

# THEATER STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE YOUR NOVEL

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## ► Theater is everything that an audience can WITNESS ◀

☞ Character interiority is inferred through movement, gesture, dialogue, and outside cues (setting, lighting, costuming, props).

☞ Plot is constructed as the action of characters through a constructed space (physical, emotional, thematic).

☞ Experience is contained, singular, and intimate (relationship between actor and audience parallels the relationship between a book and a reader).

### PLOT STRUCTURE ☛☛

- Aristotle's Three Act Structure
- Tobin's Four Act Structure
- Booker's Meta-Plot (Five Act)
- Circular vs linear storytelling

Case Study: "A Doll House" (Ibsen) as  
"a well-made play" (modern drama)

### SCENE BUILDING FOR BLOCKING/POSITIONING ☛☛

☞ Envision a scene: each moment of blocking and positioning has a purpose

☞ Ask yourself in every scene

- 1) Where is the character in a space? Where do they move in a space? How are characters in relation to each other?
- 2) How is a character gesturing? (Thought exercise: Many ways to pick up pen)
- 3) Where does a character go in their head? What is their body doing while they are thinking?

## ► Remember, theater is *action-focused* — and motions define character. ◀

### DIALOGUE ☛☛

☞ Characters are written with unstated wants and unspoken goals. These motivations become apparent in how they interact with others and while alone.

☞ Ask yourself at the beginning of a scene

- 1) What does a character want? What is their goal for that scene?
- 2) What methods do they use to achieve their goal?
- 3) By the end of the scene, do they succeed?

## ► Characters talk in order to fulfill their wants. ◀

### THEME & SYMBOL ☛☛

☞ When thinking about symbolism: Is it repeated? Is it notable? Is it significant? Is it implied?