

A Doll's House Reading Journal

You will need to fill out this chart as you read the play. Please include quotations (with page#s) with your analysis and analysis of literary features when possible and appropriate. This journal will help you in the near term and the future. In the near term, you will use this chart to help you find topics and write a take-home essay. In the longer term, this journal may help you study for Paper 2 assessments and plan your official Individual Oral.

Themes	Act I	Act II	Act III
<p>Relationships between Men and Women</p> <p>How is the relationship between men and women portrayed?</p> <p>What are the power relationships between men and women (or characters assuming male/female roles)?</p>	<p>The relationships between men and women portrayed in act 1 is that women are supposed to stay at home, make sure that it is clean and tidy, and that their appearances also matter a lot. A woman's behavior and appearance matters a lot to a man as he does not want their reputation to be lowered when he is with her ((Torvald) Helmer and Nora).</p> <p>During this period of time, it was shown that men had more power compared to women as Helmer believed that Nora was often irresponsible with money. "Has my little spendthrift been wasting money again?" (5).</p> <p>He thinks that the items she buys are wasting money and useless. This shows that women are usually under the supervision of men.</p>	<p>The relationships between men and women portrayed in act 2 shows that the men in the relationship are more dominant than the women. It is normalized in relationships, as the women would know that they would have to follow everything that the men want them to do. In this example, Nora knows her place in the relationship; however, she wants to do something, but has to ask Helmer first. By doing so, she dehumanizes herself, calling herself as a squirrel, similar to what Helmer would nickname her as. This is for her to try to persuade him, and to try to get what she wants. "If your little squirrel were to ask you for something very, very prettily—?" (44).</p>	<p>In the beginning of act 3, it shows a conversation between Mrs Linde and Krogstad. From their conversation, it shows that they used to be in a relationship together; however, Mrs Linde had to break it off, because she had found someone better that is able to financially help her family. It shows that Krogstad still loves Mrs Linde, and he feels betrayed and heartbroken. This shows that men play a huge role in contributing to a family's wealth, as women would choose men who are wealthier, than men who they actually love as it will benefit them and their families more.</p> <p>"Mrs Linde: I could do nothing else. As I had to break with you, it was my duty also to put an end to all that you felt for me.</p> <p>Krogstad: [wringing his hands]. So that was it. And all this—only for the sake of money!</p> <p>Mrs Linde: You must not forget that I had a helpless mother and two little brothers. We couldn't wait for you, Nils; your prospects seemed hopeless then." (67).</p>
<p>Masculinity and Femininity</p> <p>How are male and female roles defined?</p> <p>What constitutes masculinity and femininity?</p> <p>How do characters embody these traits?</p> <p>Do characters take on traits from opposite genders? How so? How does this change others' reactions to them?</p>	<p>In this play, the male characters are often only spending time at work, earning money for their family. The female characters are responsible for looking after their children, their husband, and to do household chores. When Nora seemed out of temper towards Helmer, he followed her and offered her money, while saying that she should not be out of temper. "Come, come, my little skylark must not droop her wings. What is this! Is my little squirrel out of temper? [Taking out his purse.] Nora, what do you think I have got here?" (6).</p>	<p>As male roles are defined as to be more dominant than females, it was also believed that men should be able to handle all troubles that they are facing, and that the women should not need to get involved in their business. Helmer believes that he has both courage and strength, and that he is able to handle anything that he faces. "Come what will, you may be sure I shall have both courage and strength if they be needed. You will see I am man enough to take everything upon myself." (47).</p>	<p>Throughout the play, male and female roles have been the same—males are believed to be more dominant than females. In act 3, this is shown as Helmer not owning up to his mistakes, and instead calling Nora as helpless like a woman. Helmer was upset with Nora as he believed that what she had done could have ruined their reputation, and he stereotyped women instead of apologizing for his mistakes.</p> <p>"I should not be a man if this womanly helplessness did not just give you a double attractiveness in my eyes." (83).</p>
<p>Patriarchy and Feminism</p> <p>What does the work reveal about the operations (economically, politically, socially, or psychologically) of patriarchy?</p> <p>What does the work imply about the possibilities of sisterhood as a mode of resisting patriarchy?</p> <p>Do you think the play is patriarchal (supporting the patriarchy) or feminist (resisting the patriarchy)?</p>	<p>The play mainly focuses on how patriarchy was common, as a few examples were shown when Helmer referred different actions as 'like a woman', as if it is bad. "That is like a woman! But seriously, Nora, you know what I think about that. No debt, no borrowing." (5).</p> <p>Helmer also dehumanizes Nora, calling her certain childish names such as, "my squirrel" or "my little lark" when he greets her. I believe that Nora might feel quite trapped when she is around him, as she would need to always listen to what he says and do as he says, and maybe she would try to find freedom for herself.</p>	<p>Women were expected to follow what their husbands say, to do chores, and to care for their children. It was very normalized back then; therefore, Helmer was confused when Nora asked him if it was nice of her to do as he wished her to do.</p> <p>"Nice?—because you do as your husband wishes? Well, well, you little rogue, I am sure you did not mean it in that way. But I am not going to disturb you; you will want to be trying on your dress, I expect." (43).</p> <p>I think that Nora was trying to make Helmer feel more appreciative of her, and to maybe compliment or thank her.</p>	<p>Women had to abide by certain rules that men did not have to. As Nora wants to help her husband and save her husband's life, she does not understand why she has to follow certain rules and is not allowed to if it is not harming anyone. She believes that some laws are unnecessary, and is trying to convince herself that the law is always right, but cannot.</p> <p>"But I find it impossible to convince myself that the law is right. According to it a woman has no right to spare her old dying father, or to save her husband's life. I can't believe that." (88).</p>
<p>Class and Money</p> <p>What social classes do the characters represent?</p>	<p>In act 1, Helmer was clearly bothered by the fact that Nora had spent a large sum of money for herself, as he started stressing about how she should not spend too</p>	<p>As Helmer and Nora are in the middle class range, they understand that they do not have much money, but can still afford necessities. Nora had to forge her father's</p>	<p>As class and reputation mattered to a lot of people, such as Helmer and Krogstad, it did not matter to Mrs Linde. She preferred if Krogstad had acted as his real</p>

<p>How do characters from different classes interact or conflict?</p> <p>In what ways do class and gender intersect in the play?</p>	<p>much money and she should be more responsible and sensible with her financial decisions. This shows that they are most likely in the middle-class.</p>	<p>signature in order to get a large sum of money for her husband to recover from an illness. This shows that Nora loved Helmer, and that they could not afford to pay his medical bills without borrowing from others.</p>	<p>character, and she believes that he could achieve a lot, without having to fake his personality. Class and reputation mattered a lot as people in high classes were able to have access to more privileges. “Niils, I have faith in your real character—I can dare anything together with you.” (69).</p>
<p>Other</p> <p>What else interested you in the text?</p> <p>Did you have any favorite quotes? What and why?</p> <p>What literary techniques did you notice? In what ways are they significant?</p>	<p>While reading the play, I found it interesting how women back then used to dread being in a relationship, and it usually makes them unhappy to see their husbands as they would often need to serve them and make them happy. Now, it is more common for people to have freedom, are not forced to get married, or be with someone they dislike. Although it is possible for some people now to experience similar events in this play, it is less common. Dialogue is mainly used in this play, and it shows how a character interacts with another character.</p>	<p>I found it interesting how Helmer and Nora’s relationship is not forced, compared to most relationships during that period of time. Nora really loved and cared for Helmer, and their relationship was not forced. This quote shows how they love each other so much, to the point where they would lie to protect each other, which is quite ironic. Rank: “Who else? It is no use lying to one’s self. I am the most wretched of all my patients, Mrs Helmer. Lately I have been taking stock of my internal economy. Bankrupt! Probably within a month I shall lie rotting in the churchyard.” Nora: “What an ugly thing to say!” (48).</p>	<p>Something that I have found shocking in act 3 is when Nora had not only left Helmer, but also her children. Nora had decided that it was better for her to leave Helmer for good as she had realized that she did not have her own freedom to do anything. She had to lie to Helmer many times throughout the play, in order for him to not get mad at her, and so that she could do her own things. I did not expect Nora to leave Helmer as in act 2, Nora was shown to have really loved Helmer. In act 3, it shows that she did not actually love Helmer as much as she thought, and she did not know him as well as she thought. “Nora: <i>[putting on her cloak]</i>. I cannot spend the night in a strange man’s room.” Helmer: But can’t we live here like brother and sister—? Nora: <i>[putting on her hat]</i>. You know very well that would not last long. <i>[Puts the shawl round her.]</i> Goodbye, Torvald. I won’t see the little ones. I know they are in better hands than mine. As I am now, I can be of no use to them.” (90).</p>