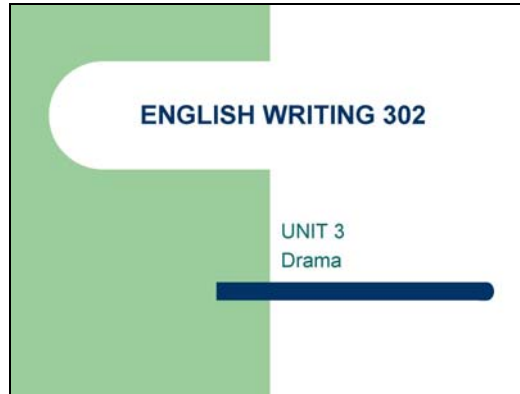


English Writing 301 – Transcript of Drama – Episode 1

Welcome to Ann Lewis's Instructional Video Series for both ONLINE and F2F students



AL: Welcome back – As we move into the third unit of this class – drama – we are going to use many of the same tools that we used for Fiction and Poetry: character, plot, setting, imagery, metaphor. But there is one thing that sets drama apart from these genres: It's not meant to be read. It's meant to be "viewed." As such, it is open to the interpretation of producers, directors, and the actors themselves.

I thought the perfect place to start this unit would be just looking at the beginnings of Susan Glaspell's play *Trifles* which you have read for today. If we look at our play, we'll see that she sets up the play with a description of the opening scene: the kitchen as follows:

Scene: The kitchen in the now abandoned farmhouse of John Wright, a gloomy kitchen, and left without having been put in order—the walls covered with a faded wall paper. Down right is a door leading to the parlor. On the right wall above this door is a built-in kitchen cupboard with shelves in the upper portion and draws below. In the rear wall at the right, up two steps is a door opening onto stairs leading to the second floor. In the rear wall at left is a door to the shed and from there to the outside. Between these two doors is an old-fashioned black iron stove. Running along the left wall from the shed door is an old iron sink and sink shelf, in which is set a hand pump. Downstage of the sink is an uncurtained window. Near the window is an old wooden rocker. Center stage is an unpainted wooden kitchen table with straight chair on either side. There is a small chair down right. Unwashed pans under the sink, a loaf of bread outside the breadbox, a dish towel on the table—other signs of incompleting work. At the rear the shed door opens and the Sheriff comes in followed by the County Attorney and Hale. The Sheriff and Hale are men in middle life, the County Attorney is a young man; all are much bundled up and go at once to the stove. They are followed by two women—the Sheriff's wife, Mrs. Peters, first; she is a slight wiry woman, a thin nervous face. Mrs. Hale is larger and would

ordinarily be called more comfortable looking, but she is disturbed now and looks fearfully about as she enters. The women have come in slowly, and stand close together near the door.

AL: What we are going to do today is look at three different beginnings – three different ways of starting this play on the "stage." They don't all start in the kitchen. And I'm going to ask you after viewing these three introductions to comment on the differences that each makes on the viewer's reaction to the play. OK – let's start . . .