DRAMA – THE ELEMENTS OF DRAMATIC FORM

The building blocks of drama from children's pretend play to classic plays

Drama starts with:

The dramatic context

- A human situation
  - What's happening?
  - Where?
  - When?
- Its characters and their roles
  - Who is involved?

Organised by:

Focus

- The dramatist's framing of the situation and characters in the human context
- The chosen distance of the human situation from the viewer or participant

Driven by:

Tension

- What's at stake?
  - Dilemmas faced by the characters
  - Conflict between the characters
  - Suspense about what may happen
  - Mystery of what is unrevealed
  - Tension of the task for the characters to achieve their aims
  - Surprise for the characters

Manifested in:

Space

- Embodied action
- Location and setting
- Light and darkness

Manifested over:

Time

- Plot and narrative
- Cause and effect

Expressed in:

Language

- Voice and words
- Non-verbal paralanguage
- Sound and silence

Embodied in:

Movement

- Gesture
- Physical relationships
- Movement and stillness

Combining to make:

Dramatic Meaning

- Symbols
- Atmosphere
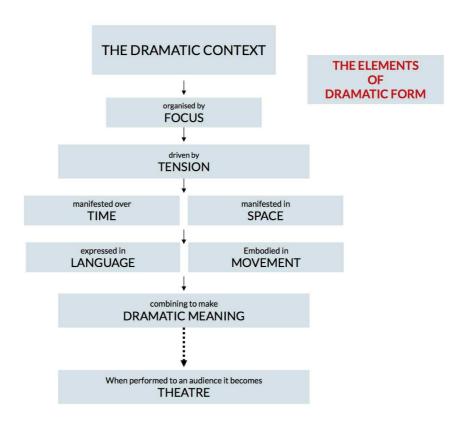- Understanding
- Aesthetic effect

When performed to an audience it becomes:

Theatre

- Acting
- Design
- Directing
- Staging
- Production

THE DRAMATIC CONTEXT

THE ELEMENTS OF DRAMATIC FORM

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organised by
FOCUS

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driven by
TENSION

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manifested over TIME	manifested in SPACE

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expressed in LANGUAGE	Embodied in MOVEMENT

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combining to make
DRAMATIC MEANING

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When performed to an audience it becomes
THEATRE