

Warm-Up

Bringing the 1930s to Life in *Brighton Beach Memoirs*



Lesson Question



Lesson Goals

Read a scene from *Brighton Beach Memoirs*.

Identify the elements of a .

Explain how characters' and show how they think and feel.

Analyze how a drama can help you understand a time period.



Words to Know

Fill in this table as you work through the lesson. You may also use the glossary to help you.

establish	to cause someone or something to be widely known and <input type="text"/>
perspective	a way of thinking about and <input type="text"/> something
dialogue	lines of <input type="text"/> in a play
stage directions	<input type="text"/> in the text of a play that tell how someone should move or act or how something should look

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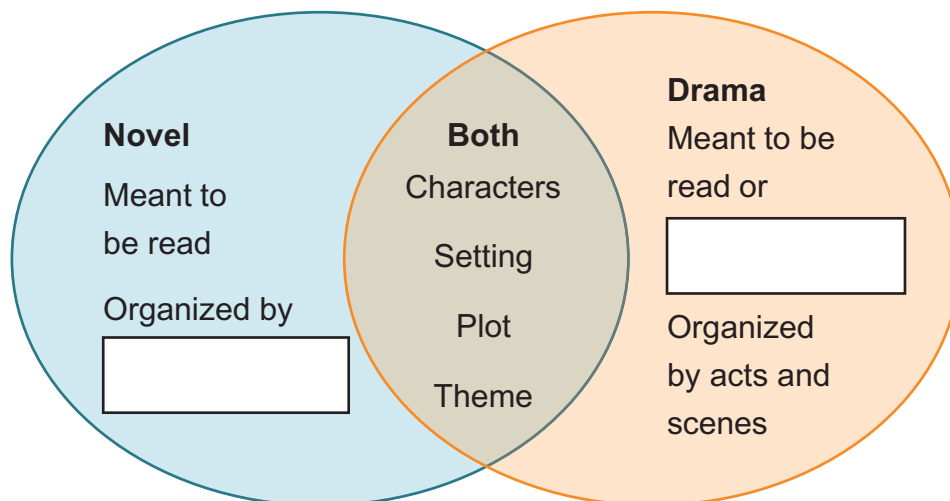
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Neil Simon (b. 1927)

- Was born on July 4, 1927, in New York
- Worked as a television
- Won numerous awards for his plays
- Is the only playwright to have had four productions running at the same time
- Based the trilogy *Brighton Beach Memoirs* (1983), *Biloxi Blues* (1985), and *Broadway Bound* (1986) on his own life

Understanding Drama

A drama is a type of performed by in front of an audience.



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Dialogue

Dialogue is lines of conversation in a play. Each line of dialogue is labeled with the name of the who says the line.

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
ELLA How are you feeling about tomorrow's game?	"How are you feeling about tomorrow's game?" asked Ella.
SARA I'm a little nervous, actually. My three-point shot needs some work.	"I'm a little nervous, actually," Sara replied. "My three-point shot needs some work."
ELLA Oh, you'll be great – I just know it!	"Oh, you'll be great," said Ella. "I just know it!"

Stage Directions

Stage directions describe how characters in a play should or react or how something should look. Stage directions are written in and appear in parentheses.

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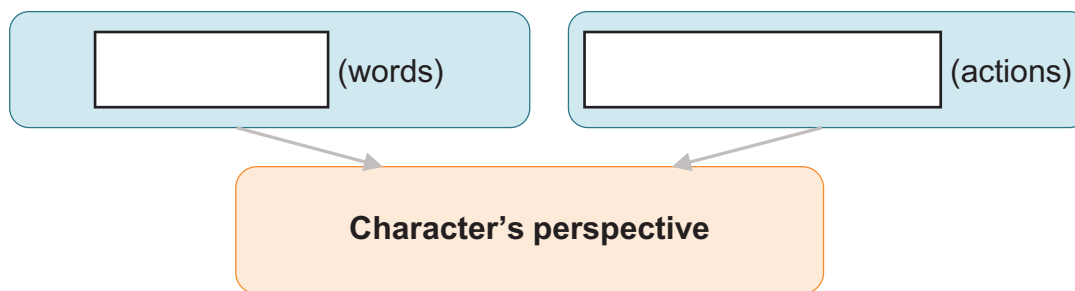
Stage Directions

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<p>JAKE (<i>looks at his watch</i>) What time is the train supposed to be here?</p> <p>JESSE (<i>pulls out train schedule and reads it</i>) It should have been here 10 minutes ago.</p> <p>JAKE (<i>looks toward track, frowning</i>) Ugh. We're going to be late!</p>	<p>Jake looked at his watch. "What time is the train supposed to be here?"</p> <p>Jesse pulled out a train schedule and began reading it. "It should have been here 10 minutes ago," he replied.</p> <p>"Ugh," said Jake, frowning as he looked toward the track. "We're going to be late!"</p>

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Character's Perspective

A character's tells how the character thinks or feels about something.



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Talking Directly to the Audience

A in a play can reveal his or her perspective by talking directly to the .

Underline the stage direction that tells Eugene who to talk to.

EUGENE (*Turns to the audience again*)

She gets all this special treatment because the doctors say she has kind of a flutter in her heart . . . I got hit with a baseball right in the back of the skull, I saw two of everything for a week and I still had to carry a block of ice home every afternoon . . . Girls are treated like queens. Maybe that's what I should have been born – an Italian girl.

–*Brighton Beach Memoirs*,
Neil Simon

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Reflecting History in *Brighton Beach Memoirs*

Brighton Beach Memoirs takes place in .

Events in the play reflect:

- the .
- World War II.
- a fascination with baseball and the New York Yankees.

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Bringing History to Life

When actors perform a play, they use tools to help a historical time period.

- Costumes
- Sets

-

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Connecting Humor to Historical Context

In *Brighton Beach Memoirs*, the of the play reflects the time period in which it is set.

Underline the part of text in the passage that reflects the time period in which the play is set.

EUGENE (*Turns to the audience again*)

She gets all this special treatment because the doctors say she has kind of a flutter in her heart . . . I got hit with a baseball right in the back of the skull, I saw two of everything for a week and I still had to carry a block of ice home every afternoon.

–*Brighton Beach Memoirs*,
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Summary

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Lesson Question

How do elements of drama help you understand a character's perspective?



Answer

Use this space to write any questions or thoughts about this lesson.