**MASTER 1 LCAPA: DRAMA AND THE DRAMATIC**

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**SAMPLE FOR STUDY:**

* Obotunde IJIMERE,“ Everyman” in ***The Imprisonment of Obatala and Other Plays***, (London Heinemann, 1978:45-78).

**Introduction**

Idiom is he words and phrases we use in talking about literature. The idiom is never a mere set of descriptive terms, since it implies standards, values and preferences. Drama and dramatic are among these descriptive terms. Drama is used to means plays, while dramatic directs us to characteristic of plays, and takes on, within the prevalent tradition. Reading a play is a sophisticated activity.

Drama certainly derives from everyday life, but it is not the same thing as everyday life. It is a condensation from everyday life (visible and invisible), whose many aspects it attempts to manifest, embody, or affirm. It is in this sense that drama is an art form.

1. **Language and situation**

Dramatic language has force and immediacy. Its function is also to create **the setting**, the world within which the action takes place. **The nature of a play’s world** determine what can happen within the play, limits the possible situations, the range or depth of the action. These limits are what critics of drama used to call decorum.

Every play, in a sense, establishes its own **decorum**, partly by demonstrating in itself the conventions within which it is to be judged, partly by placing itself in a particular relation to other plays. The way in which language creates situation and embodies action can be seen in “**Everyma**n” (pp. 45-78), a play by OBOTUNDE IJIMERE in ***The Imprisonment of Obatala and Other Plays*** (1978). It is characteristic of dramatic dialogue at its best that each utterance seems of **conflic**t (tension between characters) and in another a **collaboration** (clarifying the nature of the situation). The contrast between surface and interior worlds is of great importance in drama; what separates the eponymous character Everyman from everyone else in the play, is the acute sense of dimensions of human experience of which no one else in the play is aware of except the Priest and heaven. This is the significant of the traditional idea expressed in “Everyman” or implied in the religious idea of the world as the theatre of God’s judgment. The Prologue is an **object-lesson** in the dramatic economy.

1. **Action and Tension.**

**Tensio**n is a word which is bound to recur in any discussion of drama. We naturally speak of a **tense situation** when we wish to convey the feeling that the state of affairs might at any moment be transformed into something crucially different.

There are many different kinds of tension in drama- between different ways in which a speech may be understood (**dramatic irony**), between two characters, and so on- but the underlying, continuous tension is that between the situation at a given moment and the complete action. Another simple means of creating dramatic **tension is suspense and surprise**, the sudden introduction of a new element into an established situation, so as to immediately transform it.

You have to evaluate the dramatist’s methods of showing the tensions, threats and suspense which govern the behaviour of the characters

1. **Character and Idea**

 Drama normally consists of people doing and saying things in fashion that is carefully contrived by the dramatist

1. Language and theme
2. Language and character
3. Language, thought and action

In “**Everyman**”, there some characters, mysterious character who have a certain “**roundness and integrity**” or “which invites psychological explanation. Stock characters may of course, be described as dramatic clichés, in contrast with those characters who have undeniable individuality.

1. **Dramatic Technique/Style**

OBOTUNDE IJIMERE made use of a number of dramatic techniques in the presentation of this play, “**Everyman**”.

1. **Aside**-it is a situation where a character speaks to the hearing of the audience but his fellow actors are presumed not to hear him.
2. **Foreshadow**-Obotunde used the foreshadowing technique to add to the suspense in the play.
3. **Suspense**-“**Everyman**” is filled with suspense.
4. **Allusion-**References to religious Events to provide understanding and insight into the attitude and utterances of the characters

**Themes**

1. Death is inevitable
2. Response to duty
3. Theme of usury
4. The distinction between wish and reality
5. Theme of pride
6. Theme of poverty
7. Theme of loneliness

**ASSIGNMENTS**

1. Discuss in detail one of the major themes ( cf *Themes*).