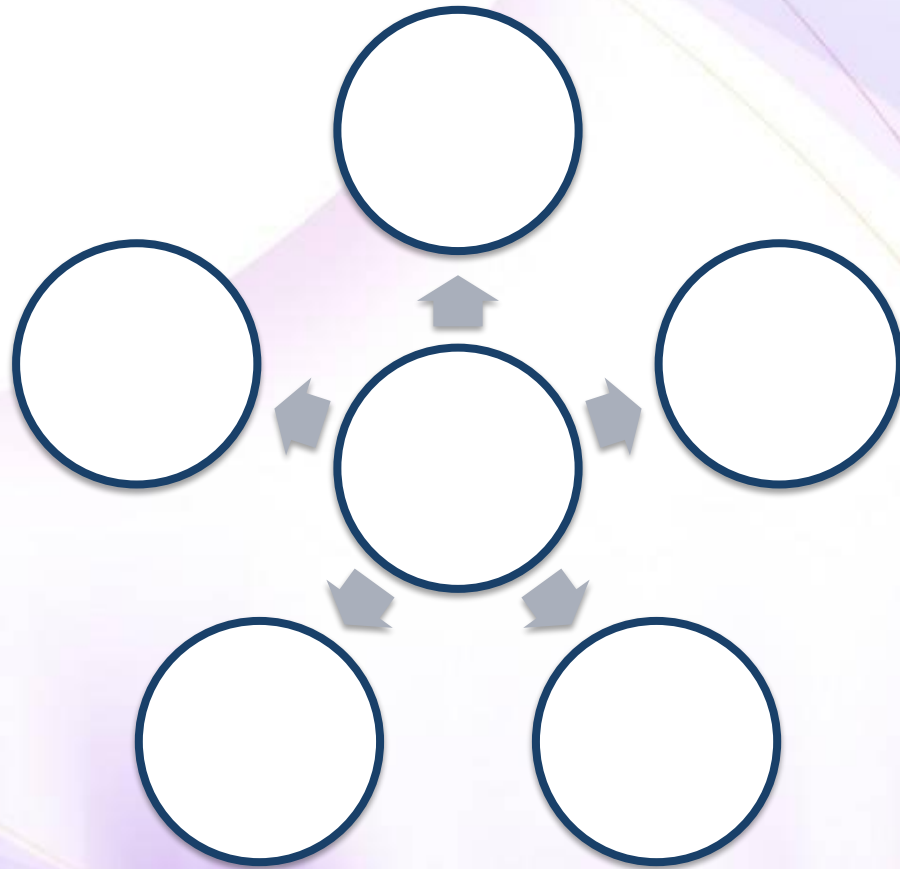


# The Language of Drama

- **Drama** differs from prose and poetry because it is not just something to be heard or read, but is performed before an audience.





# Peculiar Features of Drama

- language of plays is entirely dialogue
- author's speech is seen in remarks and stage directions
- the action is fragmented into act and scenes
- the use of both prose and poetry
- the language is always stylized, i.e. it strives to retain the modus of literary English, unless the playwright has a particular aim, which requires the use of non-literary forms and expressions

# Forms of Speech

## Monologue

- a speech given by one character to the other characters who are on stage

## Soliloquy

- spoken when only one character is on stage

## Dialogue

- the exchange of words between two character on stage

## Aside

- words given by a character to the audience like nobody else is listening to him

# Division into Acts

- **Act 1 – Exposition.** We meet the *dramatis personae*, and time and place are established. We learn about the antecedents of the story. Attention is directed toward the germ of conflict and dramatic tensions.
- **Act 2 – Complications.** The course of action becomes more complicated, the "tying of knots" takes place. Interests clash, intrigues are spawned, events accelerate in a definite direction. Tension mounts, and momentum builds up.
- **Act 3 – The Climax of Action.** The development of conflict reaches its high point, the Hero stands at the crossroads, leading to victory or defeat, crashing or soaring.
- **Act 4 – Falling Action.** Reversals. The consequences of Act 3 play out, momentum slows, and tension is heightened by false hopes/fears. If it's a tragedy, it looks like the Hero can be saved. If not, then it looks like all may be lost.
- **Act 5 – Catastrophe.** The conflict is resolved, whether through a catastrophe, the downfall of the hero, or through his victory and transfiguration.