

# The focus of the interactive oral henrik ibsen's

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The focus of the interactive oral Henrik Ibsen's 'Hedda Gabler' produced some very interesting and thought provoking concepts, highlighting to me the significance of time and place in which the play is written. The discussion began on the subject of literary realism, and how Ibsen's uses representations of actual human beings, rather than the common use of romanticised and stylized characters.

This led me to think about whether, due to a different culture and period, the play was designed for a specific social content which we no longer really understand. Setting, clothing and dialogue were specifically chosen with the intent of revealing each character's psychological desire and deeper meaning. We concluded that this may be partly true, however one main focus of the play was Hedda's frustration in conforming to social standards and lack of women's rights; as Charlotte pointed out there is only so much you can adapt without taking away this focus, and therefore changing the whole interpretation of the play. My interest was extended when Gigi introduced the side of Hedda as a symbol for the 'new woman' movement at the time. When related to context, I was intrigued by the use of Hedda as a symbol of change, as one of the first major women roles to rebel against societies stereotypes; as a mother, a housewife and be powerless to her sovereign, men. The discussion then moved to focus on Ibsen's influence for creating such a controversial character.

The suffering of women was an ever-present theme throughout the book, I was able to draw connections as to where Ibsen's inspirations came from, his mother-in-law, the leader of the feminist movement in Norway and his mother, where he first learned the struggles in which women endure and the

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sacrifices they must make, especially regarding occupation. This is mirrored through Hedda's frustration of being 'destitute'. My understanding was furthered by connections in Ibsen's personal life, at a young age Ibsen's father suffered various financial issues resulting in his family moving to a smaller house, this struggle with social descent is explicitly shown in Hedda, along with Miss Tesman who sacrifices her own financial status to aid her nephew. Furthermore, Ibsen suffered himself from depression, his works during this time became much more morbid, and we see thoughts of suicide in Hedda Gabler which perhaps mirror Ibsen's psychological state.