

## How to Read a Play

“To read drama well requires a theatrical imagination attuned to the possible realizations of the dramatic script onstage.”

### 1. Imagine the physical environment (setting)

1. When is the play set?
2. Where is the play set?
3. What are the main markers in that location (eg, a door, a throne, a dining room)

### 2. Imagine the scenic environment

1. What are the specific physical layouts of the particular scenes?
2. Which characters are present in the particular scenes?

### 3. Imagine each character's appearance

1. What do they look like?
2. What do they wear?
3. How do they move?

### 4. Imagine the language of the play

1. The spoken text (ie, dialogue; literally what the characters say to each other)
2. The action text (ie, the physical language of the play; the gestures and movements and movements and shape our understanding of the play)
3. The subtext (ie, the unspoken thoughts, feelings, and intentions of the characters)

### 5. Imagine the production elements of the play

1. How would you light the play?
2. How would you costume the play?
3. How would you design the set?
4. How would you stage the play?

Using the five main tips above, write a three-sentence summary that explains how readers should read a play.

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