

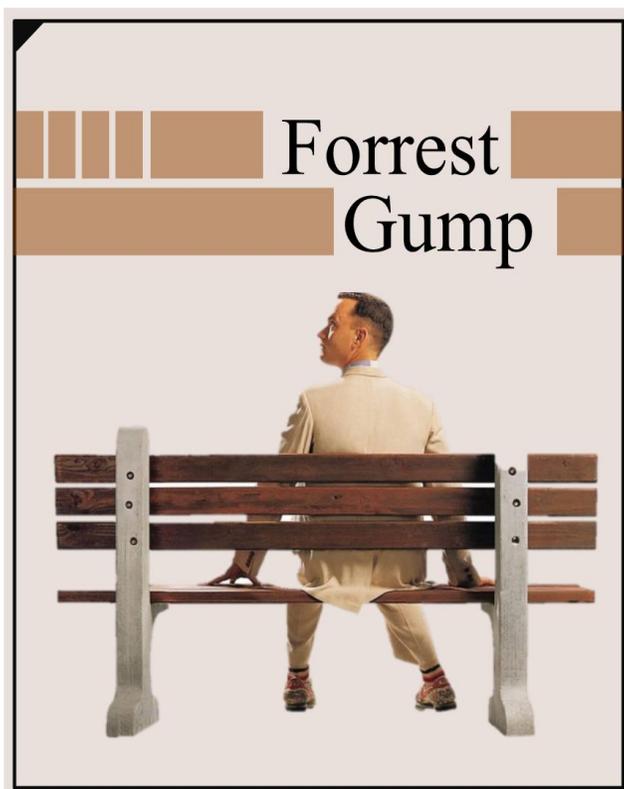
# How to Appreciate a Play

## M8U4 Reading

浙江省桐乡市高级中学  
沈萃萃

## Free talk

- Which foreign movie do you like best? Why?
- Which line (台词) in the movie impresses you most?



● Facing teasing and scorn (轻蔑), Forrest Gump, with an IQ of 75, is always **kind, honest and brave**, which finally helps him **achieve incredible success** and **win respect from others**. This movie inspires us to **stay true to the original self** and **remain kind** whatever the difficulties.

● Life is like a box of chocolates. You never know what you're gonna get.

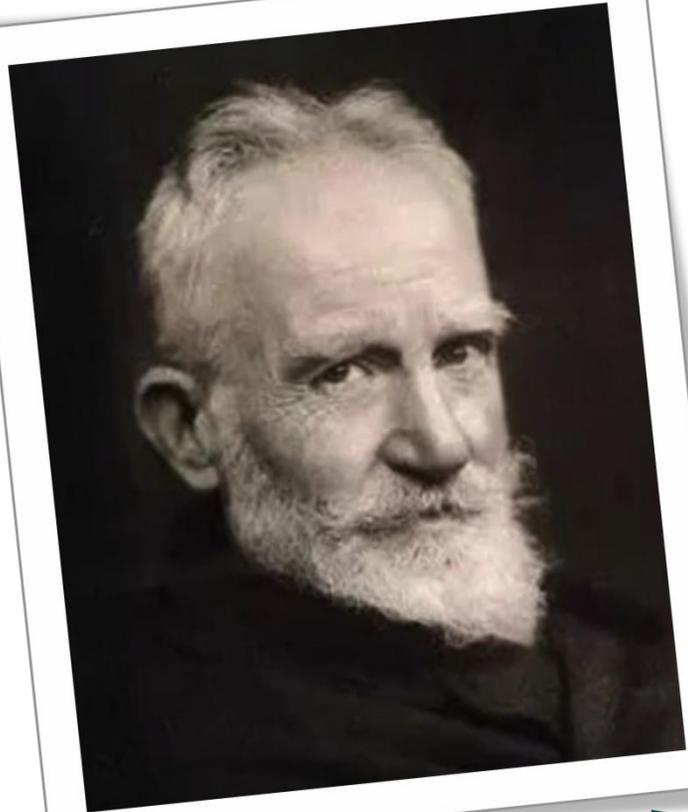


## Free talk

### ● What **elements** does a **high quality play** cover?



## About the author



George Bernard Shaw  
(1856-1950)

- An Irish dramatist, a literary critic, socialist spokesman, and humorous playwright.
- A defender of women's rights, and advocate of equality of income.
- In 1925 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. He accepted the honor but refused the money.

"You're so skinny. When people see you, they will know how poor your country is."

"You're a meat ball. When people see you, they will know the reason why our country is so poor."



# Characters

## Social status & personality

**Eliza Doolittle (E):** a poor flower girl who is **ambitious** to improve herself.

**Professor Higgins (H):** an expert in **phonetics**, **convinced** that the quality of a person's English decides his/ her position in society

**Colonel Pickering (CP):** an official in **the army** and later **a friend of Higgins** who sets him a task



lower class

middle class



upper class



**Tip 1 : Characters with different social status and personality help create conflict and make the plot more appealing.**

## Setting of Act one “Fateful Meetings”

<b>Time</b>	11:15 pm, in 1941	<b>Place</b>	London, England, outside a theatre	<b>Surroundings</b>	rain pouring, cab whistles blowing
<b>Characters</b>		<b>Appearance</b>		<b>Action</b>	
Professor Higgins		wearing dark garments and a woolen scarf		hiding from the rain, listening, watching reactions, making notes	
Eliza Doolittle				sheltering from the rain	
A gentleman				passing, hesitating for a moment	

**Tip 2 : The setting of an Act is intended to help the audience picture a particular place or type of surroundings where the Act takes place.**

## Plot

### Lines 1—15

- Please find out all the **broken sentences** by **Eliza**.
- Can you **correct** them in terms of **grammar** and **spelling**?

① Come over'ere, cap'in, and buy me flowers off a poor girl.

Come **over here captain**, and **buy some flowers from** a poor girl.

② I can giv'ou change, cap'in.

I can **give you** change, **captain**.

③ I ain't done nothing wrong by speaking to that gentleman.

I **haven't done anything wrong** by speaking to that gentleman.

④ I ain't no thief. I'm an honest girl I am!

I **am not a** thief. I'm an honest girl! I am!

poor pronunciation  
& low social status

- **Guess: why does Eliza become Higgins' target?**

# Plot

Lines 16 — 58

- Please find out all the **stage directions** and **classify** them into **three categories**.

kindly

**emotion**

rudely

proudly

**sound effect**

gives her a handkerchief

hands over the paper covered in writing

**action**

has been watching the girl and now speaks to Higgins

**Tip 3 : Stage directions are instructions in a play to indicate the movements, positions or tones of an actor/actress, or the sound effects and lighting, which help us to understand the lines and the plot better.**

goes out

- **What does Higgins think of the newly rich?**

They become **wealthy financially**, but their pronunciation still remains poor, which to some degree reveals their **original lower social status**.

- **What is Higgins' plan to transform Eliza?**

Higgins will **educate Eliza to speak properly** so that she can pass herself off in three months as **a duchess** at an ambassador's garden party, and perhaps work as **a lady's maid** or **a shop assistant**.

- **What are Higgins' attitudes towards Eliza and Pickering?**  
**Can you find out the evidence from the play?**



● What **social phenomenon** can be

The social status of each character influences the way they behave to each other. Generally speaking, people are more polite to those who they think are of a higher social class and less polite to those they consider are members of a lower class.

1 you **silently**

2 (**rudely**)

with her

the English that will **condemn** her to the **gutter** to the **end of her days**.

3 (**ignores** her)

4 (**carelessly throws** a handful of money into her basket

**impolite**



**respectful**

2 We must have a celebration, **my dear man**.

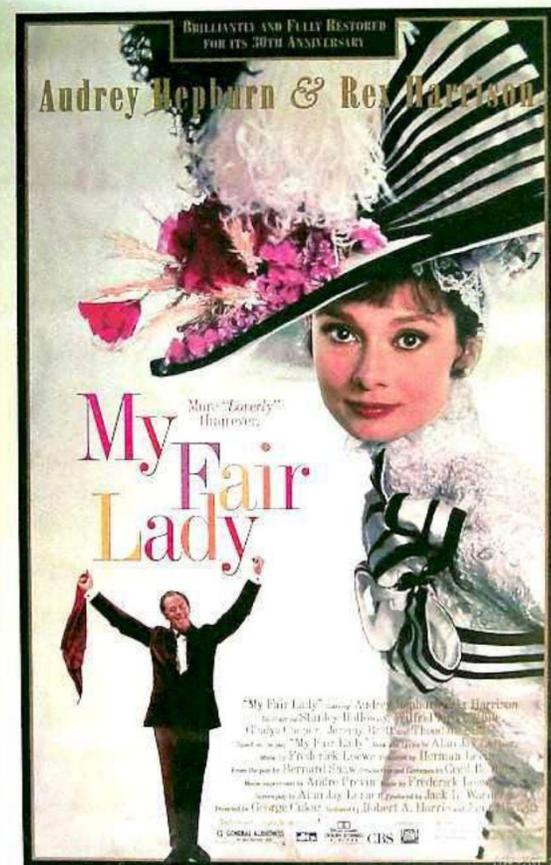
**Tip 4 : The attraction of the plot lies in presenting vivid emotions and actions, creating conflict between characters, and reflecting a certain phenomenon that can strike a chord (引起共鸣) with the audience.**



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**SHOW  
TIME**

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## Design the following plot

- Have a discussion in groups of four.

If you were the playwright, how would you continue to write the play? (What will **happen next**? What kind of **ending** will you design?)

### George Bernard Shaw's version

Higgins is **extremely strict** with Eliza in educating her to speak properly. In the process, a great many **conflicts** and **funny things** come about. Through their persistent efforts, Eliza eventually **performs perfectly** in a reception dinner hosted by a Greek ambassador and **successfully integrates herself into the upper class**. Meanwhile, Higgins develops a **deep affection for Eliza**.



## Theme

### ● Why did George Bernard Shaw **title** this play “**Pygmalion**”?



Pygmalion, a gifted artist, makes a **stone statue** of a beautiful woman.



He asks the Greek Goddess to **bring her to life**.



Finally, **his wish is granted**.

## Theme

## Pygmalion Effect

- Why did George Bernard Shaw **title** this play “**Pygmalion**”?



- On the basis of this classic Greek story, can you work out the **theme** of the play “**Pygmalion**”?

The greater the expectation placed on people, the better they will perform.

## Ending



- As Shakespeare put it, “**Life is a stage**”.
- Everyone is a **playwright** to create the **play** of his own.
- Everyone is an **actor/ actress** to determine how to **perform** on the stage.
- As for us now, the **College Entrance Examination** is also a **stage**.
- So strive to write **the best version of your play** and **perform with all your efforts**.
- Meantime, keep the **Pygmalion Effect** in mind.
- Always **believe you can achieve success** and your **belief will be granted**.



**THANKS**