

Hedda Gabler - Notes - broken down into different scenic units

Act One

Brief outline of events in scenic unit	Character notes - characteristics, attitudes to other characters, our impressions etc	Key quotations, analysis, dramatic effects, symbolism etc
Entrance of Miss T and Berte up to the entrance of Tesman (p167-169)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - First impression of Hedda: unique, "particular", General Gabler's daughter - the match between Jorgen and Hedda is very unexpected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Because she's ever so particular." p168 - "But I declare, I never once dreamed they'd make a match of it, her and Mr. Jorgen, not in those days I didn't." p169
Entrance of Tesman to entrance of Hedda (p170-175)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - First impression of Mr. Brack: kind - Hedda has a lot of luggage, rich background, materialistic? - Tesman's idiosyncrasies - foreshadows Hedda being stylish - Miss Tesman is very self sacrificing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - look after Aunt Rina - gives maid who accompanied her her whole life to serve Jorgen and Hedda - "give security for the furniture and all the carpets" from a "mortgage on the annuity" - Jorgen is oblivious and clueless and naive about the meaning behind certain words, in this case, Aunt Julle was pressing for a baby - Tesman assumes the duty of the husband is to satisfy his wife in the confines of her home - Hedda always gets what she wants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Mr. Brack was so very kind as to take me right to the door." p170 - "Hedda had so many cases that had to come." p170 - "Eh?" - "Yes, so Hedda won't be ashamed of me, if we should happen to walk together in the street." (p171) Miss Tesman bought a new hat to wear when she's with Hedda, shows how happy she is about this marriage and wants to befriend Hedda - "But I mean to say ... haven't you any ... as it were ... any prospects of ...?" p172 - "But Hedda had to have that trip, Aunt!" p173 - "Ah, my dear Jorgen, you might find a use for them ... when the time comes" p173 Aunt Julle is referring to these empty rooms for future babies, but again, Tesman being the oblivious

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the house - the honeymoon - foreshadows Tesman's competitor in writing books (which we later found out is Ejler Lovborg) - The topic of Tesman's book is clearly not very interesting and less well-known 	<p>guy here, he thought she meant for books. (dramatic irony)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Most of all I'm pleased for Hedda, though. Before we got engaged she always said that old Lady Falk's villa was the only house she'd really like to live in." p173 - "Yes ... and the people who stood in your way ... and wanted to keep you back ... you outran them all. They've fallen by the wayside, Jorgen! And your most dangerous adversary, he fell lower than any of them, he did ... And now he must lie on the bed he's made for himself ... the poor depraved creature." p174-175 - "It will be an account of the domestic crafts of mediaeval Brabant." p175
<p>Entrance of Hedda to exit of Miss T (175-179)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hedda: formal and distant - Tesman: very sentimental and appreciative - Hedda doesn't care about the things Tesman appreciate e.g. old slippers, and Tesman doesn't realize that - Miss Tesman is very forgiving, just roughly brushed it off that parasol and hat is hers, not the maid's - Hedda doesn't want anyone to know about the maybe pregnancy - Hedda is not a big fan for receiving affection, cannot respond to the warmth of Aunt Julle - Tesman is portrayed as orderly and not very perceptive - he seems oblivious to Hedda's mood and does not quite grasp the source of tension between Hedda and Aunt Julle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [Her eyes are steel grey, and cold, clear, and dispassionate.] - [offers her hand] - "Ugh ... the maid's been and opened the verandah door." p176 dramatic irony, the reader knows Aunt Julle opened those doors earlier - "My old house shoes! My slippers, Hedda!" p176 - "Thank you, they wouldn't appeal to me." p177 - "But not for me, particularly." p177 - "Look at that! She's left her old hat lying on the chair there." p177 dramatic irony, reader knows it's not Berte's hat, it's Aunt Julle's. - "Oh, that's as it may be, my dear Jorgen. [Looks around.] And my parasol ...? Here it is. [She takes it.] Because that happens to be mine too. [Under her breath.] Not Berte's.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Oh, you don’t have occasion for anything!” p178 - [free herself]. “Oh ... ! Leave me be!”
Exit of Miss T to entrance of Mrs Elvsted (179-181)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hedda: frustrated, annoyed - Why has Hedda married Tesman? - very dominant, looks down upon Tesman 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - raises her arms and clenches her fists as though in a frenzy. p179 - “Well, what manner of behaviour is that, anyway, flinging her hat just anywhere in the drawing-room! It’s not done.” p179 - “Oh, never mind. I’ll propitiate her.” p179 - “Oh, don’t ask me, Tesman, for God’s sake. I’ve told you before, I just couldn’t. I’ll try to call her Aunt. And she’ll have to be content with that.” p180 - “An old flame of yours, too, I’m told.” p180 foreshadowing Tesman’s past relationships
Entrance of Mrs E to exit of Tesman (181-185)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mrs. Elvsted is scared of Hedda - hints an affair between Thea and Ejlert Lovborg - Lovborg’s book is clearly more popular in contrast to Tesman’s - Hedda is very controlling and finds interest in learning about other people’s personal life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [gives her a scared look, then speaks quickly]. p182 - “I’m so dreadfully worried about him.” p183 - “Yes, a big new book, dealing with cultural development ... sort of altogether. It’s a fortnight ago, now. And then when it sold so many copies... and caused such an enormous stir ...” p183 - “Now be sure to write something really warm and friendly. A good long letter.” p185 Hedda tries to push Tesman away. - [She forces Mrs. Elvsted into the armchair by the stove, and sits down herself on one of the stools.]
Exit of Tesman to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hedda: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Well, then. Now you tell me a bit about your life

<p>entrance of Tesman (185-191)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - destructive desire to control the lives of others - unable to reciprocate in a relationship e.g. she pretends to be friends with Thea and learns about all her secrets yet reveals nothing about her own personal life - search for Mrs. Elvsted's weaknesses so she can later use this knowledge for her own selfish purposes - Thea and Hedda went to the same school and their relationship was not very friendly (Hedda was bullying Thea) - Thea left her husband, which is something very unusual for woman to do at the time - Thea has a sort of connection with Lovborg, she has a value in someone else's life (she helped Lovborg with his book) 	<p>at home." p185</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Oh, I was dreadfully frightened of you in those days!" p186 - "When we met on the steps you always used to pull my hair." - "Yes, and you once said you were going to burn it off." - "And so we'll be good friends again, like we were in the old days." "And I'm going to call you my darling Thora." pretends to be friends but got her name wrong - "Brief and to the point, then! I never told my husband I was leaving." p189 - "I got a sort of control over him." p190 - "He said that when they parted, she threatened to shoot him with a pistol." p191, dramatic irony, we know Hedda is the only one carrying a pistol around
<p>Entrance of Tesman to Hedda's re-entry from the Hall (191-194)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - First impression of Brack: stylish, acts younger than his actual age - From their conversation, we can conclude that Brack deals with their finance issues - Implying that Lovborg was an alcoholic before 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [Brack is a gentleman of 45. Stocky, but well-built and elastic in his movements. ... Hair short, still almost black, and carefully dressed. Eyes lively and playful. ... He is dressed in a stylish walking suit, perhaps a little too youthful in cut for a man of his age.] p192 - "You find me ... perhaps a little changed?" p192 Hedda and Brack already knew each other before - "Though incidentally, I should be happier if we'd arranged things a little more modestly." p193 Brack thinks Tesman should limit his use of money a bit.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "I was so delighted to hear that he's become quite a sober citizen again!" p194
Hedda's re-entry to end of Act (194-198)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tesman might not get his professorship - makes Hedda unhappy because they won't have money to buy the little things she wants (Hedda: very demanding) - the setting of the whole play is in their house, very interior, everyone comes and go and only Hedda stays in the house. She is "trapped" in a male-dominated society because of her gender and the irony is that she set that trap for herself. - Hedda: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - has no limits: she marries someone who she is not so fond of, being very rude and critical to Aunt Julle - not reliable (can randomly shoot at people) - lacks basic traits of a female, no women plays with pistols at the time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "The appointment to the professorship might conceivably be contested by another candidate ..." p196 - "My pistols ... Jorgen." "General Gabler's pistols." p198 Hedda brought up her pistols. - Does author want us to have any sympathy for Hedda? - Do we like Hedda more because of Tesman?

Act Two

Brief outline of events of scenic unit	Character notes - impressions, characteristics, attitudes	Key quotations, analysis, dramatic effects, symbolism etc	Themes, issues,
<p>Opening of Act to entrance of Tesman (199 - 204)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hedda is insane, she loves playing with pistols, and this has been going on for a while - “grub” connotation, means working hard at a demeaning task which shows Hedda’s disinterest in anything that Tesman has been doing and finds it “horribly tedious” - Hedda describes their wedding trip as “unbearable” to be with Tesman “everlastingly” - the idea of being “in love” is “glutinous” to Hedda, Hedda has a problem with dealing with emotions - Hedda used to be a party girl and now she would like to settle down, she married Jorgen because she has to which is what women have to do at the time in the Norwegian society, they need men to get on with a living. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>She is standing by the open glass door, loading a revolver-type pistol.</i> [She fires] p199 - “What the devil ... do you still play at that game? What are you shooting at?” p199 - “Doesn’t it seem to you that it’s an eternity since we talked together? Oh ... I don’t count those few words last night and this morning. “ - “I’ve gone around here day after day longing for you to come back again.”p201 - “He’s absolutely in his element if he’s given leave to grub around in libraries.” p201 - “I’d really danced myself tired, my dear sir. I had had my day ...” - “D’you know ... this sort of ... let me put it, this sort of triangular relationship ... it’s really highly convenient for all concerned.” p203 metaphor for the affair, Brack wants to get in between Hedda and Tesman, symbolizing that he can “come and go” and act very naturally with the lady and the man of the house 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Women at the time are restricted by Victorian values and prevented from having any real lives of their own.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - use of figurative language, dalliance and flirting between them, Hedda seems to get along with Mr. Brack better than her husband - The train extended metaphor: journey is their marriage, Brack is a resting/stopping place for Hedda, she will never “jump out” of the train, as in she is not going to leave because she is getting looked after. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “just two people alone in the compartment...!” Hedda refers to their house as a compartment symbolizes her entrapment even more - “The triangle is completed.” “And the train drives on.” Hedda is playing around with the conversation. Catching on the innuendos 	
Entrance of Tesman to his exit (204-206)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hedda is very disrespectful, refers to Tesman’s Aunt with “the other one” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [Brack and Hedda exchange a knowing smile.] They were just talking about Tesman before he comes in, how he is academic and will be successful but boring and can provide Hedda a living - “She always is.” p205 Hedda is sick and bored of it. “Well, then it’s only reasonable that the other one should stay with her. I’ll have to make the best of it.” refers to Aunt Julie as “the other one” and takes pleasure in the fact that she is not coming so she should use this time wisely - “Oh, these everlasting aunts!” p206 	

<p>Exit of Tesman to his re-entrance (206-209)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hedda purposefully criticized Aunt Julle's hat knowing that it is not the maid's - She even lied about the fact that she likes the house - She doesn't like the house, doesn't like the smell, and gets very bored - Hates responsibility (hint, her pregnancy, the responsibility of a mom) - role of woman, stereotype - she is bored - Hedda and Brack share the same meanness and mutual understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "And I pretended I thought it was the maid's." - "To that harmless old soul!" p206 - [nervously, walking across] She could be a bit guilty - "And Tesman, poor fellow, was floundering and dithering. Because he couldn't think of anything to talk about. So I felt sorry for the poor erudite man. ..." - "And perhaps you didn't really care about the place at all?" "God knows I did not." - "I think it smells of lavender and pot-pourri in all the rooms. ... But perhaps Auntie Julle brought that smell in with her." "Yes, it has a sort of odour of death." - "No responsibilities for me, thank you!" p209 - "Why shouldn't you, like most other women, have a natural aptitude for a vocation that ...?" - "Boring myself to death." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Femininity, she's against the idea of having a baby - women's role in society
<p>Entrance of Tesman to entrance of Lovborg (209-211)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - one woman has to be there when a married woman is alone with another man, conservative society - indicating sudden success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "And if the worst comes to the worst Mr. Lovborg can always stay here with me." p210 "do you think it would be quite the thing for him to stay with you? Eh? Remember Aunt Julle can't come." - [He is dressed in an elegant, black, 	

		<p>and quite new suit.] p211</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [He seems a little embarrassed.] p211 	
<p>Entrance of Lovborg to Tesman and Brack go into inner room (211-215)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tesman's line always ends with ..., he keeps getting interrupted by either Hedda or Brack. - Lovborg's book seems to be more interesting and popular than Tesman's. - Indirectly shows how Lovborg is a better writer/smarter than Tesman. - Underlying reiteration: mutual connection - The audience is given hints that there is a special connection between Brack and Hedda - Lovborg's aim is to get recognition for his efforts to change - staying sober. - Hedda prefers not to be associated with Tesman's happiness/joy - - Lovborg rejected the drink that Hedda offered trying to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "No, no, of course I wouldn't dream of it. But...?" - "Oh well, I can't possibly expect you to..." (p214) - "And I guarantee that it'll be 'lively', as my la- ... as Mrs. Tesman expresses it." (p213) - "I only intend to outshine you. In reputation." - "Our way? Leave me out of it." - "Won't you too, Mr Lovborg?" - "No thank you. Not for me." 	<p>Importance of reputation at the time</p>

	<p>stay sober. Hedda is manipulating the situation, testing him. She knows he won't drink and join the gentlemen so the two of them can talk alone.</p>		
<p>Lovborg and Hedda foregrounded to entrance of Mrs Elvsted (215-220)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hedda starts talking about honeymoon trip with Tesman, showing off her relationship and building up a good reputation of happy married life - Suggests a former intimate relationship between Hedda and Lovborg - Hedda changes the topic when Tesman walks in, obviously to hide what she and Lovborg were talking about. She manipulates the situation skilfully. She obviously has had practice. - This shows how Brack suspects or probably knows that there may be something going on between Hedda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Do you see this range of mountains, Mr. Lovborg?" - [who has not once taken his eyes off her] - "That was once my name. When ... when we two used to know each other." - [hears him coming and says indifferently]. "And this, Mr. Lovborg, was taken in the Ampezzo Valley. Just look at those rock formations. [Looks amiably up at Tesman.] What were those peculiar mountains called, dear?" - [Brack sits within, occasionally keeping an eye on Hedda and Lovborg.] 	

	and Lovborg. He could even be feeling jealous, thus the constant eye on the two.		
Entrance of Mrs Elvsted to exit of Brack, Lovborg and Tesman (220-226)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hedda: controlling and manipulative, always gets what she wants - Thea being protective of Lovborg so that he doesn't drink - Hedda wants control over people's lives, trying to push him to drink - Mrs. Elvsted seems on the outside of the conversation - Thea panicked about Lovborg and doesn't want him to know the conversation with Hedda earlier? that she left her husband for him - Lovborg still takes the drink for Thea's sake - Tesman assumed Hedda would worry if he doesn't come home early but she doesn't care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [pinches her arm]. They can hear you! p225 - [takes a chair and makes to sit down beside Lovborg] - "Thea my pet! ... I want to be in the middle." (p221) - "No, he doesn't either!" p222 - "And so I've got no power over you at all? Is that it?" - [takes one of the full punch glasses, raise it, and says quietly, in a hoarse voice] p223 - "Or maybe it was the old man himself who suggested it?" - "I'll show you ... both you and the others ... that however worthless I may have been in the past, I ... I've found my feet again! With you help, Thea." p224 - "But you mustn't expect me so early, Hedda." - "Just you stay as long as ... ever you like." p225 	
Exit of B, L and T to end of act (226-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - allusion to god of wine, meaning Lovborg will come back drunk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [has got up, and wanders uneasily about the room] - "I can just see him. With vine leaves 	

227)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “rich” metaphor, double meaning, Thea has a better companion in her life 	<p>in his hair. Flushed and confident. ...”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “For once in my life I want to feel that I control a human destiny.” p226 - “Oh, if only you knew how destitute I am. And you’re allowed to be so rich! I think I’ll burn your hair off after all.” p227 - “First you’re going to have some tea, you little goose.” - [She pulls Mrs. Elvsted towards the doorway almost by main force.] 	
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Act Three

Brief outline of events of scenic unit	Character notes - impressions, characteristics, attitudes	Key quotations, analysis, dramatic effects, symbolism etc	Themes, issues,
Opening of act to entrance of Tesman (228-231)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hedda’s in charge - Mrs Elvsted is very worried about Lovborg, Hedda knows this and manipulates the situation by making Mrs Elvsted more worried. - Hedda even calls Mrs Elvsted weak, and orders Mrs E to go to sleep, even 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - [wringing her hands] - I slept quite well - Not a wink. I just couldn’t, Hedda! It was quite impossible. p229 - And Ejlert Lovborg, he’s sitting there reading aloud ... with vine leaves in his hair. - You really are a little ninny, Thea. - And so you’re to do as I tell you. 	-

	though Mrs E insists on waiting up for Tesman, for news of Lovborg.	p230	
Entrance of Tesman to entrance of Brack (231-235)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tesman wants Hedda to care and be worried but she is not. - Hedda is cold and distant, she refuses to show affection/concern/feelings and goes to the extent of avoiding the expression of feelings. - Tesman feels bad about being jealous of Ejlert's work as "something ugly came over" him after he hear from Lovborg. - Hedda is very impatient and persistent in wanting to know what happened and she is only interested because there are gossips about Lovborg. [dramatic irony] - foreshadows that Hedda wants to keep the manuscript to herself and doesn't plan to give it back. She might do something bad about it later as well 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Were you worried about me? Eh? - Good gracious no ... I wouldn't dream of it. But I asked if you'd had a good time. - "When he'd finished reading ... something ugly came over me." "I sat and envied Ejlert that he'd been able to write such a thing." p232 - "But he made a long and incoherent speech about the woman who had inspired him in his work." Tesman thinks it must be Elvsted but it's probably Hedda. - "How on earth should I know?" p233 sarcastic tone - "No...don't give it back! Not straight away I mean. Let me read it first." - "Well, it was to be expected." - [suppressing a smile] Hedda wants Tesman to rush so she can take a look at the manuscript - "No, no, don't ask me. I don't want to look at sickness and death. I must be free of everything that's ugly." p235 	

Entrance of Brack to entrance of Lovborg (236-240)			
Entrance of Lovborg to exit of Mrs Elvsted (240-244)			
Exit of Mrs Elvsted to end of act (244 - 246)			

Act Four

Brief outline of events of scenic unit	Character notes - impressions, characteristics, attitudes	Key quotations, analysis, dramatic effects, symbolism etc	Themes, issues,
Opening of act to exit of Miss Tesman (247-249)			

Exit of Miss Tesman to entrance of Mrs Elvsted (249-252)			
Entrance of Mrs Elvsted to Hedda and Brack foregrounded (252-257)			
Hedda and Brack foregrounded to after Tesman and Mrs E interrupt (257- 260)			
Hedda and Brack foregrounded again to end of act (260 - 264)			

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To what extent do we go with our reputation?

Did Hedda cause her entrapment with Tesman and her pregnancies by killing herself?

What makes us overstress our power to protect who we are?

Did Hedda have a troubled childhood?

What is a beautiful way to die?

Does Ibsen want us to have sympathy for Hedda?

How did society impact Hedda's life?

Was her suicide selfish?

Why does scandal matter so much?

How did society impact Hedda's life?

Is it possible to escape societal norms?

Did she trap herself or was she trapped by everyone else?

How do different individuals deal with the oppression of social expectations?

How does gender inequality impact people during that time?

What is the impact of Hedda's death?

How do the choices we make define our values?

How do we judge the characters?

Themes: control, jealousy, gender and equality, reputation, social expectations, courage

Symbolism: pistols, script, the house where everything happens, death