

Dramatic Literature Analysis Sheet

I. SECTION I – Basic Given Circumstances (*worth 25 pts*)

A. What is the full title of the play?: Six Characters in Search of An Author

B. Who is the playwright (name)? : Luigi Pirandello

a) *Answer Goethe's 3 Questions about the playwright:*

(1) What was the artist trying to do?: The author is trying to comment on the conventions of theatre and how good they are at achieving theatre's objective of teaching.

(2) Did the artist succeed in doing it?: The author succeeded in the doing. This play elegantly commentates on the nature of theatre while at the same time providing the audience with a forward in the form of the mysterious backstories of the lives of the six characters the guides the audience throughout the course of the play.

(3) Was it worth the doing?: I think it was worth the doing. The play does a good job on commenting on the nature of theatre, and at least from my perspective that first experienced this play for this dramatic literature class. This brought to light many questions for me to think about theatre as a medium of art I had not thought about before. Considering the play achieved theatres objective of teaching me something about the topic that which the play's playwright wanted to teach me about this play was successful in what it set out to accomplish.

C. In what year or time period was the play written?: 1921

D. What is the time period of the world of the play (specific year and month if possible)? : The play takes place in the undscript present. Though this undscript present has two notable characteristics. It takes place during a rehearsal period for a play, and also during a period of time where the plays of the time period that in which a production of the play is produced are not doing a good job of achieving theatre's objective of teaching.

- E. What is the setting (country, state, city, town, and all locations such as houses, gardens, offices, etc)? This gets a little complicated for this play. Since, technically all the plays take place within the theatre. But also, is technically does not. It arguably could take place anywhere the six characters have been during their lives journey as their lives bleed into the world of theatre. However, at the same time one location that the six characters have been during their life journey stands out from the other locations and that would be the fountain where the double death happens. Because the theatre artists do notice the death. The death is perceived at the fountain is perceived as real in their world, and it is truly this world of the artists that which an audience of theatre goers also exists in, and thus this is the other location other than the theatre itself which truly exists within the world of the play.

II. SECTION II – Plot & Structure (*worth 25 pts*)

- A. Describe the plot. What is this story about, in paragraph form? Use your own words, do not look up a review or other summary written by someone else.: We are in rehearsals for a show *The Game of Role Playing* rehearsals for said show are not going well. Six characters show up at the theatre searching for an author to turn their past into the stories. As the six characters pasts begin to unravel we learn that there is more to the past of the six characters then we initially though. The crafting process of turning the lives of the six characters into a new play does not go well as the six characters end up taking actions to hinder that process. Eventually we reach the point where we get to the point in the characters past where they tell what has happened at the fountain. The girl was drowned, and the boy having witnessed the stepdaughters drowning committed suicide. The boy ends up possibly dead within the theatre. Shocking all those in the company of theatre professionals. Leading to the director calling off the rehearsal for the day and telling everyone to go home. Within the final moments alone in the theatre he sees the six characters. All the characters are trapped within the confines of the theatre except for the stepdaughter who alone escapes.

- B. **Point of Attack:** Middle, Early or Late? – in terms of what?: None of the above for this particular play. While on the one hand the point of attack is late in that the six characters have already had elaborate and complicated life stories that we spend the play unraveling. It is also arguable the since the six characters are well characters nothing that happened to them really happened in reality. And only the reality and passage of time happening to the company of theatre artists represents passage of time in reality and thus the point of attack is early relative to the passage of time in reality.
- C. **Inciting Incident:** What is the main event that sets the dramatic action in motion?: The Director and the company of theatre artists arrive at the theatre for a day of rehearsal.
- D. What begins the rising action, if different from the inciting incident?: The Rising action begins at the point that in which the 6 characters arrive at the theatre.
- E. **Crises (list all if more than one):** These are not quite as intense as the climax but are moments of intensity rising that build to the climax.: This play is interesting in terms of how much there are crisis since the play has a very late point of attack. Much of the action in the play that is told to the audience by the six characters has already happened. It is already in the past it cannot be changed. Arguably the only crisis other than the climax is probably the moment when the direct decides to stage the story of the six characters since it resembles a change in the character of the director from being questioning and skeptical of why the six characters are there to deciding that they are in fact willing to try to be an author to the story of the six characters, and decides to stage the story of the six characters on the theatrical stage.
- F. **Climax:** What is the highest moment of dramatic tension – the tip of the rising action?: The climax of the play is the moment in which the fabric of reality tears open and the suicide of the boy at the fountain suddenly becomes a possible reality within the theatre rehearsal space itself.

G. **Resolution:** What is the resolution?: The company leaves the rehearsal space. The boy and the girl remain dead. The son, the mother, and the father are trapped within the rehearsal space for all of eternity. The stepdaughter, however, is able to alone escape the rehearsal space or the trauma of the family that is the six characters.

III. SECTION III – Character (*worth 50 pts*)

A. Who is the protagonist and why do you think so?: The Director is arguably the protagonist. In order for someone to be the protagonist the audience my be able to relate to them. With how the play is set up the audience cannot relate to any of the six characters as the audience is left with a barrier that forces the audience not to see these characters as within the same plane of existence as an audience of theatre goers would be from. Left with no one else to latch onto the audience is forced to last onto the director who is caught in the same position as them as being forced to untangle the mystery of the six characters past.

1. What is this character’s main goal or objective in the overall plot?: To be able to take the tragedies of the six characters and be able to turn it into a successful play.

2. What is the main obstacle in this character’s way of achieving this goal?: The main obstacle in the director’s way of achieving their goal is that the six characters objective conflicts with the objective of the director. The six characters do not entirely understand that theatre is not the same thing as reality. For example, they do not understand what the set the director puts together in rehearsal or the actors the director has cast to portray the father & the Stepdaughter within the production are not perfect copy and pastes of reality. There lack of understanding results of them not doing what the director wants them to do in the directors crafting process of the new play. Hindering the attempted production process of the new play.

3. What are some tactics this character attempts or uses in order to overcome the obstacle, and do the tactics work?: The director responds how any stage director would respond. The director tries to give the six characters adjustments in hope that these adjustments will elicit the response the director is hoping for. We never really know if the director's tactic would have been successful if the director was given an opportunity to keep giving adjustments as the production process for the now play is interrupted by the boy's death.
4. What are the character's expectations (how difficult does the character expect it to be to overcome their obstacle...in your opinion)?: The director is confident that their directorial technique will work on the six characters the same way it works on the actors in the company.

B. Who is the main antagonist and why do you think so?: The main antagonist is the Stepdaughter. She is arguably the one out of the six characters that most directly challenges the director in their attempt to work composing a play from the lives of the six characters. Along with standing apart from the other six characters in escaping the theatre which is the realm of the director and theatre artists at the end of the play unlike the other of the six characters.

1. What is this character's main goal or objective in the overall plot?: While at first it may seem like the main goal of the stepdaughter is to be immortalized in the story. However, her actions within the final scene and her testimony regarding what happened at the fountain show the true nature of the stepdaughter's objective is to escape. It is likely just the manipulation of the father who has the entire family under his control that results in the stepdaughter's objective early on seeming like it to become part of a story. Since an objective always follows what you want most UNLESS your freewill is taken away like it was with the stepdaughter.
2. What is the main obstacle in this character's way of achieving this goal?: The main goal of the stepdaughter in the play is to escape the family. The stepdaughters' main obstacles to achieving her goal are the father this is exhibiting his power over the stepdaughter, and the director that is the tool that which the father is able to achieve his objective.

3. What are some tactics this character attempts or uses in order to overcome the obstacle, and do the tactics work?: She has already overcome her obstacles from the moment she manipulated the girl and the boy at the fountain and enacted the murder of the girl and boy at the fountain. The action of the play is just her playing along with things and making sure things stay on track for her eventually reaching her payoff.
 4. What are the character's expectations (how difficult does the character expect it to be to overcome their obstacle...in your opinion)?: Based on the fact that girl laughs at the end when leaving the girl is very confident in her ability to achieve her objective
- C. Describe some characters that may be supportive to the protagonist's goal, and how.: The theatre company is a vital part of the director's objective to produce the new play. However, the members of the theatre company are flawed in their own right so they partially hinder the director's objective as much as they are also a part of the director's plan.
- D. Describe some characters that may be supportive to the antagonist's goal, and how.: The stepdaughter is alone in her goal. The rest of the family of six characters is caught up within the stepdaughters no great past. The company of actors is supporting the father's goal. And the father themselves if still even within the context of the action of the play itself exhibiting his control over the rest of the family.

IV. SECTION IV – Thought/Theme/Idea (*worth 50 pts*)

- A. What is the play's genre?: Existentialism
- B. Why do you think the playwright chose this title for the play? What does it make you think specifically and thematically?: The play is literally about six characters who are searching for an author to tell their story. The play's title thematically reflects the play's meta-theatre elements.
- C. List at least 3 main questions provoked by thought from the story (thematic thoughts inspired by action).:
-Do theatre as a medium of art do an accurate job at capturing reality?

-What defines a story that is meaningful to stage on stage?

-Is trauma escapable or are we forever marked by the effects of the trauma we have experienced?

D. Describe the main idea/theme in the following ways:

1. Superobjective: To provide comparison between the lives six characters have lived and actors, theatre designers, technicians, and a director that are trying to capture said reality on stage in order to make commentary on how well theatre captures reality.
2. Action Summary: The story is about six characters that are in search of an author.
3. Thesis Statement: (Make a bold statement as if a main point for a paper).
: In this paper I will show how the playwright makes commentary on how they believe one may escape the cycle of trauma through the character of stepdaughter's actions at the end of the play.
4. Theme: (A generality title, like Good vs. Evil.... or Love and Money):
Reality Versus Unreality
5. Kuhn's Maxwell sentence (Fill in the blanks):
Six Characters in Search of An Author is about a Director that wants to compose the realities of six characters into a play, but after the reality of the tragedies of the six characters bleeds into the reality of the director's world the director decides to scrap their attempt to paint the picture of a new play with the stories of the six characters and instead go back to rehearsing the play they were originally producing because they are in terror of the horrors they have unleashed by chasing the rabbits in the reality of the six characters.