

Drama

An introduction

How to study a play

- Remember that a play is written to be performed on stage before an audience, it is not meant to be read.

Six aspects of a play

- **PLOT**: what happens in the storyline. A **sub-plot** is a secondary plot which runs alongside the main plot. If a play has one or more sub-plots, you should look for **parallels** and **contrasts** with the main plot.
- **CHARACTERS**: these are the people who have to face this situation. Since they are human, they can be good or bad, clever or stupid, likeable or detestable, etc. They may change too!

Six aspects of a play

- **THEMES**: the underlying messages of the play, e.g. jealousy can cause the worst of crimes, ambition can bring the mightiest low
- **SETTING**: this concerns the time and place that the author has chosen for the play
- **LANGUAGE**: the writer uses a certain style of expression to convey the characters and ideas
- **STAGING** and **PERFORMANCE**: the type of stage, the lighting, sound effects, costumes, acting styles and delivery.

Traditional dramatic structure

- Most plays follow a traditional three-part structure:
 - **EXPOSITION**: introduction to characters, setting up of situation, usually by presenting central characters with some kind of change or challenge
 - **COMPLICATION**: development of initial situation, showing consequences of change and how characters react to altered circumstances
 - **DENOUEMENT**: restoration of order, characters come to terms with what has taken place.

Scene divisions

Look for the effects achieved by the **JUXTAPOSITION** of scenes, and for contrasts and similarities between scenes.

Audience

- Remember plays are meant to be viewed and not read!
- Sometimes the playwright adds stagenotes (these can be helpful when reading!)
- Soliloquy: Character speaking one long piece
- Aside: Character speaking aloud to himself/audience
- Dramatic irony: device that hinges on the audience knowing more than the characters

Dramatic dialogue

- Reveals information about the character and relationships between characters, the plot, but indirectly the **themes** of the play
- **Idiolect**: the distinctive features of an individual speaker's language (may be used by a writer to reflect important aspects of the character's personality)
- May generate specific reaction from the audience (e.g. laughter, booing)

Dramatic dialogue vs Real Speech

- Absence of **non-fluency** features
- Lower proportion of **grammatical errors**
- Less **interruptions** and **overlapping speech**
- Less **feedback**
- It is prepared, organised, coherent
- More intense: every word counts

Describing dialogue

- When dialogue has been carefully constructed by a writer, it is described as **stylised**.
- **Formality** of **lexis** and **grammar**.
- Is it **naturalistic** (realistic)
- **Accents** or **dialects**

Characters

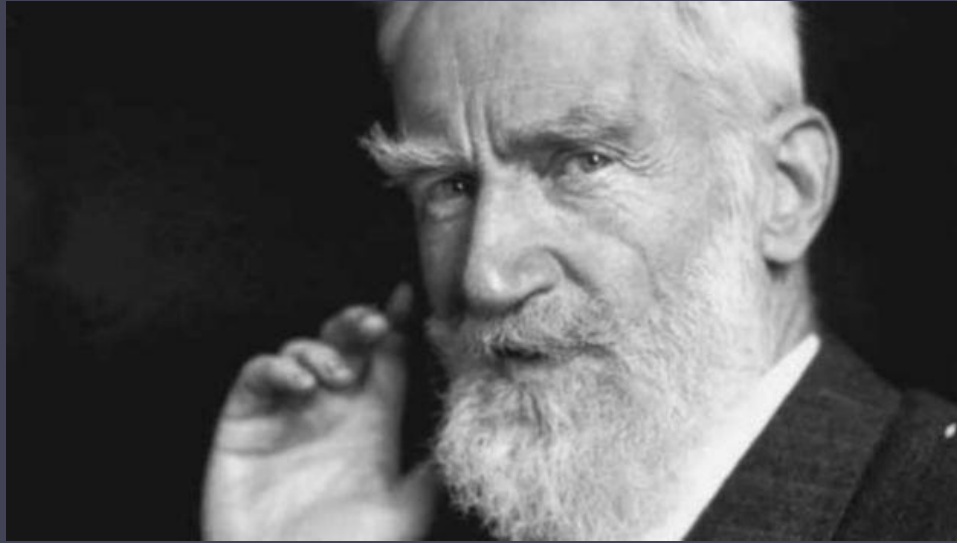
- Two main types:
 - HERO or PROTAGONIST: central character
 - (Hero not necessarily “heroic” in the sense of being courageous)
 - Anti-hero: a protagonist who, while not necessarily evil or villainous, lacks traditional heroic qualities
 - ANTAGONIST: the hero’s main opponent. Often the antagonist is also the play’s villain.

Characters

- It is relevant to think about how characters relate to the play as a whole, in relation to:
 - Plot
 - Themes
 - Other characters

Make notes on these as we read Pygmalion

- Plot
- Characters
- Themes
- Setting
- Language
- Staging and Performance



George Bernard Shaw

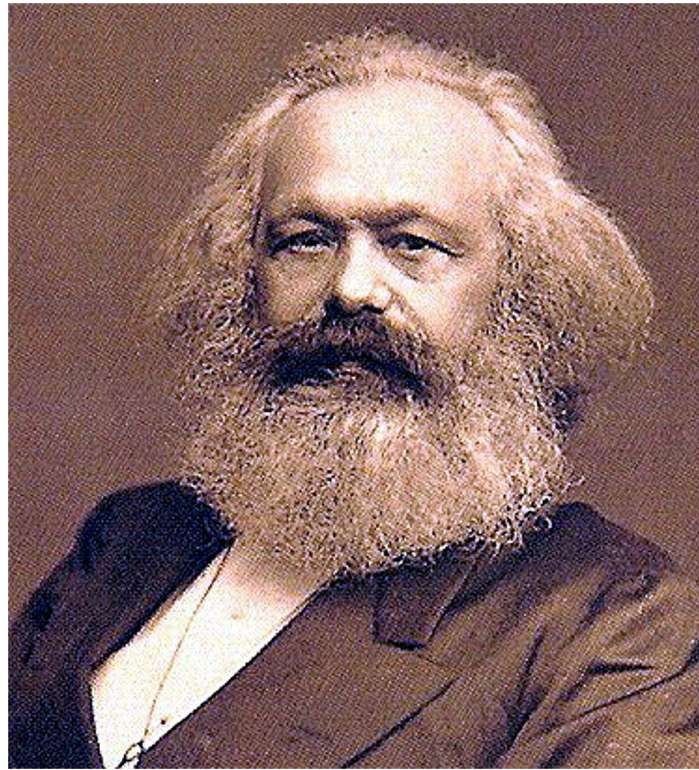
Biography

- 1856 – Born in Dublin to the son of a Corn merchant. Father was an alcoholic, so not enough money for further education
- Aged 15, Shaw starts work as a clerk but sees repetitive work as a “damnable waste of human life”.
- His parents move to London and Shaw joins them in 1876.

Biography

- 1879-83 Shaw writes books but they are unsuccessful. He has better luck in journalism and publishes several articles in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Its editor tried to use the paper to change social values.
- This was Shaw's first contact with socialism. He joined the Social Democratic Federation, where he came into contact with the work of Karl Marx (*Das Kapital*).

Intermezzo : Karl Marx (1818-1893)



Karl Marx

- German socialist, communist (= anti-capitalist)
- Marx argued that the working class (the proletariat) would eventually be the emancipators of society
- Marx identified three kinds of alienation in capitalist society. First, the worker is alienated from what he produces. Second, the worker is alienated from himself; only when he is not working does he feel truly himself. Finally, in capitalist society people are alienated from each other; that is, in a competitive society people are set against other people. Marx believed the solution to this problem was communism as this would enable the fulfilment of "his potentialities as a human."

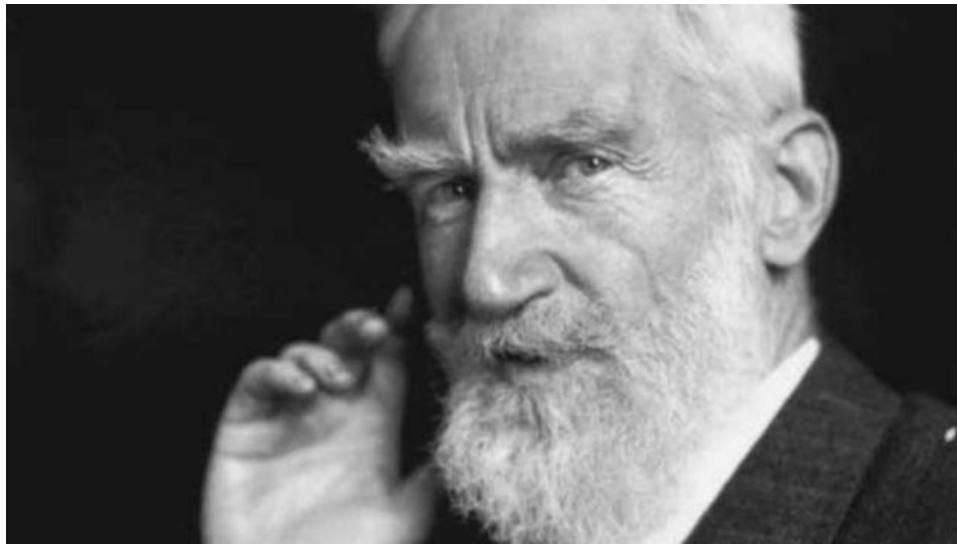
The Communist Manifesto (1848)

- Begins with the assertion:
 - "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles."
- Marx argued that if you are to understand human history you must not see it as the story of great individuals or the conflict between states. Instead, you must see it as the story of social classes and their struggles with each other.
- Marx explained that social classes had changed over time but in the 19th century the most important classes were the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. By the term bourgeoisie Marx meant the owners of the factories and the raw materials which are processed in them. The proletariat, on the other hand, own very little and are forced to sell their labour to the capitalists.

Das Kapital, Volume 1 (1867)

- Detailed analysis of capitalism.
- Dealt with important concepts such as surplus value (the notion that a worker receives only the exchange-value, not the use-value, of his labour); division of labour (where workers become a "mere appendage of the machine") and the industrial reserve army (the theory that capitalism creates unemployment as a means of keeping the workers in check).
- In the final part of *Das Kapital*, Marx deals with the issue of revolution. Marx argued that the laws of capitalism will bring about its destruction. Capitalist competition will lead to a diminishing number of monopoly capitalists, while at the same time, the misery and oppression of the proletariat would increase. Marx claimed that as a class, the proletariat will gradually become "disciplined, united and organised by the very mechanism of the process of capitalist production" and eventually will overthrow the system that is the cause of their suffering.

Back to Shaw ...



Back to Shaw ...

- 1884 – Leaves the SDF and joins the Fabian Society, a socialist debating society. The Fabians believed that capitalism had created an unjust and inefficient society. They agreed that the ultimate aim of the group should be to reconstruct "society in accordance with the highest moral possibilities".

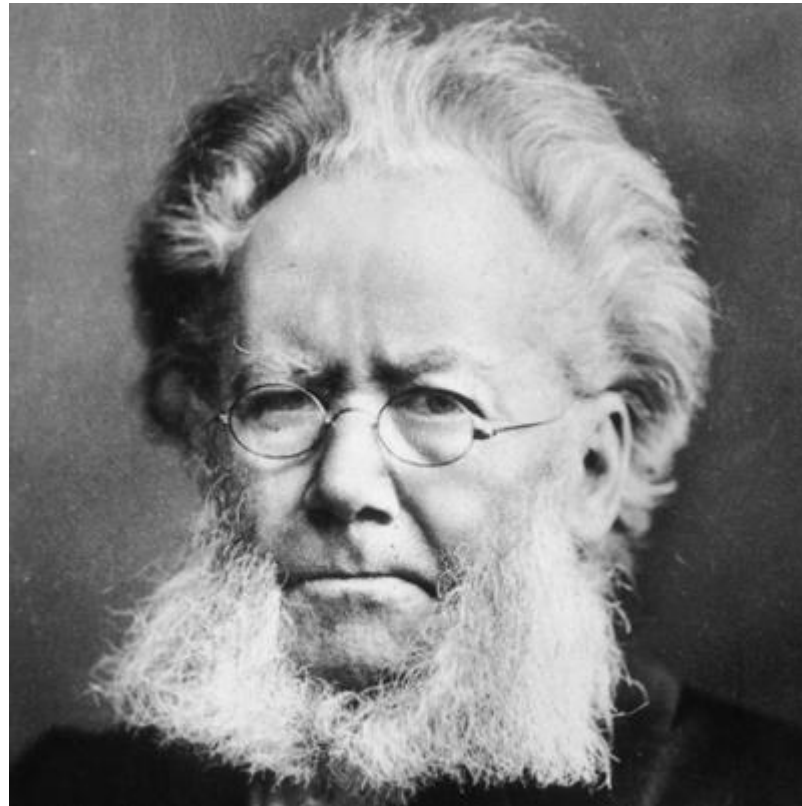
Biography

- The Fabians rejected the revolutionary socialism of the SDF and were concerned with helping society to move to a socialist society "as painlessly and effectively as possible".
- The Fabian Society laid the foundations for the modern Labour Party. It still exists today and its members include many Labour Party (ex-)leaders and Prime Ministers such as Tony Blair and Gordon Brown.

Biography

- 1885-90: works as an Arts critic
- 1889: sees “A Doll’s House” by Ibsen
- 1891: comes out in support of women’s rights
 - “Unless woman repudiates her womanliness, her duty to her husband, to her children, to society, to the law, and to everyone but herself, she cannot emancipate herself. It is false to say that woman is now directly the slave of man: she is the immediate slave of duty; and as man’s path to freedom is strewn with the wreckage of the duties and ideals he has trampled on, so must hers be.”
- 1891: publishes “The Quintessence of Ibsenism”

Intermezzo: Henrik Ibsen (1828-1906)



Henrik Ibsen

- Norwegian playwright, realist and many argue founder of Modernism
- 19th century theatre: strict moral codes and values should be upheld.
- Ibsen addressed contemporary social and political issues. Through his plays, Ibsen showed what was really going on behind the screen of social norms.
 - Example: *A Doll's House* examines position of married women and ends with a wife who decides to leave her husband.

Shaw on Ibsen

A generation which could read all Shakespear and Molière, Dickens and Dumas, from end to end without the smallest intellectual or ethical perturbation, was unable to get through a play by Ibsen without having its intellectual and moral complacency upset. Its religious faith shattered, and its notions of right and wrong conduct thrown into confusion and sometimes even reversed.

Shaw on Ibsen

The statement that Ibsen's plays have an immoral tendency, is, in the sense in which it is used, quite true. Immorality does not necessarily imply mischievous conduct: it implies conduct, mischievous or not, which does not conform to current ideals.

Shaw on Ibsen

- In short, our ideals, like the gods of old, are constantly demanding human sacrifices. Let none of them, says Ibsen, be placed above the obligation to prove itself worth the sacrifices it demands; and let everyone religiously refuse to sacrifice himself and others from the moment he loses his faith in the validity of the ideal.

What does Shaw think makes Ibsen new?

- All very serious revolutionary propositions begin as huge jokes. Otherwise they would be stamped out by the lynching of their first exponents. Even these exponents themselves have their revelations broken to them mysteriously through their sense of humor.

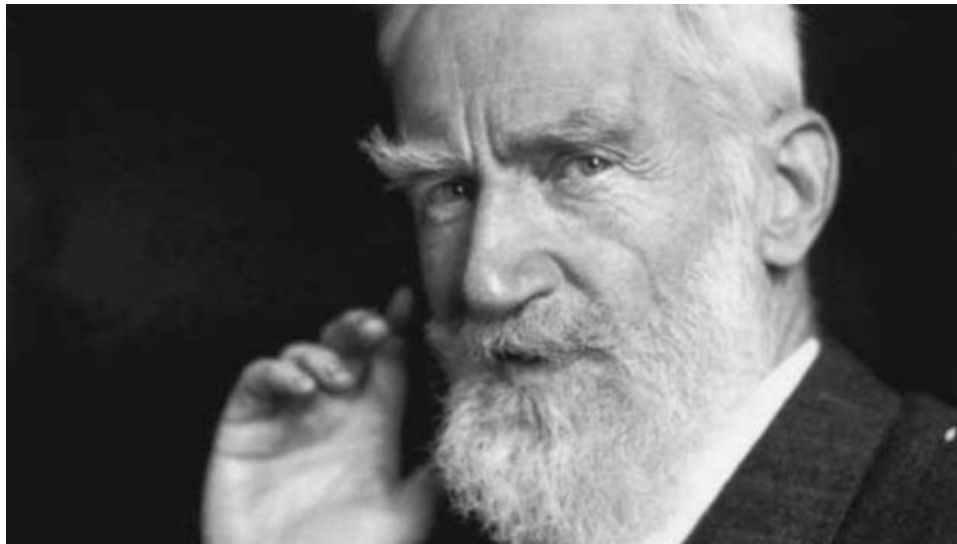
What does Shaw think makes Ibsen new?

- Formerly you had in what was called a well made play an exposition in the first act, a situation in the second, and unravelling in the third. Now you have exposition, situation, and discussion; and the discussion is the test of the playwright. The critics protest in vain. They declare that discussions are not dramatic, and that art should not be didactic. Neither the playwrights nor the public take the smallest notice of them. The discussion conquered Europe in Ibsen's *Doll's House*; and now the serious playwright recognizes in the discussion not only the main test of his highest powers, but also the real centre of his play's interest.

What does Shaw think makes Ibsen new?

- No great writer uses his skill to conceal his meaning ... He is so great a poet that the idealist finds himself in the dilemma of being unable to conceive that such a genius should have an ignoble meaning, and yet equally unable to conceive his real meaning otherwise than as ignoble.
- Ibsen's deep sympathy with his idealist figures seems to countenance this confusion. Since it is on the weaknesses of the higher types of character that idealism seizes, his most tragic examples of vanity, selfishness, folly, and failure are not vulgar villains, but men who in an ordinary novel or melodrama would be heroes.

Back to Shaw ...




Biography

- 1892: first play, *Widowers' Houses*, performed at the Independent Theatre
- 1895-97: continued as a critic
- 1897 onwards: concentrated on being a playwright, which brought increasing success.
- 1912: First performance of *Pygmalion*
- 1914: Essay: *Common Sense about the War*

Shaw's plays

- Provocative
- Uncomfortable social issues (e.g. *Widowers' Houses* dealt with Slum Landlords and *Mrs Warren's Profession* with prostitution)



“My business ... is to chasten morals
with ridicule”

George Bernard Shaw

Shaw's plays

- Shaw believed a dramatist should be primarily concerned with social issues and a new and challenging approach to morality.
- Intelligence is more important than imagination
- Shaw felt that scientific study of humanity and society should be at the heart of theatrical drama.
- Context: Nature vs Nurture debate at the turn of the 20th century



“I avoid plots like the plague.”

George Bernard Shaw

Pygmalion

- Conceived idea in 1897.
- First performed in London in 1914
- By this time, successful critic, political writer and campaigner, showman and dramatist.
- Huge hit very welcome as Shaw had been going through a rather dull period.

Pygmalion

- Shaw not content to leave staging to others: he took an active part in directing.
- Business mind: plays in London for maximum 6 weeks, then tour provinces, before returning to London (extends life of plays and therefore increases profit)
- Shaw believed there was a creative force within each of us struggling towards improvement and perfection

Pygmalion

- Shaw wanted Mrs Patricia Campbell to play Eliza (he had seen her play Ophelia in Hamlet and then foresaw her in the role of a flower girl)
- Didn't offer her the part directly but attracted her through trickery and flattery
- Shaw swept off his feet by Mrs Campbell, and “was in love for nearly 35 hours”.

Pygmalion

- Still relevant today:
 - Role of women in society
 - Importance of class background
 - Education is a key to progress
 - Different kinds of language

Pygmalion

CONTEXT

First, from last week

- Without looking at your notes, what do you remember about GBS?
- My homework: GBS was a clerk at an Estate office

Historical Background: General

- By the end of the 19th Century the landed gentry and the country agricultural labourer were in serious decline.
- Cheap imported food had reduced the importance of British agriculture.
- By 1911, the population of the UK had increased by 25% in 40 years, and over 75% of the population lived in towns.

Historical Background: Science

- The Victorian era was full of scientific discoveries and advancements.
- Darwin (1809-1882) shook-up society.
- His cousin, Francis Galton, (1822-1911) was the “founder” of the Nature versus Nurture debate.

Discuss ...

Scientific theories are only valid within a given cultural paradigm and the 'knowledge' of the way the world works which science claims to provide is socially constructed and relative. The whole idea of 'scientific progress' is just another enlightenment myth!



What did you say? Sorry, I couldn't hear you over the sound of me remote controlling robots on Mars



The first working-class MPs

- After 1870 basic education was available to all
- Employers faced with literate and organised workers = Lower classes could no longer be counted on to “know their place”
- Decline of landed gentry: reduction of power of House of Lords in 1911.
- Increased power to elected House of Commons, MPs started to be paid = working-class men could now afford to be an MP.
- Politics went from being a rich man’s hobby to a professional public service

Industrial Unrest

- Between 1910 and 1914
- Wage cuts, poor working conditions, and rapid inflation (between 1889 and 1910 the cost of food had risen by 10 per cent and the cost of coal 18 per cent) left workers deprived and disgruntled.
- The various trade unions were swelling in size and in 1911 there were widespread violent strikes in which several people were killed.

Victorian Era

- The Victorian Era ended when Queen Victoria died in 1901, but its morals and values lasted on for longer (some even until today)
- Many Victorians believed that the class system was vital to a stable society and it should not be changed.

Women

- The industrial revolution provided more work for working-class women and less work for middle-class women: servants and clerks took over.
- A middle-class lady could not work AND be a lady.
- Middle-class women became “ornamental” and “ladies of leisure”
- Education: girls went to school, but they were often taught domestic subjects because subjects like Latin and mathematics were only fit for boys.

Women

- Under Queen Victoria's reign (1837-1901), all British women, of whatever class, were legally on the same level as lunatics, children, and male criminals.
- "The husband and wife are one person, and the husband is that person"
- Queen Victoria firmly believed a woman's place was at home!



Women's Rights & The Suffragette movement

Women and Employment

Work opportunities for women were improving at the start of the 20th century. It was becoming socially acceptable for women to become nurses, teachers and have jobs in clerical work.

BUT

- Marriage bars in employment meant that once a woman got married they could not keep their job.
- Limited access to education meant that women's jobs were often seen as low skilled and paid less than men even if it was the same job.
- Most working women were poorly paid, and worked in poor conditions.

Women and Marriage

Marriage and Divorce Act, 1857:

A woman could divorce her husband if he beat her or committed adultery.

BUT

- A divorced woman was shunned by society and treated as an outcast. With these obstacles, many women were forced to stay in unhappy marriages.
- Divorce was costly and most women could not afford to pay.
- Due to restriction in employment women could not afford to look after their families without a male breadwinner.
- Women were unlikely to keep their children once divorced.

Women, Property & Education

Married Woman's Property Act 1882:

This law enabled married women to own property and earnings. Before this date everything a woman owned went to her husband upon marriage.

Education

Women had little access to higher education with only a few universities allowing women to attend. Most women were therefore not educated past the age of 11.

A break through in education?

Elizabeth Garrett Anderson became the first lady to qualify as a doctor (GP).

BUT

She then faced huge obstacles making progress in her profession. Men would not go to her simply because she was a woman. Women who needed to see a doctor often stayed with what was known and remained with their male GP.

Women getting organised

Co-operative Women's Guild 1884

Campaigned for women workers rights, divorce reform and better schools and pensions.

Ladies Association for the Repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act.

Campaigned for the rights of prostitutes. The police had the power to force any woman suspected of being a prostitute to have an examination to see if they were carrying sexually-transmitted diseases. Men who used prostitutes were **not** subject to the same treatment.

- Reform groups were seen as a threat, and unnatural for women to join and draw attention to themselves publically.
- Many articles were written opposing women's reform groups.

Women and Voting Rights

- In 1900 the country was run by men. Women had no say on issues they felt related to them, such as divorce rights, better working conditions, and access to education.
- Women wanted the vote to gain more power in society. With the vote women and men could support the Party which addressed the issues they wanted changing.
- The **Liberal Party** was the most likely one to bring in female suffrage, but they felt that many middle class women would vote for the Conservative Party.

National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies

- In 1897, the existing suffrage groups merged and formed the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS).
- In 1903, members who were dissatisfied with the progress made by the NUWSS, formed the Militant group the WSPU.
- Despite this NUWSS still attracted large numbers of women and by 1907, it had over 10,000 members and was led by Millicent Garrett Fawcett.



NUWSS

- **Processions**

- February 1907: 3,000 suffragists campaigners marched in London. Known as the 'Mud March' due to torrential rain.

- **Worked with politicians**

- Up to 1910: Suffragists helped pro-female suffrage Liberal candidates with their campaigns.
- 1912: Suffragists started to support Labour candidates that were pro-female suffrage.

Suffragettes

- The suffragettes were a **militant** women's campaign group that were willing to use violent tactics to achieve the vote.
- The **Women's Social and Political Union** (WSPU) was founded by Emmeline Pankhurst and her daughter Christabel on 10 October 1903 in their Manchester home.
- Emmeline worked as a registrar and was struck by the troubles single women faced to raise their children. She believed that women needed to lose their subordinate role and campaign for the vote if they were to progress in society as equals to men.



WSPU

- Slogan: Deeds not words
- Believed in using militancy (violence) to gain the vote. Setting fire to empty buildings, chaining themselves to railings, smashing windows, and damaging golf courses
- Series of six meetings in 1908 attracted more than 25,000 women.

The suffragettes gained publicity through propaganda, leaflets, newspapers, marches and demonstrations.

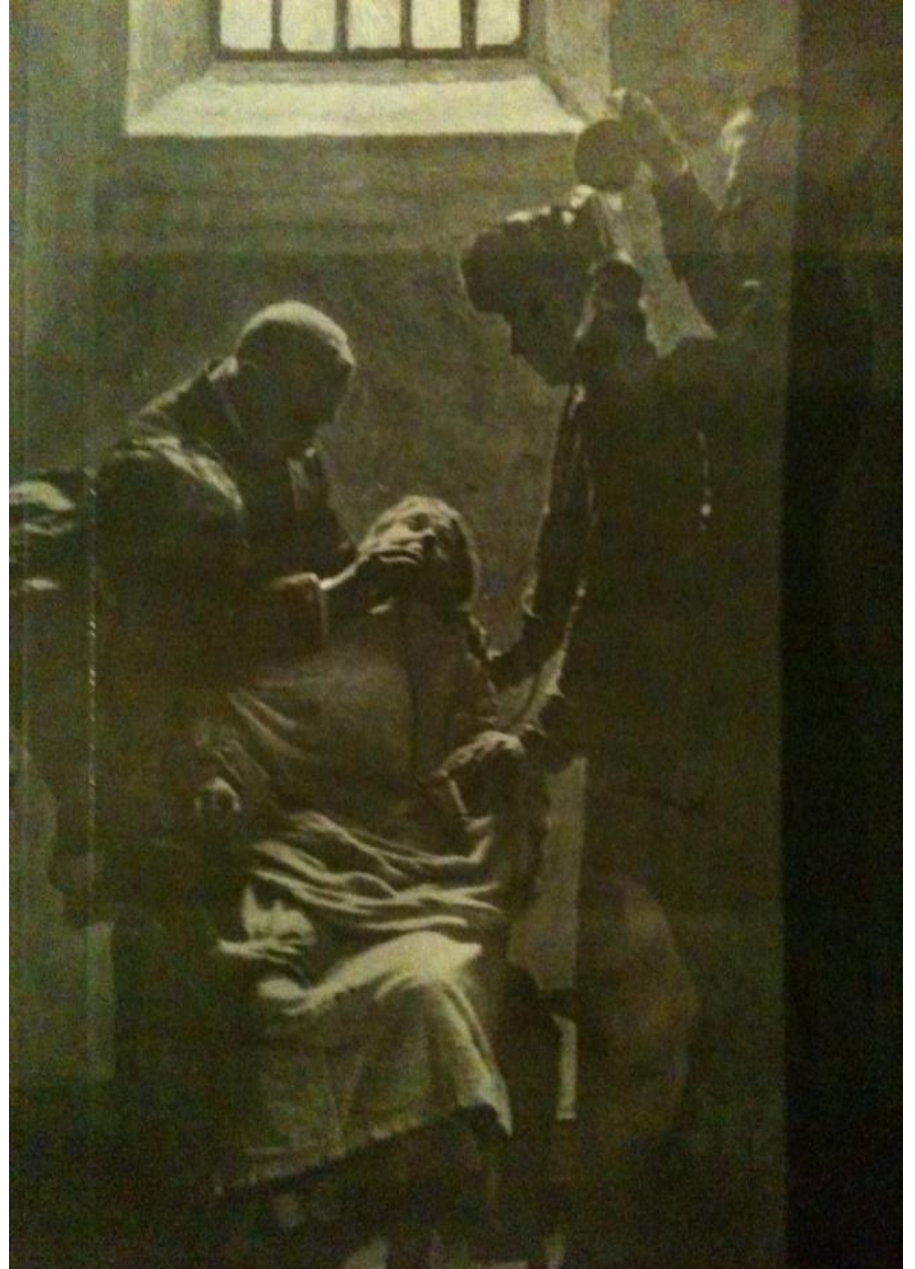




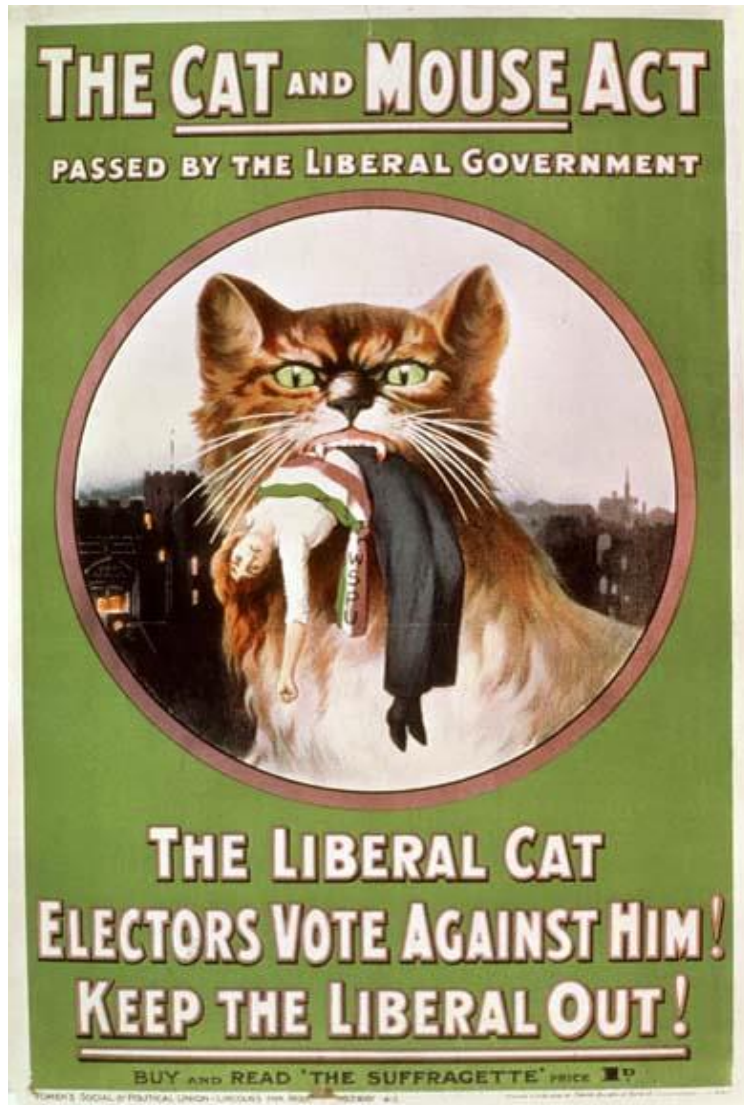
1908 Demonstration
Hyde Park and £1,000
spent on publicity.

Militant Tactics

- 1909 Imprisoned suffragettes started going on hunger strike.
- Many women who went on hunger strikes were force fed by a tube through the nose and liquid food would be poured into their stomachs. Many were made very ill as a result.



Temporary Discharge for Ill Health Act 1913.



Introduced by Henry Asquith and the Liberal Government, the Act was a response to petitions from councils against forced feeding.

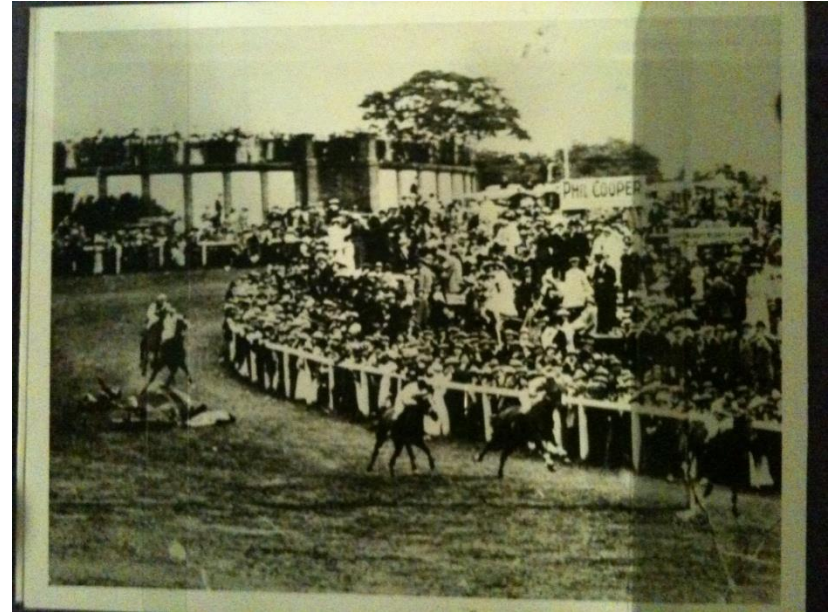
- Public opinion was against the idea of women being force fed. To deal with this, suffragettes on hunger strikes would be released until they were in better health and would then be re-arrested.
- This became known by suffragettes as the CAT AND MOUSE ACT, as you can see from this suffragette propaganda poster.

- 18 November 1910: Black Friday
150 suffragettes hurt in violence
outside parliament.
- 1912-14 Wild Period begins arson
attacks, acid spilt on golf courses,
letter boxes vandalised and
telephone wires cut.



Emily Wilding Davison

- On 4 June 1913, Emily Davison was severely injured when a protest for women suffrage went wrong at the Epsom Derby.
- Emily stepped out into the race course in front of the King's horse. She was kicked by horses hooves and died on 6 June from her injuries.
- There has been debate about what she was trying to do.



BBC programme

- [Link to programme](#)

Pygmalion

Act 2

But first ...

- Recap: what happened in Act 1?
 - Plot
 - Characters & Relationships
 - Themes
 - Audience appeal
 - Is there a link to the title “Pygmalion: a romance in five acts”

Warm-up

- List:
 - All the things other people expect of you (parents, family, friends, teachers, employers, etc.)
 - All the things you expect from others
 - All the things you expect from yourself
- Discuss:
 - How do other people's expectations effect your behaviour, self-esteem, motivation?
 - Consider the effect of low, high and/or unrealistic expectations on your sense of self

Act 2

- In groups of two/three, identify key quotations which link to:
 - Plot (so far)
 - Setting
 - Characters & Relationships
 - Themes
 - Audience appeal

Social class

Where would you place the following characters according to their position in society? List them in order:

- Eliza, Pickering, Mrs Pearce, the Eynsford-Hill family, Higgins, Mrs Higgins, Alfred Doolittle

Social class

A person's social class in the play can be indicated by some or all of the following. Find examples for each.

- House, work, social events, speech, clothes, manners/behaviour, education, morality

Social class

- Identify the speaker, fill the gaps in the following key quotations, then explain what each one shows:
 - “This is an age of upstarts.” (pg 17)
 - “She’s quite a common girl, sir.” (pg 25)
 - “I want to be a lady in a flower shop” (pg 26)
 - “What is middle class morality? ...” (pg 46)

Pygmalion

Acts 3, 4, and 5 in 45 minutes

Act 3

- Social status: Fixed expectations of middle-class behaviour
 - “small talk” vs “large talk” (pg 54)
 - “She’s to keep to two subjects: the weather and everybody’s health (pg 55)
 - The comedy of the tea party is due to Liza’s use of (inappropriate) language
 - The shallow depression ... (pg 60)
 - ... they done the old woman in (pg 60)
 - Gin was mother’s milk to her (pg 61)
 - Not bloody likely (pg 62)

Act 3

- Mocking the middle (and) idle class
 - Freddy:
 - Ahdedo (pg 57)
 - (Freddy generally a vehicle for Shaw's mockery of the middle classes)
 - Clara:
 - I find the new small talk delightful and quite innocent (pg 62)
 - (Shaw uses Clara to mock the middle classes who were always trying to climb the social ladder)
 - Mrs Eynsford Hill
 - We're so poor (pg 63)
 - Nepommuck
 - Hungarian (pg 71)
 - Hostess
 - She must be a princess at least (pg 72)
 - Liza
 - I don't think I can bear much more (pg 72)

A small intermezzo

- Ethos
- Logos
- Pathos

are modes of persuasion used to convince audiences

Ethos

Ethos or the ethical appeal, means to convince an audience of the author's credibility or character. An author would use ethos to show to his audience that he is a credible source and is worth listening to.

Ethos can be developed by choosing language that is appropriate for the audience and topic, making yourself sound fair or unbiased, introducing your expertise or pedigree, and by using correct grammar and syntax.

Logos

Logos or the appeal to logic, means to convince an audience by use of logic or reason.

To use logos would be to cite facts and statistics, historical and literal analogies, and citing certain authorities on a subject.

Logos can be developed by using advanced, theoretical or abstract language, citing facts, using historical and literal analogies, and by constructing logical arguments

Pathos

Pathos or the emotional appeal, means to persuade an audience by appealing to their emotions.

Authors use pathos to invoke sympathy from an audience; to make the audience feel what the author wants them to feel.

Pathos can be developed by using meaningful language, emotional tone, emotion evoking examples, stories of emotional events, and implied meanings.

Act 4

- Social status: People can not only imitate a better class but can better themselves through hard work (ref to Shaw's view on education)
- Note the juxtaposition of Humour (e.g. slippers on pg 76) and Pathos (where Liza feels she has been used).
- Pg 78-9
- Last scene (after stars) Liza shows she is developing according to her own free will by taking charge of the situation with Freddy. She is happy to find real affection but also shows independence and initiative. This is juxtaposed with Freddy.

Act 5

- Society represented through two pairs of women:
 - Liza & Mrs Higgins => Feminist movement
 - Clara & Mrs Eynsford Hill => Fickle and foolish
- Doolittle: It's making a gentleman of me that I object to. Who asked him to make a gentleman of me? ... I'll have to learn to speak middle class language from you, instead of speaking proper English (pg 89)
- Liza gets the better of Higgins (pg 93)
- Contrast Liza's relationships with Higgins / Pickering (pg 95)
- Liza feels unhappy at new status (pg 95)

Act 5

- Higgins: ... I think a woman fetching a man's slippers is a disgusting sight (pg 100)
- Liza: If only I could go back to my flower basket (pg 101)
- Liza: I wouldn't marry you if you asked me ... (pg 101) (audience expectation / link to title / real love with Freddy vs material love)
- Higgins: black eyes / a thick pair of boots to kick you with (pg 103)
- Liza: I'll marry Freddy, I will, as soon as I'm able to support him (pg 103)

So why revolutionary??

- Play destroys some well-accepted Victorian stereotypes:
 - Eliza will support Freddy (role reversal)
 - Eliza doesn't fall in love with Higgins
 - Higgins is not a changed man and doesn't see the errors of his ways
 - No resolution of conflict: the audience will leave the theatre and think about what they have seen

Themes in the play

- Social status & moving up the social ladder
- Nature vs nurture
- Science of language
- Role of men & women in society, ultimately women's suffrage
- The idle class
- Education for all
- Appearance and reality
- Beauty
- Change and transformation
- Identity