



The Oxford Dictionary of Plays

Michael Patterson

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Anyone with an academic, professional, amateur, or recreational interest in the theater is likely to want to look up details of particular plays sometimes--perhaps to check on the author, or on when they were first performed, or perhaps to see how many characters they have, and whether or not they would be suitable for their theater company or drama group to perform.

The Oxford Dictionary of Plays provides essential information on the 1000 best-known, best-loved, and most important plays in world theater. Each entry includes details of title, author, date of composition, date of first performance, genre, setting, and the composition of the cast, and more. A synopsis of the plot and a brief commentary, perhaps on the context of the play, or the reasons for its enduring popularity, follow. Around 80 of the most significant plays-- from *The Oresteia* to *Waiting for Godot*--are dealt with in more detail. Genres covered include: burlesque, comedy, farce, historical drama, kabuki, masque, melodrama, morality play, mystery play, *No*, romantic comedy, tragicomedy, satire, and tragedy.

An index of characters enables the reader to locate favorite characters, and trace the trajectory of major historical and legendary characters--such as Iphigenia--through world drama, including in plays that do not have entries in the *Dictionary*. An index of playwrights, with dates, allows the reader to find all the plays included by a particular author.

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