

**PLAYS FOR  
CLASSROOM  
INTERPRETATION**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649384426

Plays for classroom interpretation by Edwin Van B. Knickerbocker

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**EDWIN VAN B. KNICKERBOCKER**

**PLAYS FOR  
CLASSROOM  
INTERPRETATION**



UNIV. OF  
COLUMBIA

# PLAYS FOR CLASSROOM INTERPRETATION

EDITED BY  
**EDWIN VAN B. KNICKERBOCKER**

*Chairman of the English Department  
The George Washington High School  
New York*

DRAWINGS BY  
**OLINDO RICCI**



NEW YORK  
**HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY**

PNG120

A4

K6

1921

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

The authors and publishers of the plays included in the present volume have permitted this reprinting of copyrighted material on the understanding that the plays will be used only in classroom work. No other use of any of the plays is authorized, and permission for any such other use must be secured from the holder of the acting rights. For each play in this book the name and address of the holder of such rights is printed below the list of the characters in the play.

The law protecting the rights of the dramatist is quoted herewith:

"Sec. 4968:—Any person publicly performing or representing any dramatic or musical composition for which copyright has been obtained, without the consent of the proprietor of said dramatic or musical composition, or his heirs or assigns, shall be liable for damages therefor, such damages in all cases to be assessed at such sum, not less than one hundred dollars for the first and fifty dollars for every subsequent performance, as to the court shall appear to be just. If the unlawful performance and representation be wilful and for profit, such person or persons shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction be imprisoned for a period not exceeding one year."  
—U. S. Revised Statutes, Title 60, Chap. 3.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

For permission generously accorded for use of the plays included in this book, the writer acknowledges his obligation as follows:

To Lady Gregory and Messrs. G. P. Putnam's Sons for "Spreading the News."

To Lord Dunsany and Messrs. Little, Brown and Company for "The Golden Doom."

To Mr. Eugene Pilot and Brentano's for "Two Crooks and A Lady."

To Miss Doris F. Halman for "Will o' the Wisp."

To Beulah Marie Dix (Mrs. G. H. Flebbe) and Messrs. Henry Holt and Company for "Allison's Lad."

To Miss Margaret Scott Oliver and Mr. Richard G. Badger for "The Turtle Dove."

To Mrs. Stephen Phillips and The Macmillan Company for the "Ulysses" selection.

## CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction . . . . .	vii

### PART I

#### CLASSROOM WORK WITH A PLAY

Chapter I. THE PRELIMINARY STUDY . . . . .	3
<i>Plot</i> . . . . .	3
<i>Theme</i> . . . . .	6
<i>Atmosphere</i> . . . . .	8
<i>Setting</i> . . . . .	10
<i>Preliminary Characterization</i> . . . . .	13
<i>Music</i> . . . . .	14
Chapter II. THE DETAILED INTERPRETATION . .	16
<i>The Situations</i> . . . . .	17
<i>Realizing the Setting</i> . . . . .	20
<i>Acting as Team-Work</i> . . . . .	23
<i>Getting Inside the Character</i> . . . . .	28
<i>The Auditory Appeal</i> . . . . .	33
<i>The Visual Appeal</i> . . . . .	59



# CONTENTS

## PART II

### THE PLAYS

✓ THE GOLDEN DOOM . . . . .	75
Lord Dunsany	
✓ TWO CROOKS AND A LADY . . . . .	93
Eugene Pilot	
✓ WILL O' THE WISP . . . . .	121
Doris F. Halman	
✓ SPREADING THE NEWS . . . . .	141
Lady Gregory	
✓ THE TURTLE DOVE . . . . .	169
Margaret Scott Oliver	
✓ ALLISON'S LAD . . . . .	191
Beulah Marie Dix	
ULYSSES (Scene 2, Act III) . . . . .	213
Stephen Phillips	
Notes on the Plays . . . . .	237

## PART III

### NOTES TO THE INSTRUCTOR

Notes on Chapter I . . . . .	247
Notes on Chapter II . . . . .	251

## INTRODUCTION

This book has been prepared for use as a high school text-book in the classroom interpretation of short plays.

In such work the plays are acted out in the classroom with expressive oral rendering of the lines, and with complete action, gesticulation, and facial expression. The lines are read from the text, no stage is required, and no stage equipment or costuming is necessary, although some simple provision for these is desirable. The interpretation of a play is highly motivated and socialized project work, providing numerous problems of genuine interest and value. The project as a whole and its component problems all lie properly in the field of English, and the work can be done by any English class. Because the work is group work, it is desirable that something of the spirit of the studio should prevail rather than the atmosphere of the more formal classroom.

Nowadays teachers very generally realize the value of dramatic work, but the practical difficulties peculiar to the problem of working in the classroom with good short plays have been so great that few teachers have attempted it. The writer believes that the use of the present book as a student's text-book will make dramatic interpretation in the

## INTRODUCTION

classroom an entirely practical phase of high school work in English. Indeed, the book is an outcome of the writer's efforts to overcome the difficulties he has encountered in the course of his work with dramatic classes in the English Department of the Evander Childs High School.

*active* - Teachers realize that properly directed work in dramatics develops the student's power of self-expression through its training in the co-ordination of mind and body; that it makes for social efficiency, both in the development of the spirit of team-work and in the inculcation of a knowledge of social usages; that it quickens the powers of visualization and auditization; that it tends to deepen the student's knowledge of human nature. They realize that such work provides highly motivated and socialized project work; that it affords unusual opportunities for speech improvement and develops in the student an ability to read aloud effectively; that it stimulates interest in related fields of art and history; that it provides occasion for real co-operation between departments in the school. They realize, too, that the work with the modern short play tends to develop in the students a proper taste in an important phase of present day literature.

But teachers know that text-books for the most satisfactory kind of dramatic work have not been available. There are school editions of Shakspeare, and there are on the authorized school lists certain other dramatic classics like "She Stoops to Conquer." But these plays are very long for