Henrik Ibsen's bio

Sydney, Colin, Judit
Basic Info

- Born on March 20, 1828 in Skien, Norway.
- Discovered himself as an author while working as a pharmacist’s apprentice.
- Exiled and moved to Italy in 1862.
- By 1891, he returned to Norway as a literary hero.
- Died on May 23, 1906.
- Often considered as “the father of modern theater” and one of the founders of Modernism in theatre.
Childhood

- Oldest of five children.
- Born to Knud & Marichen Ibsen.
- Father was a successful merchant but an alcoholic
- Mother was a painter and piano player who suffered from depression
- Forced to leave school at the age of fifteen
- At the age of 16 left his family
  - this can be seen in *A Doll House* through Nora
Personal life

- Married in 1885 Suzannah Daae Thoresen
- Had a son named Sigurd
- In 1888 he fathered a child with a maid
- Provided some financial support for last child, but never met him
Writing in Exile

- Disappointed from life in Norway, Ibsen went to Italy in 1864 and didn’t return for 27 years.
- During his exile, he wrote his breakthrough drama “Brands”, which gave him great financial success.
- He moved to Germany and had his first drama, “The Pillars of Society”, performed.
- Launched his play, “A Doll’s House” in 1868.
Style of writing

- "While living in Norway for much of his youth, Ibsen experienced the horrors of poverty, loneliness, and disgrace of himself, his family, and his country" (Henrik Ibsen: The Father of Modern Drama).
- Due to many troubles Ibsen faced during his life, the tone of his works is depressing.
- Main topics of his writings were money, lies, and family issues.
- Many characters within his works had psychological problems.
- Ibsen's writings represent a contemplation of people's need to live differently than they do.
- Deep undercurrent of desperation in his work.
"Helmer. Before all else, you are a wife and a mother.

Nora. I don't believe that any longer. I believe that before all else I am a reasonable human being, just as you are..."
Influences

● When Ibsen was young, Norwegian author, Henrik Wergeland was a widely known poet and playwright. Wergeland, along with other Norwegian folk tales influenced Ibsen to write more plays.

● Ibsen was inspired by the social issues, particularly the oppression of women in marriage. He believed that women should retain the role of mothers and wives but he saw the injustice in marriage.
  ○ This can be seen as the play revolves around a typical housewife who becomes disillusioned and dissatisfied with her condescending husband.
Early works

- 1850 - *Catiline* (Catilina)
- 1850 - *The Burial Mound* also known as *The Warrior's Barrow* (Kjæmpehøjen)
- 1851 - *Norma* (Norma)
- 1852 - *St. John's Eve* (Sancthansnatten)
- 1854 - *Lady Inger of Oestraat* (Fru Inger til Østeraad)
- 1855 - *The Feast at Solhaug* (Gildet paa Solhoug)
- 1856 - *Olaf Liljekrans* (Olaf Liljekrans)
Question 1

What is one of Ibsen’s techniques that was covered in this powerpoint that can be traced throughout the play?

For example: realism (use quotes to support your answer)
Question 1

Realism: Mrs. Linde: "You must not forget that I had a helpless mother and two little brothers. We couldn't wait for you, Nils; your prospects seemed hopeless then." (3.22)
Question 2

What is an event in Ibsen’s life that was covered in this presentation that can be seen in one of the characters in “A Doll House”? (Use quotes to support your answer.)
Question 2

- In the play, Mrs. Linde was forced to work hard her entire life and was hardly able to provide for her and her family. This can be seen in Ibsen’s life as he grew up in poverty and was forced to quit school and start working at a young age.
- Ibsen also borrowed money from a friend in order to move to Italy for some time just like Nora borrowed money from Krogstad.
Question 3

How did Ibsen include his social perspective and opinion of marriage in the play?
Question 3

Ibsen included his opinion on marriage in the play by showing how the demeaning nature of Helmer had an effect on Nora. "I have often wished that you might be threatened by some great danger, so that I might risk my life's blood, and everything, for your sake." Helmer makes Nora appear weak and helpless throughout the entire play. Nora is constantly undermined by Helmer and is seen as an inferior being this can also be seen through the name calling.
Work cite