 'fourth wall' meant for the audience's ears only, whereas a soliloquy is a long, private reflection.

7. The 'Inciting Incident' must occur before the play begins for it to be considered a 'Late Point of Attack.'

Answer: A) True

Plays like Sophocles' 'Oedipus Rex' utilize a late point of attack where the primary action begins just as the climax is approaching, with much of the plot happening beforehand.

8. When writing stage directions, a 'Given Circumstance' refers to which of the following?

Answer: B) The environmental and historical facts provided by the playwright

Given circumstances include the time, place, and social rules of the world the playwright has established, which dictate how characters must behave.

9. The structural element where the protagonist's fortunes take a decisive turn for better or worse is the _____.

Answer: C) Peripeteia

Peripeteia is the Greek term for the 'reversal' or turning point in a drama, a key component of complex tragic plotting.

10. How does 'Vernacular Dialogue' contribute to the 'Verisimilitude' of a play?

Answer: C) It ground characters in a specific socio-economic and regional reality

Vernacular—the everyday language of a people—creates 'verisimilitude' (the appearance of being true/real) by accurately reflecting the character's background and culture.