

GENRES OF LITERATURE

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Annotation: GENRES OF LITERATURE—DRAMA The word drama is gotten from the Greek word “Dran” which means to do or act. Drama as a genre of literature possesses a major feature which is action, irrespective of whether it is on a built stage or on a village pathway as in the case of village festivals or dances. And this becomes a unifying factor for all dramatic.

Keywords: These genres of literature: Drama, Prose and Poetry, have their uniqueness and peculiarities, which make them distinct from one another

Definition of Genres. The word ‘genre’ simply means branches or arms; and these branches of literature includes Drama, Prose, and Poetry. Oftentimes, works of oral literature serve as sources or raw materials for written literature. These genres of literature: Drama, Prose and Poetry, have their uniqueness and peculiarities, which make them distinct from one another. As they are all written works that are creative and imaginative, they also possess features that are particular to a type. And this can be represented in a diagram below. Note: Students to sketch the diagram of the Genres of Literature displayed as learning materials in class. Diagram of literature: Students to also sketch the diagram of Literature displayed in class also as learning materials. Oral literature as a source of written literature: Literature is the study of man, his feelings or emotions his needs, his relationships to his society, his contractions within himself and his community and his responses to all these aspects. However, it takes stories passed on via folktales, folklores from one generation to the other, to facilitate

informed

written

literature.



1. GENRES OF LITERATURE—DRAMA The word drama is gotten from the Greek word “Dran” which means to do or act. Drama as a genre of literature possesses a major feature which is action, irrespective of whether it is on a built stage or on a village pathway as in the case of village festivals or dances. And this becomes a unifying factor for all dramatic type. Drama cannot take place without characters, therefore it is all about persons in action. FORMS/TYPES OF DRAMA Drama comes in different kinds. They include: 1. Comedy: This is a play that is filled with a light atmosphere and which often ends on a happy note. Examples are: “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” by William Shakespeare, “The Blinkards” by Kobina Sekyi, and De Graft’s “Son’s and Daughters.” 2. Tragedy: Often regarded as the opposite of comedy because it is a drama whose atmosphere is usually serious and tense with an unhappy ending and in most cases involves death or a calamity. E.g “Let me Die Alone” by John Kargbo Kolosa, “Women of Owu” by Femi Osofisan and “Hamlet” by William Shakespeare. 3. History Play: Also known as the chronicle play or Epic, its material {what forms the play} is based on historical records. Besides presenting the history of individuals and people, History play also glorifies the past heroic deeds of individuals and people. Examples of history plays are: Ola Rotimi’s “Ovoranmwun Nogbaisi, William Shakespeare’s “Julius Caesar”, Chimamanda Adichie’s “Half of a yellow sun”, e.t.c. 4. Tragi-comedy: It is a play that combines element of tragedy and comedy. It has a serious tone and several uneasy/tense moments but usually ends on a tone of relief. Example: “Merchant of Vernice” by William Shakespeare. 5. Farce: A comic drama

that uses stock characters whose actions in the play leads them near disaster but never really get into disaster. These stock characters are regular characters but their roles may be described by the name they bear. They are instantly recognizable to their audience. However, the naivety of events presented in farce is mostly sacrificed in the process of achieving excess laughter. Example is 6. Melodrama: This is a light hearted comic play that highlights suspense and romantic feeling with characters who are usually either clearly good or clearly bad. In this drama, belief is downplayed/made less important in order to create excitement, sensation and shock. This kind of drama uses a musical background to increase/height the emotional tone of a scene. Examples: "Arms and the Man" by Benard Shaw, "The Jew of Malta" by Christopher Marlowe. 7. Mime/Pantomime: 8. Monologue: 9. Domestic Tragedy: FEATURES OF DRAMA The following are the features of drama. But there is no restriction toward other literary writers or authors to use some of these features. They include: • Cast: A list of actors and actresses given defined roles in a drama by the playwright or director. • Playwright: The writer of a piece of drama or play. • Conflict: Another common feature of drama often involving the protagonist and the antagonist in their rivalry and struggle for assertion of influence or relevance. • Protagonist: A character that plays the most prominent/famous/important role in a play or novel, often referred to as the hero/heroine or the chief character. • Antagonist: A character in a play or novel who opposes the protagonist rightly or wrongly. Often he/she contradicts the protagonist. • Denouement: Also known as resolution or the unknotting of events. It is the resultant process soon after the climax has been reached. Here the conflict in a play or novel is finally resolved. • Catharsis: This means purgation (from 'purging' the original Greek word). It is the feeling by an audience of a sense of release or the cleansing of the mind of excess emotion, often through the shedding of tears as when a great tragedy is being played out on stage. • Tragic Flaw: A costly mistake made by the protagonist in a play or drama. It could also mean an in-built or inherited weakness (flaw), say pride (hubris), which aids the downfall of the protagonist. • Plot: This is the sequential arrangement of events in a creative work. Playwright's often focus on the development of their plots

from a beginning, through the middle, to the end. Plots build up to a climax and end with a resolution. • Action: This is an important feature of drama because drama is all about “doing”. What stimulates/arouses action in a play is conflict. Conflict is the disagreement between two people or two groups. When two persons hold two different opinions, it leads to a disagreement. As the characters try to argue their points, drama is created. Without conflict, there may not be credible dramatic actions. • Dialogue: refers to the exchange of ideas and opinions in a play between two or more characters. It is one of the elements of drama and it is a verbal element.

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