

Name: _____

Honors English 12

Date: ____

Period ____

A Doll's House

Act I Study Guide

CCSELA-LiteracyRI11-121 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

CCSELA-LiteracyRI11-122 Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSELA-LiteracyRI11-123 Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.

Comprehension:

1. When and where is the play set? What atmosphere is created by the opening description of the scene?
2. Did the first act raise any questions in your mind? Is there anything you would like to ask Nora?
3. How does Torvald find fault with Nora? Do you think it bothers her? Are his criticisms valid? What does she value?
4. Who is Mrs. Linde? What is she like? Why has she come? Why do you think Ibsen has included her in the story?
5. What does the audience learn about Nora's marriage from her discussion with Mrs. Linde? How and why does Nora lie at first about where the money from the trip came from? What plan did she come up with for saving her husband? Does she regret her decision? What else could she have done?
6. What do we know about Krogstad's past? How do we learn that? How is his trouble like Nora's?

7. How are Krogstad and Nora linked? Do you have more sympathy for one than for the other?

8. Do you think Nora is a good mother? Does Helmer seem to think so? Why does he assume that Krogstad is a bad parent?

9. Who is Dr. Rank? Why do you think he visits every day? What are your impressions of him? Is he a sympathetic character?

Literary Analysis: Modern Realism

Henrik Ibsen is known as the "father of modern realism." In a movement away from the falseness and sentimentality that often characterized romanticism, he centered attention on the here and now and what interested in the psychology of his characters.

The stage directions, often in italics, tell the director or actors how the stage should look and how the characters are to act, move, and speak. Stage directions are not meant to be spoken out loud to the audience. Some dramatists such as Henrik Ibsen and Tennessee Williams provide detailed directions throughout the play while others, like Shakespeare and Moliere, provide few.

What do the opening stage directions describing the living room tell you about this couple, their social world, and their marriage? Why do you think Ibsen provides the reader with such a complete description of the physical environment?

Writing Idea

Imagine that Ibsen wrote this play over a hundred years later – in our time. Reread the description of the upper-middle-class home that opens Act I. Rewrite this description of the setting to describe the equivalent modern-day home in which Nora and Helmer might live. Try to convey an atmosphere similar to the one conveyed by Ibsen.