

Academic Vocabulary for Collection 11

These are the terms you should know as you read and analyze the plays in this collection.

Play A story acted out live, using dialogue and action.

Tragedy A play that presents serious and important actions and ends unhappily for the main character.

Tragic hero An admirable figure who has a personal failing that leads to his or her downfall.

Tragic flaw A failing that leads a character to make choices that result in tragedy.

Comedy A play that ends happily, in which the main character gets what he or she wants.



Dialogue Conversations between characters in a play.

Monologue A long speech made by one character to one or more other characters onstage.

Soliloquy A speech made by a character who is alone onstage, speaking to himself or herself or to the audience.

Aside A short speech, delivered to the audience or to another character, that others onstage are not supposed to hear.



Stage directions Descriptions of how characters move onstage and how they speak their lines.

Props The portable items (properties) that actors carry or handle onstage.



For Further Information . . .

Be sure to read these essays in *Elements of Literature*:

- **Drama: Forms and Stagecraft**, pages 852–854.
- **How to Read Shakespeare**, pages 895–896.