

GCSE



CCEA GCSE STUDENT GUIDANCE  
**English Literature**

Glossary of Technical Terms for Drama  
(Unit 2 Section A and Unit 3)



For first teaching from September 2017



## GLOSSARY OF TECHNICAL TERMS FOR DRAMA

When you write about the plays you have studied you should use the correct technical terms.

act	Plays are structured by being divided into sections called 'acts'.
aside	A comment heard by the audience that is supposed not to be heard by the other characters on the stage.
chorus	The chorus in a play is like a narrator providing a commentary on what is happening.
climax	The climax is the turning point, which changes the protagonist's fate. It is usually the conclusion of a crisis.
costume	The clothes worn to create the appearance characteristic of a particular period or person e.g. Elizabethan clothing; royal robes.
denouement	The end of a play when the plot is worked out and brought to a conclusion.
dialect	The language people use in a particular area e.g. Scotland/Yorkshire which may include an accent and some dialect words specific to that area e.g. <i>Blood Brothers</i> .
dialogue	The words spoken/conversation between two or more characters in the play.
dramatic irony	This is a device where the audience is given more information or understanding of events than the characters e.g. Mr Birling's views about the Titanic in <i>An Inspector Calls</i> .
(dramatic) monologue	This is a long piece of dialogue by only one character speaking to the audience.
exposition	Background information provided for the audience.
hero	A person who is admired for their courage, their behaviour or the quality of their character.
minor character	Not a main character but still important in the play.
prologue	Some plays begin with a prologue which sets the scene and tells the audience what has happened or is going to happen e.g. <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> .
properties	Sometimes called 'props'. They are objects used on stage by the actors e.g. swords in <i>Macbeth</i> for the fight scenes.
protagonist	The leading character in the play. Sometimes there will be more than one e.g. <i>Antony and Cleopatra</i> ; <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> .
resolution	The resolution comes at the end of the play when the problems or issues are worked out or 'resolved'.
scene	Each act of a play is broken into shorter sections called scenes.
soliloquy	This is a speech when a character talks to himself so the audience can understand how they are thinking and feeling e.g. <i>Hamlet</i> .
stage directions	On a script the stage directions tell ('instruct') the actors how to move or to speak their lines e.g. 'enter', 'exit' and 'shouts' are stage directions.
stream of consciousness	Stream of consciousness (sometimes called 'interior monologue') lets us hear a character's thoughts as they come in to his/her mind in a stream rather than in complete sentences e.g. Gar in <i>Philadelphia, Here I Come!</i>