

# The our town by thorton wilder

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**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

1 Our Town 26 November Our Town Our Town written by Thorton Wilder is one of the famous American plays that was written with the belief of the human spirit and produced in 1938 which received Pulitzer Prize for literature. It is an unconventional work that has no scenery or costume or sound effects except tables and chairs and ladders to simulate the events happening on stage.

When actors dine they hold imaginary utensils and eat imaginary food. When they introduce a milkman delivering milk from his horse cart the audience just hear clip clops and whinnies. The play is portrayed in such a way that the audiences are forced to concentrate on the characters and the theme of the play. The play delivers useful life lessons relevant to any generation.

#### Overview

#### Act 1:

The Usual routine of people living in Grover's Corner, a fictional small town in New Hampshire, United States.

The play begins with the commentator also called the stage manager who narrates the

simple life of the people in the town with the milkman and the newspaper boy delivering milk packets and paper. The town people spend their time eating their meals, working in town, doing household chores, gardening, gossiping, going to school, attending choir practice and gazing at the moon light.

Then the stage manager introduces two families who are neighbors in that town.

(i) Dr. Gibbs, who is a physician, Mrs. Gibbs, his wife, George and Rebecca

their children.

(ii) Mr. Webb, who runs the town's newsletter, Mrs. Webb, his wife, Emily and Wally their children.

Emily Webb and George Gibbs are school friends who chat across their open windows and share about everything happening in their lives. Their fondness for each other is very well known.

The play also introduces another character called Simon Stimson, a church organist who is mostly drunk and looks troubled. Others could only feel sorry for the man but couldn't help him out of his situation. The first part of the play gets over with Rebecca chatting with her brother George.

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Act 2:

The Blissful life of love and the perplexed Institution of marriage:

The second act begins with the marriage proposal between George and Emily. The Stage manager explains how their romance bloomed 3 years before when George was the captain of base ball and Emily was elected student body treasurer and secretary and how both would meet after school at the soda shop and how one day they revealed their love for each other.

The wedding commences and the scene shifts to the bride and the groom who are

scared and skeptical about entering into married life. Both their parents calm their fears and Emily and George become husband and wife.

Act 3:

The death and loss of their loved one Emily:

The Final act happens in a cemetery 9 years after Emily and George's

marriage where a dozen people sit on the chairs arranged in rows. They are all dead people of the town. Among the dead are civil war veterans who fought to keep the United States united. Also among the dead are Mrs. Gibbs who died while visiting her daughter, Wally Webb who died of appendix while being young, and Simon Stimson who hanged himself because of worldly troubles.

The act then displays a funeral procession of Emily Webb who died while giving birth to her second child. The spirit of Emily walks away from the living and joins the dead and sits next to Mrs. Gibbs. They talk about how people live their lives grieving about their troubles. The dead are no longer emotionally connected to their feelings of love or hatred, joy or sorrow. They seem to be looking into the future waiting for the eternal life that is ahead.

“ But soon we shall die and all memory of those will have left the earth, and we ourselves shall be loved for a while and forgotten. But the love will have been enough; all those impulses of love return to the love that made them. Even memory is not necessary for love. There is a land of the living and a land of the dead and the bridge is love, the only survival, the only meaning.”— (Thornton Wilder)

Emily wishes to return to the world of the living to relive her 12th birthday celebration when life seemed beautiful and wonderful and realizes how the little acts of love showed by her parents went unnoticed by her and how that really matters but she chooses to go back to the grave. The dead believe that life is both painful and wonderful and feel that people on earth don't really understand the precious gift of life.

Theme of the play:

The play reminds us that nothing in life is permanent and that all our slogging to become rich, famous and educated is a mere waste and how there is something eternal related to human beings after death as the spirits let go of their memories and identities and wean away from the ambitions and pleasures they had, the pain they had suffered and the people they loved. The author emphasis on the fact that people must enjoy their everyday life and appreciate it and must find happiness in whatever they do.

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“ Oh, earth, youre too wonderful for anybody to realize you. Do any human beings ever realize life while they live it -- every, every minute?” —

(Thornton Wilder)

He reminds the audience that time flies and requests them to seize each day and every moment and to cherish their lives and to love one another. Life is too short and fleeting and that everybody will have an eternal life to look for after death and that nobody realizes the beauty of our world until we are gone.

Characters:

The Stage Manager: The Commentator, who sets up the stage, introduces the characters and provides background information during the play.

Charles Webb: Editor of Grover's corner sentinel.

Myrtle Webb: Devoted wife of Charles.

Emily Webb: Pretty, Intelligent girl who marries George her next neighbor.

Wally Webb: Little brother of Emily who dies of appendix while young.

Frank Gibbs: Physician who is hard worked and disciplined.

Julia Gibbs: Wife of Gibbs who feels that they should take a vacation out of their hectic life.

George Gibbs: Son of Gibbs, a baseball player and husband of Emily.

Rebecca: Sister of George.

Simon Stimson: Church organist, an alcoholic who commits suicide.

Works cited:

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