UNIT-2

Forms and Styles of Theatre

Learning Objectives
Students will be able to:

 gain knowledge about the forms of theatre their history and development.
 distinguish between dramatic and non-dramatic theatre.
 understand various styles of theatre.
 understand the difference between various styles of theatre, their origin and history.
 read independently various dramatic texts with a clear understanding of their forms and styles.

Theatre, like all of the other performing and visual arts, is a composite that has forms and styles that define content, technique and genre. The first and basic classification lies in the distinction between Dramatic and Non-dramatic theatre. Sometimes we come across activities that do not deal with dramatic content, yet there is an inherent element of theatrics in it, such as a circus, sound and light shows, pageants, festive traditions, sports events, and even gymnastic presentations. These are spectacles or visual forms that are non-dramatic, as they have no narrative line, but the technical virtuosity of the performers or the ritual significance of the event becomes the focus of audience attention.

Dramatic theatre on the other hand, is primarily driven by the narrative content, oral or physical, that carries the story of the characters forward with the most common form being a scripted play. In some forms of dramatic production, music and dance may provide or supplement the narrative content. The classification of dramatic theatre is based on two aspects of this narrative-the manner in which it is presented or the style and the content of the narrative or the genre or form.

Major Theatrical Traditions and Styles

Plays are often described according to their compositions and performed with related aesthetic features. The form or composition of a play refers to dramatic form like: tragedy, comedy, farce, satire etc. and aesthetic features to dramatic styles like Classicism, Neo-classicism, Elizabethan, Romanticism, Naturalism, Expressionism, Absurdism, Realism, Modernism etc. These styles also represent different eras of development of theatre, which in turn, is closely associated with the overall evolution of art and fine arts.
The form of drama is the way that the story has been told, the way characters play their part and the way the themes are explored. Drama form is composed within specific drama contents that define, shape and differentiate the ways in which it is performed; such as, movements, speech improvisation and scene work. In brief, Dramatics form is the established set of structural principles in a play which helps a reader to make appropriate distinctions. Form provides structures to organize and represent dramatic action and dramatic meaning. Not all the plays of a particular form have the same internal characteristics and this explains why critics use more detailed categories. It could be argued that, the form of every play is unique because no two plays are exactly alike, but there are certain identifiable characteristics that are common to different plays, and these characteristics help define them.

Dramatic forms and styles are interrelated and at times they overlap. Dramatic style is the way the playwright chooses words, arranges them in sentences or in lines of dialogues or verse and develops ideas and actions with description, imagery and other literary techniques. Style may include the conventional practices and devices the actors, the playwright, the designers and or the director use to expedite the production. An audience willingly accepts and expects such devices as a type of shorthand. It refers to elements used in the realization of the play in performance. In brief, dramatic styles are stabilized aesthetic features of any part of the process of making and performing works of drama and theatre, including styles of writing, directing, design and performance.

Theatre is also classified into classic, medieval, renaissance, epic and modern, in terms of the eras or time periods each genre evolved.

Dramatic styles are influenced by their time, place, artistic and other social structures, as well as the individual style of the particular artist or artists. They are indicative of the time and manner, and are therefore, usually words that have an 'ism' at the end.
Classic Theatre reflects the first use of mask and the chorus themes, to reflect the period of the play and rely upon the imagination (limited props) to convey and retain the atmosphere of play. The actors must physically/vocally train their body to accommodate the needs of larger theatres. Its key characteristics are the use of heightened language, using verse and prose, larger movements to fill bigger theatres. The aim is to make audiences hear a play, enjoy the language, its wit and humour and moralistic themes. All tragedies were individual, unique pieces, specifically written to honour Dionysus until the Hellenistic period when plays began to be repeated in performances. While the Greeks preferred their tragedies and religious ceremonies in their drama, Romans preferred comedies and pure entertainment. That being said, much Roman drama was derived from Greek drama and was rewritten for the Roman stage. There is very little 'Roman' drama represented today that is not Greek in origin. Romans did introduce new aspects into their plays such as different costumes to represent different characters, such as a purple robe to represent a young man and a yellow robe to represent a woman. As in Greek drama, all actors in Roman plays were men, even women characters.

Mask that the actors wore during performances

The actors were all men but played different parts

The Romans’ need for action and entertainment turned theatrics into something more and more violent. Criminals would be executed for the sake of entertainment. Gladiators would fight lions. Men would fight each other to death. Actions such as these led the Christians to rebel against theatre as a whole.

History and development

The origin of classicism lies in the Greek theatre. The origins of theatre in ancient Rome and Greece set the precedence for theatre all over the world, which began around 550 and 220 BCE in the city of Athens, the political centre of Greece at that time. Originally used to celebrate the festival of Dionysus, it was expanded and exported to colonies around Athens to promote cultural identity in Greece. The first Greek tragedy was attributed to Thespis, the winner of the
first theatrical contest in Greece. To this day, theatre-performers are referred to as 'thespians.' Other playwrights at the time were Choerilus, Pratinas, and Phrynichus. In India, Sanskrit theatre can be classified under the classic theatre genre. The script development around the Nayak, Nayika or Vidusaka (Clown). A number of playwrights, including Bhasa wrote plays in Sanskrit which were performed in front of large audiences. The most famous of the Sanskrit dramatists was Kalidasa, who is known for his plays: Mālavikāgnimitram, Vikāmōrvosīyam and Abhijnānasākuntalārm. Other renowned one include Bhavabhuti, Harsha, Students and Asvaghosa.

**Medieval Theatre**

It is a class of plays which come between the fall of the Roman empire and the beginning of the Renaissance period. Due to the excesses of the Roman theatrical experiences, the Roman Catholic church banned all theatre of the middle ages. Therefore, much formalized theatre was nonexistent during the medieval period. What did exist took place in inn yards or in travelling wagons or on wagon stages, taken from town to town. Mimes, minstrels, storytellers, jugglers, and the like travelled to find their audiences and to find financial sustainability.

**Renaissance Theatre**

The period that followed medieval times is known as the Renaissance period. It was born from several medieval traditions; one being the mystery plays, or retelling of legends based on Biblical themes. With the Renaissance period, also, came the permanent theatres. Actors were members of companies attached to noble households that performed in various locations.

**History and development**

The first of the Renaissance permanent theatres was 'The Theatre', built by James
Burbage, but quickly theatres were built to accommodate the companies. Theatre was still looked down upon by most authorities and society as well. However, Queen Elizabeth-I had a fondness for theatre, and the companies performed many rehearsals for the public for financial gain, to practice for the performances for the Queen.

The end of the English Renaissance theatre began with the rising of the Puritan movement and their hostility toward the theatre. They believed that theatre promoted immortality, and they complained of the practice of men dressing as females. On September 2nd, 1642, the Puritan faction, then in control of London, ordered the close of all London theatres. They remained closed for eighteen years, finally reopening after the Restoration period.

**Epic Theatre**

As devised by Bertolt Brecht, the epic theatre forces audiences to constantly return to rational observation, rather than emotional immersion. Sudden bursts of song, elements of absurdity and breaches of the fourth wall are all prime examples of how this rational observation is constantly revitalized; this idea is known as Verfremdung.

Before one can fully comprehend what epic theatre is, it is necessary to understand the period of **Realism**.

During the 1800s, the philosophy of positivism gained ground. This philosophy was based on the concept of the five senses. Only objects that can be experienced with the five senses existed. Spirituality was left behind. Where plays about heroes, kings and gods were very typical during the previous theatre time periods, writers now started to concentrate on the tragedy of the common man, in other words, everyday people. Inside the theatre, a 'slice of life' was recreated. Scenery was very realistic, all technical aspects were hidden from the audience and the audience was supposed to believe that they are watching a piece of real life happening.

**History and development**

Bertolt Brecht, the play Wright and Irwin Piscator, a Marxist director, are perceived to be the initiators of the epic theatre. Brecht was in the medical corps during World War-1, and realized that the science they believed in so much, is killing their people. Brecht lost his faith in science and realism. The epic theatre was born. Brecht's main goal was to move away from Realism. Where in Realism, plays happened over a very short period of time to create the illusion of reality; Brecht had his plays happening over months and even years. In Caucasian Chalk Circle, the events happen over more than two years. No attempt was made to let the audience believe they are watching a 'slice of life'.

Brecht never wanted his audience to forget that they are in a theatre and made use of a technique called 'alienation' to ensure this. He used this in the dialogue and characters of his
plays. His plays had many characters where most were known by their occupation rather than their names, for example, in Caucasian Chalk Circle, characters were called 'The Kitchen Maid', 'Cook', 'Iron-shirt' (soldier) etc. Characters would sometimes refer to themselves in the third person. 'Grusha' would for instance call 'Simon, the soldier' instead of 'Simon'.

During performances, Brecht also defied the idea of realism and left theatrical devices open for the audience to see. No light or sound devices were hidden. He seldom used pure white light and left the auditorium lights on during a performance. Where realism never had scene changes that could break the illusion of real life happening, in epic theatre scene changes happened in full view of the audience. Using a narrator that remained on stage was a useful alienation technique.

It is widely believed that, the epic theatre had a vast influence on modern theatre, where a combination of styles and influences from different time periods are evident.

**Modernism**

Modernism is a broad concept that sees art, including theatre, as detached from life in a pure way and able to reflect on life critically. It ushered in an era of modern theatre from the humble beginnings of initial periods of modernity, and we got the modern theatre of today. The theatres, in most parts of the world today, are grandiose and expensive. Themes of plays are as varied as books that are published. Actors are paid often more than politicians, and writers can make a living to be envied. Thespians are no longer the lower class of citizens, and costumes are as magnificent and costly as the stages and scenery that go into theatre productions.

**History and development**

Modernism originated in the early 20\textsuperscript{th} century, includes the activities of those who felt the traditional forms of art, architecture, literature, religious faith, social organisation and daily life were becoming outdated in the new economic, social, and political conditions of an emerging fully industrialised world. It rejects the lingering certainty of enlightenment thinking and also that of the existence of a compassionate, all-powerful creator. The aim is to make audience question the axioms of the previous ages.

Modernism was followed by post-modernism. It challenges accepted views of the world includes use of multiple art /media forms of narrative, broken, paradoxical and imagistic. Its characters are fragmented, forming a collection of contrasting / parallel ideas from a central theme or traditional character. Each performance is a spectacle, with no intent on methodical repetition and the audience is integral to the shared meaning and making of the performance process. The rehearsal process is driven by shared improvisation and not by the scripted text. It aims to encourage audience to reach their own individual understanding.
Apart from these genres of theatre, a number of post-modern genres have made their impact over the audiences:

(i) Theatre of cruelty
(ii) Physical theatre
(iii) Environmental theatre
(iv) Plastic theatre
(v) Theatre of the oppressed
(vi) Verbatim documentary theatre

**Realism**

Realism describes a quality of painting, film literature or other artistic medium that strives to present people or events as they actually are. It was a general movement that developed a set of artistic and theatrical conventions with the aim of bringing a greater fidelity of real life to text and other art works. Realism strives for absolute accuracy in the depiction of its subjects, filled with honesty, rather than hiding things behind distortions or opinions.

Realism in Theatre

Realism is a dramatic style, in which, characters of the play move and talk in a manner similar to that of everyday behaviour. It holds the idea of the stage as an environment, rather than as an acting platform. Social and political ideas, playwriting and some spectacular theatrical innovations helped bring realism to the theatre.

In realism, the plot of the play contains a secret known to the audience, but withheld from certain characters. The secret is revealed and this is the climax. Here the antagonist is revealed. The protagonist has his/her dignity restored and receives his/her reward. There is careful attention paid to the exposition, usually the entire first act at the minimum. After this, the remainder of the plot uses contrived entrances, exits and props to increase suspense. There are expected and logical reversals. The hero has a series of successes and failures with the
antagonist. There are discovery scenes where the antagonist learns facts which can hurt the protagonist in some way. The protagonist does not learn until later that the antagonist possesses knowledge. There is a misunderstanding that is known to the audience, but not to the characters. This increases suspense.

Sometimes realism simply refers to 'believability'. However, realism in theatre means more than just a reflection of reality. As a literary movement, realism denotes the ambitions of the past eighteenth century writers who moved away from the romanticism of the artists who wanted to write about how life should be rather than how life actually is, for example, 'The Red Badge of Courage' by Stephen Crane.

**History and development**

Realism which began as an experiment to make theatre beneficial to society has eventually become the leading figure of theatre in the 20th century. Realism is closely connected to the development of modern drama, which, as Martin Harrison explains, 'is usually said to have begun in the early 1870', with the 'middle-period' work of Norwegian dramatist Henrik Ibsen. Ibsen’s realistic drama in prose has been very influential. He wanted to make the stage a vehicle for the discussion of modern day problems and he initiated the realistic period with plays focused on contemporary, day-to-day themes that skillfully reveal both sides of a conflict by brilliantly capturing psychological details.

Russia began a tradition of psychological realism which culminated with the establishment of the Moscow Art Theatre by Constant in Stanislavski and Valadimir Nemirovich Danchenko. Stanislavski went on to develop his system, a form of acting training that is particularly suited to psychological realism.

Realism is also supposed to have originated from Naturalism and superseded it. It portrays characters on stage that are close to real life, with realistic settings or staging, direct attention to the physical and philosophic problems of social and psychological existence of key characteristics: victims of forces larger than themselves, individuals confronted with a rapidly accelerating world. Playwrights, unafraid to present characters as ordinary, impotent and unable to reach answers to their predicaments, aim to search for answers collectively along with their audiences who identify with the characters, plot, or situations.

In India, Bhisham Sahni and Badal Sircar brought in realism to contemporary theatre. Bhisham Sahni was especially known for his poignant and realistic wonk Tamas, which depicted the aftermath of the 1947 position of India sircar added a new realism to the contemporary body of work as there was no makeup and costumes in his plays and the audience also participated in the act.

**Symbolism**

A symbol implies a greater meaning than the literal suggestion and is usually used to represent something other than what is at face value. Symbolism is the practice of representing things
with a symbolic meaning, in which, a person places an activity or an object that stands for something beyond itself. The term 'symbolism' refers to the use of symbols or pictorial conventions to express an intended message that has some significant meaning. Symbolism was largely a reaction against realism and in favour of spirituality, the imagination and dreams. Symbolists believed that art should apprehend more absolute truths which could only be accessed indirectly. They desired to present feeling and emotions.

Symbolism in the theatre can be achieved via characters, colours, movements, costumes and props. A symbol can be defined simply as any object or action that means more than itself; it represents something beyond its literal self; it may have symbolic meaning. A rose might represent beauty, love or transience. A tree might represent a family’s roots and branches. A huge throne can symbolize freedom in the outside world or a simple action by a character could symbolize a greater ideal in the context of the play. A soaring bird might stand for freedom. Light, depending on its quality, might symbolize hope, knowledge or mystery of life.

In theatre, symbolism was considered to be a reaction against the plays that embodied naturalism and realism at the turn of 20th century. The dialogues and style of acting in symbolist plays was highly stylized and anti-realistic or non-realistic. Plays were written in a very metaphorical and suggestive manner, endowing particular images or objects with symbolic meaning. Symbolic associations however, are not necessary or automatic, since the meaning of any symbol is controlled by its context and function in a particular dramatic scene, and is rather open-ended.

In symbolism, the actor was to be a depersonalized symbol pointing to a meaning beyond which was visible on the stage. Rather than depicting the real life, the main purpose of symbolism is to metaphorically represent the reality. Its main objective is to capture the core essence of and represent it in an indirect mystical manner. The characteristic emphases on an internal life of dreams and fantasies have made symbolist theatre difficult to reconcile with
more recent trends. The greatest characteristic about the symbolic movement is that, it was almost like a 'permission slip' for other artists to disagree or find new ways of expression, and it led to a variety of other 'isms' that we take as commonplace today.

**History and development**

Symbolism was a late nineteenth-century art movement of French, Russian and Belgian origin in poetry and other art. It began with a group of poets in the late 19th century and soon spread to the visual arts and theatre, finding its peak between 1885 and 1910. The name 'symbolist' itself was first applied by the critic Jean More as who invented the term to distinguish the symbolist from the related decades of literature and arts. The French poet, Jean More as, published the 'Symbolist Manifesto' in 1886, that greatly influenced the entire movement in the visual and performing arts.

Aurélien Lugné Poe was an actor, director and theatre producer. He sought to create a unified non-realistic theatre of poetry and dreams through atmospheric staging and stylized acting. Some of his greatest successes include opening his own symbolist theatre producing the first staging of Alfred Jarry’s 'UbuRoi' (1896) and introducing French audiences to Scandinavian playwrights such as Henrik Ibsen and August Strindberg. In the later works, the Russian playwright Anton Chekhov has been identified as being much influenced by symbolist pessimism. Both Constantine Stanislavski and Vsevalod Meyer held experimentes with symbolized modes of staging in their theatrical endeavours.

Symbolism had a significant influence on modernism and its traces can also be detected in the works of many modernist poets, including T.S. Eliot, Wallace Stevens, Conrad Aiken, Hart Crane and W.B. Yeats. Rabindranath Tagore and Harindranath Chattopadhyaya are also known to be the followers of the symbolist movement. Author of Gitanjali, Tagore’s compositional were chosen by two nations as national anthems: India’s Jana Gana Mana and Bangladesh’s Amar Shonar Bangla. In Lover’s Gift, nature imagery and symbolism transpire in rare versatility of form and undertones, exhisiting Tagore’s rare dexterity.

**Naturalism**

Naturalism is portraying life on stage with a close attention to detail, based on observation of real life. Cause and effect are central to the script's structure, with the subjects focused on conflicts of "nature vs. nurture", the natural order of things, survival and notions of evolution. The production style is one of everyday reality. Emile Zola’s works may be regarded as naturalism, as well as the early works from Strindberg such as ‘Miss Julie’.
History and development

Naturalism is a movement in European drama and theatre that developed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It refers to theatre that attempts to create a perfect illusion of reality through a range of dramatic and theatrical strategies: detailed, three-dimensional settings (which bring Darwinian understandings of the determining role of the environment into the staging of human), drama everyday speech forms (prose over poetry), a secular world-view (no ghosts, spirits or gods intervening in the human action), an exclusive focus on subjects that are contemporary and indigenous (no exotic, otherworldly or fantastic locales, nor historical or mythic time-periods), an extension of the social range of characters portrayed (away from the aristocrats of classical drama towards bourgeois and eventually working-class protagonists), and a style of acting that attempts to recreate the impression of reality (often by seeking complete identification with the role, understood in terms of its 'given circumstances', which, again, transcribe Darwinian motifs into performance, as advocated by Stanislavski). Naturalistic role play is used within theatrical performances to demonstrate to the audience or show the audience how this would appear in real life. No still images are used as this does not show the full quality of the piece of drama. Naturalistic drama is used within many drama pieces to show the true feelings of the characters. This helps the characters to touch the audience’s feelings properly and appropriately.

Naturalism was first advocated explicitly by Émile Zola in his 1880 essay entitled 'Naturalism on the Stage'. According to him, the naturalistic novel is simply an inquiry into nature and things. It no longer interests itself in the ingenuity of a story, developed according to certain rules.

Expressionism

Expressionism in theatre is said to be anti-realistic in seeing appearance as distorted and the truth lying within man. The outward appearance on stage can be distorted and unrealistic to portray an eternal truth.

History and development

Expressionism is a cultural movement, initially in poetry and painting, which originated in Germany at the start of the 20th century. It dramatizes spiritual awakening or sufferings of the central character and the struggle against social class values, established authority etc. The key characteristics are to present the world in a subjective perspective, distorting it for emotional effect in order to evoke moods and ideas. The movement and speech etc. is heightened,
expansive, or clipped and telegraphic so that a spectacle or an illusion can be created for the audiences’ experience.

**Absurdism**

Absurdity in theatre presents a perspective that all human attempts at significance, are illogical. Ultimate truth is chaos with little certainty. There is no necessity that something of importance should always drive us. For example, 'The Homecoming' by Harold Pinter.

**History and development**

Absurdism, which originated in the 1940s–60s, expresses belief that human existence has no meaning or purpose. Therefore, all communication breaks down, logical construction and argument gives way to irrational and illogical speech and to its ultimate conclusion. Its key characteristics are broad comedy, mixed with horrific or tragic images, characters caught in hopeless situations forced to do repetitive and meaningless actions, with dialogues that are clichés or wordplay, may be nonsensical and the plots are cyclical or absurdly expansive. They may either be a parody or a dismissal of realism. A well-staged and performed absurd play aims at creating a subversive and anarchic view of our societies.

**Theatrical Forms**

Theatre, over centuries of existence and practice, has evolved into a number of very interesting forms namely

1. Tragedy and neoclassic tragedy
2. Shakespearean and Jacobean drama
3. Romantic drama
4. Modern tragedy
5. Comedy
6. Tragic comedy
7. Melodrama
**Tragedy**

Tragedy is a form of drama based on human suffering that invokes in its audience an accompanying pleasure in the viewing. It often refers to a specific tradition of drama that has played a unique and important role historically in the self-definition of Western civilization. According to Aristotle -“Tragedy is an imitation of an action that is admirable, complete (composed of an introduction, a middle part and an ending) and possesses magnitude; in language made pleasurable, each of its species separated in different parts; performed by actors, not through narration; effecting through pity and fear the purification of such emotions”. In a tragedy the main character is brought to ruin or suffers extreme sorrow, especially as a consequence of tragedies by a tragic flow, moral weakness, or inability to cope with unfavourable circumstances.

**Origin of tragedy**

The word 'tragedy' derives from Classic Greek- tragos (he goat) + aeidein (to sing). It refers to a time when a goat was either the prize in a competition of choral dancing or was that around which a chorus danced prior to the animal’s ritual sacrifice. In another view, the original form of the word was 'trygoedia' from ‘trygos” (grape harvest) + ode (song), because those events were first introduced during grape harvest.

**Characteristics**

Greek tragedy was characterized by seriousness and dignity and involved a great person who experiences a reversal of fortune. This reversal of fortune must be caused by the tragic hero’s mistake. All of the chorus parts were sung and some of the actor’s answers to the chorus were male and wore masks. Sophocles’ 'Oedipus Rex' is an example.

Roman tragedies were a rework of Greek tragedies, but they differ from the Greek version in their long declamatory, narrative accounts of action, their obstructive moralizing and their bombastic rhetoric. Tragedies contain long reflective soliloquies and explore ideas of revenge, the occult, the supernatural, suicide, blood and gore. One good example is Phaedra by Seneca.
Renaissance tragedies were mostly influenced by Seneca. Although plots were taken from classic authors, in these tragedies, the hero is always able to back out, to redeem himself. The Renaissance tragedy was most prominent in England where famous playwrights such as William Shakespeare, Thomas Middleton and Christopher Marlowe pioneered the form.

Modern tragedy can depict ordinary people in domestic surroundings. 'Death of a Salesman' by Arthur Miller, and 'A Street Car Named Desire', by Tennessee Williams are some examples of modern tragedy.

**Comedy**

Comedy is a form of drama in which mirth pre-dominates the termination of the plot which is happy. It refers to a dramatic work that is light and often humorous in tone and contains a happy resolution of the thematic conflict. Comedy is an imitation of the common errors of life and known as the genre of dramatic literature that deals with the light and amusing or with the serious and profound in a light, familiar or satirical manner. We can say in brief, *comedy is a dramatic composition of a bright and amusing character, based upon the foibles of individuals, the manner of society or the ludicrous events or accidents of life.*

**Origin of Comedy**

Comedy can be traced to revels associated with worship in Greece in 5th Century B.C. Aristophanes, Menander, Terence and Plautus produced comedies in classical Greek and Roman literature. It reappeared in the late middle Ages, when the term was used to mean simply a story with a happy ending. The word 'comedy' is derived from the classical Greek “komoidia”= “komas” (revel) or 'kome' (village) + oide (singing). In modern usage, comedy is generally confined to the sense of “laughter provoking”.

**Characteristics**

Greek comedies began with low or base character, seeking insignificant aims, and ended with some accomplishment of the aims which either lightens the initial baseness revels the insignificance of the aims. It usually also has elements of the supernatural, typically magic and the deities.

Elizabethan comedy is one that has a happy ending, usually involving marriages between the unmarried characters, and a tone and style that is lighter hearted. For example, Shakespeare’s play ‘Much Ado about Nothing’ and Dan Thurston’s ‘Volpone, the Fox’.

In ancient Sanskrit drama, Bharata Muni’s Natya Shaster defined humour (hāsyam) as one of the ine (nava rasas), or principle rasas (emotional responses). Each rasa was associated a specific bhavas portrayed on stage. In the case of humour, it was associated with mirth (hasya).
Melodrama is a dramatic form that exaggerates emotions and emphasizes plot or action over characterization. It does not observe the law of cause and effect. In a melodrama, the typical plot is a conflict between characters who personify extreme good and evil. Melodrama usually ends happily and emphasizes sensationalism. The term 'melodrama' refers to the Greek words for music (melos) as plays with musical interludes. Melodrama is characterized by excessive sentiment, exaggerated emotions, sensational and thrilling action and an artificially happy ending. It usually has an improbable plot that features such stock characters as the noble hero, the long suffering heroine and the hard-hearted villain and it ends with virtue triumphing over vice. The villain is always distinct from honesty; virtue always overcomes vice, and there is always a happy ending. The hero or heroine goes through turmoil before good can triumph over evil. Other stereotypical characters include the sheriff, the villain’s sidekick and comical friends who share insurmountable odds with the hero or the heroine. The virtuous hero or vivacious heroine is hounded by the villain and then rescued from a series of life-threatening events as an episodic story unfolds. Plot devices like disguise, abduction, concealed identity and fortunate coincidence are often used just to keep the audience guessing what will come next. Melodrama has some distinctive elements that are still attractive to us even today, making it for the most popular kind of drama. It is always clear in a melodrama that who is good, what are good and who and what is bad or evil. Melodramas also have a sense of poetic justice: the good people won, bad people were defeated. Even if a good person died, he or she still manages to make the world right. Melodrama provided a way of looking at a difficult issue that has to do with moral behaviour.

In a melodrama, the exciting or terrible stories they show seem too strong to be real. There is a situation in which people become more angry or upset than is really necessary. Melodramas were popular in Europe and the U.S. during the 19th century. They often featured spectacular events such as shipwrecks, battles, fires, earthquakes and horse races. Formerly, it was a drama having a musical accompaniment to intensify the effect of certain scenes and it was abounding in romantic sentiment and agonizing situations, with a musical accompaniment only in parts which are especially thrilling and pathetic. Melodrama died out as a theatrical form in the early 20th century, but remained popular in silent films, for example 'Pushpak', Charlie Chaplin films. It can still be seen in contemporary films genres such as the action films.
Origin

In theatre, melodrama developed in the 19th century. The earliest uses of melodrama go back to the stage productions of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Although other earlier works contain scenes or sections that can be grouped with the genre, experts believe that the first full example is 'Pygmalion', a play by Jean Jacques Rousseau that was first performed in 1770. Rousseau used the French word 'melodrama', to distinguish his work from the Italian opera that was popular at the time, specifically describing spoken dialogue with musical undercurrents.

Theatres took melodrama to new heights in 19th century France, where the playwright and the theatre director, Rene Charles Guilbert de Pixérécourt, funnelled his real life experiences into his successful plays. According to his template, the first act was usually an antagonistic event, followed by a second act of increased conflict and a final, third act of complete moral resolution. Three Act tragedy in the story became reduced by the use of comedy, romance or an upbeat ending. Towards the end of 1800, theatrical melodramas began to fall out of favour. They continued to develop as salon entertainment, which was performed privately in homes or other small venues.

When films became the popular form of entertainment in the 20th century, melodramatic elements were saved from fading away. Many of movies used short adaptations of well-known stories and novels, which were usually extremely sentimental. Film makers since have applied melodramatic elements in a large number of films that are considered classics.

In contemporary society, the melodrama has gained many negative connotations, and is associated with excessive action or emotion that looks unrealistic.

Characteristics

Melodrama consistently displays "key constitutive factors" pathos, protagonist of melodramatic works may either be ordinary people who are caught up in extra ordinary event, or highly exaggerated and unrealistic characters. Novelist Wilkie Collins in noted for his attention to accuracy in detail in his works, no matter how sensational the plot.

Street Theatre

Street theatre is a theatrical performance that is done on the street, often in the form of basking. Practitioners of this type of theatre have to use noise and visuals to get the audience's attention. Good street theatre has elements of improvisation and a fluidity, that allow the audience to stand and watch for only a few minutes and to come in half way through the performance. Street theatre draws on a plethora of dramatic elements and techniques to communicate a particular message to the audience. Generally, street theatre is a dramatization of social and political issues, usually enacted outside, as on the street or in a park, comes in many shapes and forms, and has many other names: Road Show, Corner Play (N ukkad Natak), Guerrila Theatre etc. In other words we can say that the street theatre is an amateur theatrical production


performed in a street, park, etc. or indoor, usually for a non-paying audience, usually with an improvised script generally on a social or political theme.

Generally, doing away the accessories required for a main stream theatre performance like lights, costumes and sounds, the beauty of street plays lies in the fact that they can be performed anytime, anywhere and need only an audience. There are certain characteristics which distinguish street plays:

1. **Performed in open space**: Street theatre breaks the limitations of a particular frame and is performed in an open space.

2. **Customary Percussion**: Customary musical instruments like ‘Dhapli’ or ‘Dholak’ an Indian musical instrument and a very basic percussion like a well-coordinated simple clap of hand, are used to create an impactful music.

3. **Dialectal and regional languages**: The language of a street play is generally away from literature and is like the common people’s language, including songs and use of one liners.

4. **Costumes**: All the artists generally wear common costumes (*kurta* and *pyjamas/jeans*) and manage the changing characters with use of a *dupatta* or a similar cloth.

5. **Energy level**: The energy level of artists is very important in a street play as it shows in the body language and action-reaction of the performers.

6. **Spontaneity**: Spontaneous adaptation to the immediate situation, reaction to movements and improvisations are essential parts of a street performance.

**Emergence**

Street theatre is arguably the oldest form of theatre in existence: most mainstream entertainment mediums can be traced back to origins in street performances, including religious plays and many other forms. Different practitioners will have different motivations for using the street as a space for performance because the street is a place with a different set of possibilities as compared to conventional theatre space.

In India, street theatre developed as an art form to illustrate the feeling of common people. During and after the independence of India, Indian street theatre drastically developed as an artistic expression in illustrating the colors of daily life. Gradually, Indian street theatre became an effort of communicating the message of the masses; an attempt in illustrating the realities of daily life. Safdar Hashmi’s ‘*Jana Natya Manch*’ formed in 1973, led the movement of Indian
street theatre. The movement has now spread to all states and today, street theatre has become an eminent form of expression.

**Folk Theatre**

Folk theatre is non-commercial, generally rural theatre and pageantry based on folk traditions and local history. Folk play is a theatrical performance, within a frame of make-believe action shared by performers and audience that is not fixed by authority, but is based on living tradition and displays lesser or greater variation in its repetition of this tradition; it is a performance enacted overtime and space, with practices of design, movement, speech and music which engenders and enhances a sense of communal identity among those who participate in its delivery and reception. We can say in brief that folk drama is the traditional play activity that relies primarily on dialogue to establish its meaning and that tells a story through the combination of dialogue and action.

Folk drama is performed by an ethnic or folk group that has developed traditional rules for time, place and manner of performance. In contrast to the static scripts of literary dramas, the dialogue and actions represented in these plays maintain certain fluidity.

In India, the folk theatre is mainly narrative in its form. Every state in India has its own distinctive forms of folk theatre. Such as,

- **Jatra** - West Bengal, Odisha, and Eastern Bihar
- **Tamasha** - Maharashtra
- **Swang** - Haryana and Uttar Pradesh
- **Nautanki** - Uttar Pradesh
- **Khayal** - Rajasthan
- **Bhavai** - Gujarat
- **Yakshagana** - Karnataka
- **Therukuttu** - Tamil Nadu
Characteristics

The stage for the folk theatre is generally a colossal empty space, which the actors dexterously control and employ to complement their dialogue and symbolic gestures. The typical concept of stage designing of folk theatre in India points towards its simplicity. The actors of the Indian folk theatre generally perform on the make shift stage. This immensely supports conversing with the audience in the course of the play, as audience participation is an essential part of Indian folk theatre. Elaborate makeup, masks, chorus, loud music and folk dance are indeed the hallmarks. For themes, the folk theatre uses the Sanskrit epics, the Puranas, historical tales, folk stories of romance and valor, and biographical accounts of local heroes.

Folk theatre owes its origin to the efforts of the narrator, the Sutradhara, of the folklore, to make his/her art more visual in its impact. He/she resorted to acting and playing different roles all by himself/herself in the course of his/her narration. Even today, these forms continue to attract large audience especially in small towns.
Solo Performance

The term 'solo performance' often referred to a single person's show in which a person would perform on stage and entertain the audience by himself/herself. A solo play is simply a traditional play written by a play writer for a cast of one. There is also room in this genre for inclusion of other art forms. When creating a show, a solo performer is not limited to creating and performing the show himself/herself. He/she can use the director, writer, designer and composer.

Two main strands in the theatre of solo plays need to be highlighted; The Monologue Drama and the Solo Performance. These strands, at times, are highly distinct; at others, they are closely interwoven. Both involve a speaker, who
delivers speeches before an audience, sometimes directly addressing that audience, sometimes addressing a silent or invisible character-auditor. Though in some cases, speeches relate stories; this may not be their primary function. If there is more than one speaker on stage, speeches are not dialogical, rather they function as discreet units that may overlap or contradict one another.

A monologue is the presentation of a single character’s speech, most often to express the character’s mental thoughts aloud to directly address the audience or another character. Monologues share much in common with several other literary devices including 'soliloquies', 'apostrophes' and 'asides'. There are however, distinctions between each of these devices. A monologue is distinct from a soliloquy because the soliloquy involves a character relating his or her thoughts and feelings to him/herself and to the audience without addressing any of the other characters. 'To be or not to be' in Hamlet is an example of soliloquy. A monologue is the thought of a person spoken out loud, whereas, in apostrophes, the speaker addresses an imaginary person or inanimate object. Asides differ from each other not only in terms of length, but also in that, asides aren’t heard by other characters even in situations where they logically should be.

While a 'one-person show' may be the musing of comedian on a theme, the form can accommodate a wider scope. In the preface of the book "Extreme Exposure", Editor Jo Bonney uses the term ‘Solo Performance’ to encompass these performances that do not necessarily have a comic history. She suggests, "At the most basic level, despite their limitless backgrounds and performance styles, all solo performers are storytellers". This assumption is based on her assertion that, a number of solo shows have a storyline or a plot. Bonney also suggests that a distinctive trait of solo performance resides in its frequent lack of a fourth wall separating the performer from the audience, stating that a solo show experts and demands the active involvement of the people in the audience. But "Krapp’s Last Tape" by Samuel Beckett, is performed without addressing the audience directly.

**History**

We may assume that individuals have told stories in front of other members of their tribe or society for thousands of years. They would have orally passed down many of today’s myths developing through theatrical people such as Greek monologists, the strolling minstrels of medieval England and the French troubadours.

The backgrounds of solo performers the decades range from Vaudeville, stand-up comedy, poetry, music, the visual arts, magic, cabaret and dance. Solo shows have long been the domain of comic performers. Several performers have presented solo shows which may be personal or autobiographical creation.

**Some solo performances of the past centuries:**

1. Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Pygmalion
2. Nikalai Vasilievich Gogol: Diary of a mad man
3. Anton Chekhov: On the Harmful Effect of Tobacco
4. Arnold Schonberg: Erwartung

Some famous Indian Solo Performances are:
1. Bheeshm Sahani: Madhavi (Director-Arvind Gaur and Actor - Rashi Bunny)
2. Vijay Tendulkar: Massage (Director-Harbansh Singh and Actor - Rakesh Bedi)
3. Nirmal Verma: Dedhi Inch Upar (Director-Shyam Juneja and Actor-Lucky Verma)
4. Anupam Kher: Kuchh Bhi Ho Sakta Hai
5. Nadira Zaheer Babbar: Dayashankarki Diar y (Director-Nadira and Actor - Aashish Vidyarthi)

**Mime**

Mime is the theatrical technique of expressing an idea or mood or portraying a character entirely by gesture and bodily movement without the use of words. The wonder and miracle of mime comes from the artist’s ability to hone the entire body to speak like a mouth and without using the words, mime gracefully, forcefully and swiftly convey an intended story, message or feeling to an audience. We can say in brief that mime is an eloquent and efficient delivery of a mood or a message in which the body is the primary instrument. Mime is one of the most ancient forms of theatre. The earliest record of mime is found in the ancient Greek theatre, where a masked dancer performed for audiences, which was called 'pantomime'. The first recorded pantomime actor was Telestes in the play 'Seven against Thebes' by Aeschylus. There are differences in mime and pantomime performances:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pantomime</th>
<th>Mime</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The art of acting without words.</td>
<td>1. A special art form that is an offspring of pantomime. It is very abstract, stylized and gives an illusion of daily action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The action conveys only action.</td>
<td>2. Action conveys a theme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The actor works with imaginary objects.</td>
<td>3. The actor uses imaginary objects, but all or part of the body to become the object.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Based on reality.  
5. No sound is allowed.  
6. The goal is the exact pantomime of the specific action.  
7. Masks are used.

5. No verbal sound is allowed.  
6. The goal is to express an idea.  
7. No masks are allowed.

Mime is also a popular art form in street theatre and busking. Traditionally, these sorts of performances involve the actor/actress wearing tight black and white clothing with white facial makeup. However, contemporary mimes often perform without whiteface.

**History**

It is believed that mime was simply the earliest form of self-expression. Mime existed before the creation of language in primitive times and simply began with the first movement of a human expressing a need, a desire or a response. Instead of fading into obscurity when the spoken language was developed, mime became a form of entertainment. The earliest written records of mime in the west appear in the Greek theatre of the Dionysus in Athens. The principal mimes were known as 'ethalogues', and the scenes they would perform would teach moral lessons. After the fall of the Greek empire, the Romans created irreverent spectacles out of mime, which were then banned on stage by the Church.

Mime flourished once again in the middle ages in the market places of Italy where street performers combined it with acrobatics. In those times, other artists like dancers, poets, actors and singers, all used mime to further their own brand of art. As they gained popularity, mime artist began wearing masks which enabled them to ridicule government and political institutions and spread social messages.

It is interesting to note that, other cultures also developed highly elaborated art forms that consisted of miming. The Japanese drama form *Noh* is a different type of mime performance and so is the Indian dance drama called ‘*Kathakali*’.

In the 19th century, mime evolved into a pure slapstick routine that was meant only to entertain. A mime performance, as we know it today is the result of the efforts of an acrobat named Jean-Gaspard Batiste Deburau. Performing in a theatre in Paris, he was responsible for the creation of mime as an art form. His other great innovation was the sympathetic but downtrodden character 'Pierrot'. Some of the other most well-known figures in Western mime are Etienne Decroux, Gilles Segal. Charlie Chaplin’s comedic escapades too, involve elements of mime bringing it to public notice. In India, Niranjan Goswami founded the Indian Mime Theatre in 1976, and since then, has been working for social causes.
A modern mime performance is very different from what it used to be because contemporary artists have put a lot of effort into creating something unique and different. If the story is a comedy then literal mime is usually used. If the story is a serious one then abstract mime is most likely to be used. What is certain is that, this art form has been attracting a lot of fresh talent and is therefore constantly evolving.

**Musical Theatre**

Musical theatre is a form of theatre that combines music, songs, dance and spoken dialogues. The humour, love, pathos, anger and the story itself is communicated through music, movement and technical aspects of the entertainment as a whole. Although musical theatre overlaps with other theatrical forms like opera and dance, it may be distinguished by the equal importance given to the music as compared with the dialogue, movement and other elements of the work. Since the early 20th century, musical theatre stage work has generally been called as simply ‘musical’.

Musicals are performed all around the world. In a musical play, songs and dances are fully integrated into a well-developed story with serious dramatic goals that are able to evoke genuine emotions other than laughter. The three main components of a musical play are – music, dance and dialogue.

Musical theatre productions usually include a score, songs with lyrics that advance the plot and instrumental interludes. The music and songs heighten the dramatic tensions within the plot. The emotions or plans of characters are expressed through songs as well as monologues. Some include a chorus of characters as a functional device. Choreographed dance or movement adds a physical rhythm to accompany the musical score. The dialogue in a musical theatre is usually brief and functional. It drives the main narrative forward, but until the final act, the emphasis of the show is on the songs.
There is no fixed length for a musical. While it can range from a short one act entertainment to several hours in length. Most musicals range from one and a half hour to three hours. Musicals are usually presented in two acts with one short intermission and the first act frequently longer than the second. The first act generally introduces nearly all the characters and most of the music, and often ends with the introduction of a dramatic conflict or plot complication while the second act may introduce a few new songs, but usually contains reprises of important musical themes and resolves the conflict or complication.

The material presented in a musical may be original or it may be adapted or born from novels, classic legends, historical events and stories.

**History and development**

Musical theatre dates back to the ancient India’s Natyashastra. In the Western tradition, it can be attributed at least to the ancient Greeks where the music and dance were included in theatre performances during the 5th century B.C. The dramatist Aeschylus and Sophocles composed and choreographed the dances of the chorus. The 3rd century B.C. Roman comedies of Plautus included song and dance routines performed with orchestrations. By the Middle Ages, theatre in Europe consisted mostly of travelling minstrels and small performing troupes of performers singing and offering slapstick comedy.

In the 12th and 13th centuries, religious dramas set to church chants. These plays developed into an autonomous form of musical theatre, with poetic forms sometimes alternating with the prose dialogues and liturgical chants. The European Renaissance saw older forms evolve into ‘commedia dell’arte’ and later, 'opera buffa'. In England, Elizabethan and Jacobean plays frequently included music up to an hour before and during the performance. In France, Moliere turned several of his farcical comedies into musical entertainments with songs and dance.

Musical theatre has existed in America since the colonial days; uniquely American forms of theatrical entertainment did not emerge until the nineteenth century. It really gained popularity after that.

The first theatre piece that conforms to the modern conception of a musical is generally considered to be the 'Black Crook' scheduled in New York on 12 September, 1866. The production was five and half hours long, but despite its length, it ran for 474 performances. The same year ‘The Black Domino/Between You and Me and the post’ was the first show to call itself a “musical comedy”.

The golden age of the musical is generally considered to be from 1940 to 1960. The year 1976 brought one of the greatest contemporary musicals to the stage when a chorus line emerged from recorded group therapy-style sessions. Recent decades have also seen the development of vibrant musical theatrical scenes in Germany, Austria, France, Japan, America, England, India and other places.
In India, the term 'musical' has two connotations. The pure musical comes from the Indian classical and the tradition of folk theatre, such as, Bharatnatyam, Odissi, Kuchipudi, Kathak, Kathakali, Mohiniaattam, Manipuri and Sattriya. There is no difference between songs and dialogues. The other is the western concept, where there is a distinction between spoken dialogue and song. At the present time, the musical is being pulled in a number of different directions.

Music and theatre have had a close relationship since ancient times—Athenian tragedy, for example, was a form of dance-drama that employed a chorus whose parts were sung (to the accompaniment of an aulos—an instrument comparable to the modern clarinet), as were some of the actors' responses and their 'solo songs' (monodies). Modern musical theatre is a form of theatre that also combines music, spoken dialogue, and dance. It emerged from comic opera (especially Gilbert and Sullivan), variety, vaudeville, and musicall genres of the late 19th and early 20th century. After the Edwardian musical comedy that began in the 1890s, the Princess Theatre musicals of the early 20th century, and comedies in the 1920s and 1930s, musicals moved in a more dramatic direction. Musical theatre may be produced on an intimate scale, in regional theatres, and elsewhere, but it often includes spectacle. For instance, Broadway and West End musicals often include lavish costumes and sets.

**Ballet and Dance**

Ballet is a form of classic academic dancing based on the accepted five positions of the feet and using a vocabulary of movement development since the 17th century; they originally descended from court dances and spectacles of the 15th and 16th century. The ballet is the most popular and well-known ancient dance characterized by graceful, balanced movements with fully extended limbs, initiated from a restricted set of body positions.

In the late Renaissance society, dance was not considered merely a source of a light-hearted entertainment or physical recreation, but a profoundly intellectual experience for both participants and spectators. Sixteenth century dance was infused with a new meaning and innovations. The court ballet of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were intended to enlighten and edify audiences. As the art of choreography developed, it became increasingly informed by humanist ideals and imbedded with layers of meaning that were moral, philosophical and political in nature.

Proscenium stage was created at the end of the 16th century and it separated the audience from the performers. By this time, the ballet was recognized as a viable art form. Ballet dancers began to use "turned-out" positions and set vocabulary of movements which were based on the:

(A) Position of the feet
(B) Position of the arms and head
(C) Locomotor and non-locomotor movements
Some of the most common characteristics of ballet performances are:

(1) Spectacular scenery
(2) Elaborate costumes
(3) Proscenium stage and a fairy tale or fable storyline

History and Emergence

Ballet history dates back to the 15th century in Italy, a popular dance form for fun and celebration. Eventually the dance form became a way to entertain the families of nobilities. Catherine de’ Medici (1519-89) came from Italy to France to marry into the ruling family and brought her dancing masters who introduced a new type of entertainment to the public, later to be known as the court ballet. It quickly spread to the French court and further developed. In 1652, Jean Baptiste Lully, an Italian violinist, dancer, choreographer and composer, joined the court of Louis XIV. Lully often cast the king in his ballets. Lully also collaborated with the French Playwright Mollier. Together they took the Italian theatre style, the ‘Commedia dell arte’ and adopted it into their work for a French audience, creating the ‘Comedie Ballet’. Louis XIV founded the academic ‘Royale de Musique’ (the Paris opera) within which emerged the first professional theatrical ballet company, the ‘Paris Oer Balle’. Theatrical ballet soon became an independent form of art, maintaining a close association with opera and spread from the heart of Europe to other nations. In the 20th century styles of ballet continued to develop and strongly influence the broader concept of dance and drama.

Summary

The Dramatic Form is the established set of structural principles in a play which helps a reader to make appropriate distinctions. Dramatic styles are stabilized aesthetic features of any part of the process of making and performing works of Drama and Theatre (including styles of writing, directing, design and performance). Tragedy, Comedy, Solo Performance, Mime, Melodrama, Musical Theatre are all forms of Drama. Realism, Symbolism, Ballet, Street Theatre and Folk Theatre are all dramatic styles.

Tragedy

Tragedy is an imitation of an action that is admirable, complete [composed of an introduction, a middle part and an ending] and possesses magnitude; in language made pleasurable, each of its species separated in different parts; performed by actors, not through narration; effecting through pity and fear the purification of such emotions.

Comedy

Comedy is a dramatic composition of a bright and amusing character, based upon the foibles of individuals, the manner of society or the ludicrous events or accidents of life.

Solo Performance

The term solo performance often referred to a single person’s show in which a single person would perform
on stage and entertain the audience by himself.

**Mime**

*Mime* is the theatrical technique of expressing an idea or mood or portraying a character entirely by gesture and bodily movement without the use of words.

**Melodrama**

*Melodrama* is a dramatic form that exaggerates emotions and emphasizes plot or action over characterization.

**Musical Theatre**

Musical theatre is a form of theatre that combines music, songs, dance and spoken dialogues. The humour, love, pathos, anger and the story itself is communicated through music, movement and technical aspects of the entertainment, as a whole.

**Realism**

In theatre, *Realism* is a dramatic style in which characters of the play move and talk in a manner similar to that of everyday behaviour. It holds the idea of the stage as an environment, rather than as an acting platform.

**Symbolism**

Symbolism is the practice of representing objects with a symbolic meaning, in which, a person, place an activity or an object stands for something beyond itself.

**Ballet and Dance**

Ballet is the most popular and well-known ancient dance characterized by graceful, balanced movements with fully extended limbs, initiated from a restricted set of body positions.

**Street Theatre**

Street Theatre is a theatrical performance that is done on the street, often in the form of basking. Practitioners of this type of theatre have to use noise and visuals to get the audience’s attention.

**Folk Theatre**

Folk Drama is the traditional play that relies primarily on dialogue to establish its meaning and tell a story through the combination of dialogue and action.
Complete the crossword with the help of clues given below:

Down
1. Acting without words using masks
2. Charlie chaplin films are examples of ____________________
3. Use of symbols
4. Ancient form of theatre
6. Done in the form of basking
8. It is based on five positions of the feet
10. Light and humorous
Across
5. 'believability'
7. Combination of music, song, dance and spoken dialogues
9. Forms of 'swang', 'jatra', 'tamasha'
11. 'presentation of single character's speech'
12. Introduced during grape harvest

Down
1. Greek word from which the word 'Theatre' has been derived
2. Term associated with purgation and purification
4. Beckett's second masterpiece
7. Father of realism, famous for writing scandalous plays

Across
3. Play that features Harold's economical dialogue and characters' hidden emotions
5. First American playwright to win Nobel Prize
6. Major theme of Miss Julie
8. Writer considered one of the first post-modernists
Match the column

A  Forms of Folk Theatre  States
a) Bhavai  Tamil Nadu
b) Therukuttu  West Bengal
c) Swang  Maharashtra
d) Tamasha  Haryana and Uttar Pradesh
e) Khayal  Karnataka
f) Jatra  Gujrat
g) Yakshagana  Uttar Pradesh
h) Nautanki  Rajasthan

B  Performers  Famous Play
a) Bheeshm Sahani  Pygmalion
b) Anton Chekhov  Kuchh Bhi Ho Sakta Hai
c) Nirmal Verma  Diary of a mad man
d) Nikolai Vasilievich Gogol  Dedh Inch Upar
e) Jean-Jacques Rousseau  Madhavi
f) Anupam Kher  Erwartung
g) Arnold Schoenberg  On the Harmful Effect of Tobbaco

Comprehension Questions

I. Answer the following in about 15 words:
1. What is a dramatic form?
2. Define tragedy.
3. What is a solo performance?
4. Name the first theatre production that was ‘musical’?

II. Answer the following in about 50 words:
1. What are dramatic styles?
3. Describe a monologue. How is it different from a soliloquy?
4. What is psychological realism?
5. How is a solo performer not limited to creating and performing the show himself/herself?
III. Answer the following in about 75 words
1. How is realism closely connected to the development of modern drama?
2. Explain the statement, ‘Symbolism was largely a reaction against Realism’.
3. Describe the movements used in a ballet?
4. Discuss the folk theatre.

IV. Answer the following in about 150 words
1. Discuss the origin and characteristics of tragedy, giving examples.
2. How is melodrama used as a theatrical form over the years?
3. How has musical theatre developed as a popular form of theatre?
4. Discuss the development of the Epic Theatre.

V. Answer the following in about 250 words
1. Describe mime as a theatrical technique, its origin, difference from pantomime and modern day mime.
2. What is street theatre? Why and how has it become a popular form?
3. Bring out the various styles of theatre.

Lets Discuss

HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skills)
1. Identify the local theatre from your city or state, with reference to:
   a) Origin
   b) Number of theatre groups in your area
   c) Number of artists who are trained and untrained
   d) Dialects
   e) Narratives
   f) Types of songs
   g) Types of audience
   h) Expenditure involved in shaping a performance/ running a theatre.
2. Folk theatre continues to attract a large audience, especially in small towns. What are the essential features which have made folk theatre popular?
Activities

1. Identify characters from the play and select one or two characters from all the plays, read their roles and discuss them in class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Antony and Cleopatra Characters</th>
<th>Hamlet Characters</th>
<th>Julius Caesar Characters</th>
<th>King Lear Characters</th>
<th>Macbeth Characters</th>
<th>Pygmalion Characters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Antony</td>
<td>Hamlet</td>
<td>Julius Caesar</td>
<td>Lear</td>
<td>Macbeth</td>
<td>Alfred Doolittle</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Cleopatra</td>
<td>Claudius</td>
<td>Calpurnia</td>
<td>Goneril</td>
<td>Banquo</td>
<td>Professor Henry Higgins</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Octavian</td>
<td>Gertrude</td>
<td>Octavius</td>
<td>Regan</td>
<td>Macduff</td>
<td>Colonel Hugh Pickering</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Marcus Aemilius Lepidus</td>
<td>The Ghost</td>
<td>Cicero</td>
<td>Cordelia</td>
<td>Donalbain</td>
<td>Eliza Doolittle</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Sextus Pompey</td>
<td>Polonius</td>
<td>Brutus</td>
<td>Duke of Albany</td>
<td>Three Witches</td>
<td>Mrs Higgins</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Romeo and Juliet Characters</th>
<th>As You Like It Characters</th>
<th>Comedy of Errors Characters</th>
<th>Merchant of Venice Characters</th>
<th>Midsummer Night's Dream Characters</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Romeo</td>
<td>Rosalind</td>
<td>Solinus</td>
<td>Shylock</td>
<td>Oberon</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Juliet</td>
<td>Touchstone</td>
<td>Egeon</td>
<td>Portia</td>
<td>Titania</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Friar Lawrence</td>
<td>Oriando</td>
<td>Emilia</td>
<td>Antonio</td>
<td>Hermia</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Mercutio</td>
<td>Duke Senior</td>
<td>Adriana</td>
<td>Gratiano</td>
<td>Helena</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Prince Escalus</td>
<td>Phebe</td>
<td>Luciana</td>
<td>Bassanio</td>
<td>Theseus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. What are the four kinds of tragedy? Complete the table by listing 2 examples about each category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tragedy</th>
<th>Play</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Characters</th>
<th>Form and Style</th>
</tr>
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</table>

Practice some mime exercises linking all of them to a story or idea:

(a) Go away
(b) Go away! Leave me alone
(c) Come here
(d) Don't come any nearer
(e) Don't stand so close, I feel uncomfortable
(f) Be quiet
(g) I've got a headache
(h) I'm hungry
(i) I feel absolutely exhausted
(j) I'm tired
(k) Peace, man
(l) Something smells
(m) My feet ache
(n) I'm warning you
(o) Do, sit down
(p) What a surprise!
(q) I can't hear you
(r) What's over there
(s) What's the noise
(t) Halt!
(u) I don't want to volunteer, so don't choose me
(v) I'm bored
(w) I'm so hot
(x) I'm sorry, I don't understand English
(y) It's cold in here
(z) You are crazy ... bye, keep talking.

3. Organize a theatre festival entitled 'Going Solo'. Work in groups, allocating the following roles:
   - Actor
   - Director
   - Producer
   - Sound, light and costume designer
Select a speech from a play of your choice for your solo performance. You may refer to any, Shakespearean, or modern playwrights. As per your role in the project, examine minutely your specific area of responsibility.

Hold rehearsals and prepare for the final presentation.

4. Try making the shapes of a number of different types of statues and sculptures. Then choose one shape and freeze totally, so you really do look like that statue or sculpture.

5. Working in pairs, work out a short movement piece where two people crash into each other. Begin and end with a freeze, so you see a photo of two people about to move, then the movement, then an action photo of the collision.

6. In pairs, work out a mime sequence of four snap movements—two each—which begin and end with a freeze. For example, one of you could hold out your hand and your partner could mime putting something in your hand. You could reach out, catch it and freeze.

Whatever actions you choose, begin and end with a strong freeze, and make the snap movements as clear and sharp as possible.

7. Individually mime a bird in flight by lifting both shoulders, followed by your elbows, then wrists, and finally fingers, all in a continuous flowing movement. Reverse the sequence to mime the down sweep of the wing.

8. Working individually, imagine, a present has been delivered to you for your birthday. Mime carrying the box, opening it and taking out the present.

9. In pairs, in turns, mime handling and using an object while your partner watches. Repeat the exercise three times, seeing if you can identify each of the objects your partner mimes. Make your mime so clear that your partner can identify the object straight away.

10. In pairs, in turns, perform your circus mime for each other and then analyse each other’s work, identify the effective use of precision.

11. In pairs, create a mime about a hall of mirrors in a circus fun-fair. Take it in turns to be the person and the mirror, and use the three techniques for precision—slowing them down, exaggerating them and snapping them, to make the different mirror work effective.

12. Working in pairs, experiment with a number of role reversals, taking it in turns to be the teacher, the parent, the police officer, etc. As you create the roles, make them as believable as possible so that you can experience what it is like to be in the opposite role to your everyday one.

13. Working with a partner, take turns to be a mirror. Begin by sitting facing each other and move only your hands while your partner mirrors you. As you get skilled at mirroring each other, try standing up and doing whole body mirroring, pretending you are getting dressed or practicing tennis or dancing, while your partner mirrors you. Finally, try
shadowing in turn, starting with your back to your partner and moving around the room
using different actions and different levels while your partner mirrors you from behind.

14. Working in groups, take a story, poem or song and read it or play it, working together to
act out in movement the action, story or situation from the text you are using. You might
like to create your own story or poem, or use a piece of instrumental music and imagine
the story or situation that it suggests.

15. Working in small groups, imagine there is a bus stop near. One at a time, take on a role,
then go and stand waiting for a bus, using body language to take on your role. You can
react physically to the other people at the bus stop but do not talk to them. See how long
you can maintain your concentration and the role you have taken.

16. Repeat the bus stop improvisation, you sing the same physical movement, and this time
use conversation as well, giving the role you are playing, a voice. Talk to the other people
at the bus stop, acing and reacting spontaneously with them, and see how long you can
keep the improvisation going without losing your role or concentration.

17. Working in a group of three or four, set up a space in the drama room for picture theatre.
Place a few objects and costumes in the space, give each member of the group a number,
and then stand in a circle outside the space. The Number 1 enters the space, touches one
of the objects or costumes and freezes. Number 2 looks at the picture created, imagines what
is happening, then enters the space, does something and freezes the action. The rest of the
group follow the same process until an interesting picture is created. Each person then
adds one line of dialogue and one action to the picture, beginning with Number 1 the fair
performer.

18. (a) Two students, A and B, are to work together.

(b) B thinks of an object – a pencil case, a coffee cup, etc. which A is to sketch. A does not
know what the object is and will be blindfolded. B gives A instructions about how to
draw the object, but cannot help beyond that.

(c) A: try your hardest. As you draw, can you guess what is the object? Finally, take off
the blindfold and compare the sketch with the real thing

From game to drama: A dramatic situation creating a similar tension would be a deaf and
dumb child who has witnessed a crime and has to be coaxed to draw what he or she saw.
Can you devise a dramatic situation which would create a similar kind of tension? What
situation could possibly include a person struggling to make sense of some strange
information?