 Jasper Jones: Dramatic techniques

Instructions

1. Find each of the examples in the play script and read the full extract. Discuss each extract with your partner.
2. Cut out the definitions and examples.
3. Work in pairs to arrange them in the table.
4. Check your answers with peers from another group, and with the teacher.
5. Glue the definitions and examples onto the table.
6. Use these notes as part of your preparation for your assessment tasks and exams

| Definition |
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| When the reader has more information about what is taking place, or what may develop, in the story before the character or characters. The reader may know that the character is depending on untrustworthy people, even his enemies, or that he is taking step towards a wrong solution, but the main character or the other characters inside the story may not be privy to those the facts. |
| An expression stemming from Victorian and 20th Century theatre where a stage consisted of three physical walls, as well as an imaginary fourth that serves to separate the world of the characters from that of the audience.  Any instance in which this performance convention is violated. This can be done through:   * directly referencing the audience * directly referencing the play as a play * directly referencing the characters' fictionality   This act of drawing attention to a play's performance conventions is metatheatrical. |
| Instructions written into the script of a play. |
| Indicative scenes, words or phrases that indicate how the story will unfold. |

| Examples | Examples |
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| p. 57. Charlie: Sorry.  A beat  Sorry [to us] in all the best books I’ve read … nineteen sixty-six.” | pp.21-22 Jeffrey doesn’t understand his mother’s advice when she quotes the traditional Vietnamese saying “catch the fish with both hands.” |
| p. 29 Eliza recounts the story of Sylvia Likens and questions why her sister Jenny didn’t say anything about the torture of her sibling. | P1. On a dark stage, beneath a tree, … raps abruptly on the louvred window. |
| p. 55 There is the wreck of a car. Illuminated on the car is the word ‘Sorry’. | p. 1. Charlie: [to us] Jasper Jones needs me?! |
| P. 36. As Charlie settles down to sleep on the sand pile, Laura Wishart wanders across the stage, past the sand pile, still wet and bloody. | P. 36  Jeffrey: Why are you covered in dirt?  Charlie: No reason.  Jeffrey: Have you been burying Laura’s body?  Charlie turns, stunned. |
| P. 34  Mr Bucktin: Well, I’ve taught Laura for a couple of years now… Have you ever heard anything about that Charlie? | P. 36.  Jeffrey: They must be searching for Laura Wishart, Charlie!  A beat  Or her body. Arghghghghgh…  He wanders across to Charlie like a zombie. |
| p. 44  Jasper: My mum was Aboriginal, but I never really knew her.  Charlie: What happened to her?  Jasper: Car accident when I was a baby. That’s all my old man ever told me. | p. 39.  Jasper is beaten and kicked.  I wait.  The sound of Mad Jack calling ‘Jasper’ is heard faintly, over and over… |
| p. 30. Charlie turns to us  Charlie: Corrigan has finally woken up. | P21 Mrs Bucktin appears, dressed to the nines. Jeffrey is suddenly all charm |

Student Activity Sheet

| Technique | Definition | Example(s) from Jasper Jones | Effects |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Breaking the fourth wall |  |  |  |
| Stage directions |  |  |  |
| Dramatic irony |  |  |  |
| Foreshadowing |  |  |  |

Teacher Activity Sheet

| Technique | Definition | Examples from Jasper Jones | Effect |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Breaking the fourth wall | An expression stemming from Victorian and 20th Century theatre where a stage consisted of three physical walls, as well as an imaginary fourth that serves to separate the world of the characters from that of the audience.  Any instance in which this performance convention is violated. This can be done through:   * directly referencing the audience * directly referencing the play as a play * directly referencing the characters' fictionality   This act of drawing attention to a play's performance conventions is metatheatrical. | p. 1. Charlie: [to us] Jasper Jones needs me?!  p. 30. Charlie turns to us  Charlie: Corrigan has finally woken up.  p. 57.  Charlie: Sorry.  A beat  Sorry [to us] in all the best books I’ve read … nineteen sixty-six.” | * to remind the audience that this is a play, and to call attention to the artifice of theatre * to make the audience listen to the argument/ideas * to become invested in its emotional story * to implicate the audience in the issues, themes context etc of the play * to encourage an audience to ally themselves with a Charlie. |
| Stage directions  Explain the function, effect and/ or the symbolism of each of the examples | Instructions written into the script of a play. | P1. On a dark stage, beneath a tree,… raps abruptly on the louvred window.  P21 Mrs Bucktin appears, dressed to the nines. JEFFREY is suddenly all charm.  P. 36. As Charlie settles down to sleep on the sand pile, Laura Wishart wanders across the stage, past the sand pile, still wet and bloody.  p. 39.  Jasper is beaten and kicked.  I wait.  The sound of Mad Jack calling ‘Jasper’ is heard faintly, over and over… | To indicate actions,  movements of performers, or  production requirements  To add a symbolic dimension to the play’s set, costumes and physical gestures.  To show important ideas and themes.  Darkness, tree – suggest covert activity and dark themes such as death, sexual abuse, racism.  Mrs Bucktin’s appearance – desire to impress, dignity etc. Jeffrey’s change of tone – humorous  Laura’s ghost  Jasper’s beating – bears out his fears expressed in the opening scenes that he will be blamed; institutionalised racism in Australian society in Australia – the beating is conducted by a public official and the police. |
| Dramatic irony  Explain the irony in each of these examples from the play. | When the reader has more information about what is taking place, or what may develop, in the story before the character or characters. The reader may know that the character is depending on untrustworthy people, even his enemies, or that he is taking step towards a wrong solution, but the main character or the other characters inside the story may not be privy to those the facts. | pp.21-22 Jeffrey doesn’t understand his mother’s advice when she quotes the traditional Vietnamese saying “catch the fish with both hands.”  P. 34  Mr Bucktin: Well, I’ve taught Laura for a couple of years now… Have you ever heard anything about that Charlie?  P. 36.  Jeffrey: They must be searching for Laura Wishart, Charlie!  A beat  Or her body. Arghghghghgh…  He wanders across to charlie like a zombie.  P. 36  Jeffrey: Why are you covered in dirt?  Charlie: No reason.  Jeffrey: Have you been burying Laura’s body?  Charlie turns, stunned. | A powerful means to keep audience interest in the play because it puts the reader in a superior position. This technique also encourages the audience’s curiosity, hopes, and fears concerning when, and if, a character will find out the truth inside the events or situations in the story. This technique can also be a source of humour.  Jeffrey actually lives by his mother’s maxim through his refusal to be put down or deterred from following his passion by the relentless racism of Warwick and friends. He is true to himself.  Both Charlie and the Audience know the answers to the questions asked by Mr Bucktin.  Charlie has actually hidden Laura’s body and Jeffrey’s innocent joke startles him. The audience may see dark humour in this incident. |
| Foreshadowing | Indicative scenes, words or phrases that indicate how the story will unfold. | p. 29 Eliza recounts the story of Sylvia Likens and questions why her sister Jenny didn’t say anything about the torture of her sibling.  p. 44  Jasper: My mum was Aboriginal, but I never really knew her.  Charlie: What happened to her?  Jasper: Car accident when I was a baby. That’s all my old man ever told me.  p. 55 There is the wreck of a car. Illuminated on the car is the word ‘Sorry’. | Prompts audience to engage with the plot and builds tension by hinting at something that is going to happen without revealing the story or spoiling the suspense. Suggests an upcoming outcome to the story. |