CLASSICS LIBRARY · STORY MAP

Hedda Gabler, The Master Builder and The Wild Duck

Henrik Ibsen · *1884–1892 · Edmund Gosse and William Archer (Hedda Gabler; The Master Builder); Eleanor Marx-Aveling (The Wild Duck)*

Upon my word, I don't believe they are stirring yet! Miss Tesman listens at the door, and Hedda Gabler has not yet appeared. The hosted file is three plays: Gosse and Archer's Hedda Gabler and The Master Builder, and Eleanor Marx-Aveling's The Wild Duck. For grades 11–12. Quote the plays, not Archer's introductions. Tact.

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

How should a school read these three late Ibsen plays together—as distinct works, in two English versions, without flattening Hedda, Solness, or the Ekdal house into a single modern slogan?

"Upon my word, I don't believe they are stirring yet! BERTA. [Also softly.] I"

Hedda Gabler, Act I, Miss Tesman

The file opens, after a long Archer introduction, in Hedda Gabler: Miss Tesman speaks softly at the door. The second play is The Master Builder, in the same Gosse-and-Archer English; the third is The Wild Duck, translated by Eleanor Marx-Aveling. Name all three, and both English versions. Teach each as itself, for grades 11–12, with tact. These houses are under strain; do not make a spectacle of the last acts, and do not quote the introductions as if they were the plays. Hedda and The Master Builder also stand in another hosted Ibsen file; quote the file you are in.

KEY CHARACTERS

Miss Tesman, and Berta
Who open Hedda Gabler, waiting at a door that is not yet the play's center

Hedda Tesman (Hedda Gabler)
A general's daughter in a scholar's new house; teach her as Ibsen wrote her, not as a slogan. Gravity at the close

Halvard Solness, and Knut Brovik
The master builder, and the old assistant who cannot bear the waiting

The Ekdals, and Mrs. Sörby
The photographer's household, and the woman who first calls the guests to punch in The Wild Duck

A LOW VOICE AT A CLOSED DOOR

> *"Upon my word, I don't believe they are stirring yet! BERTA. [Also softly.] I"*
> Hedda Gabler, Act I, Miss Tesman

Grades 11–12
Read the full text free at classicslaunch.org.

01

Three Plays, Two English Versions

THE FILE AS A WHOLE

Project Gutenberg #4093, #4070, and #73631 are united here. Hedda Gabler and The Master Builder are Gosse and Archer; The Wild Duck is Eleanor Marx-Aveling. Introductions stand first; quote the plays.

- For grades 11–12. Tact; no prurience on the map.
- Do not treat Archer's prefaces as the text to memorize.
- The other Ibsen collection in this library also holds Hedda, The Master Builder, and The Wild Duck; quote the file you are in.
- Name the translator of the play you are reading.

> *"Upon my word, I don't believe they are stirring yet! BERTA. [Also softly.] I"*
> Hedda Gabler, Act I, Miss Tesman

02

A Door, Not Yet Open

HEDDA GABLER, ACT I

Miss Tesman has arrived early, with Berta, in the Tesmans' new drawing-room. Hedda is still asleep after a late arrival. The play will be about a woman in a house that is not the life she wanted.

- The first spoken line is exact, including "don't believe they are stirring yet."
- Translator: Gosse and Archer. Quote this English.
- Teach Hedda as a person, not as a later slogan. Gravity at the close; no spectacle.
- 11–12.

> *"Upon my word, I don't believe they are stirring yet! BERTA. [Also softly.] I"*
> Hedda Gabler, Act I, Miss Tesman

03

I Can't Bear It Much Longer

THE MASTER BUILDER, ACT I

In Solness's work-room, Knut Brovik rises from the plans, ill, and will not go until he has it out with the chief. The play is about a builder, a young woman who comes back, and a house that is also a test of nerve.

- The first spoken line is Brovik's, not Solness's.
- Same translators as Hedda: Gosse and Archer.
- Hilda Wangel belongs to the play as Ibsen wrote her; tact; no prurience.
- The close needs gravity, not a thrill.

> *"No, I can't bear it much longer! KAIA. [Going up"*
> The Master Builder, Act I, Brovik

04

A Glass of Punch

THE WILD DUCK, ACT I

At Werle's house, Mrs. Sörby calls the guests in for punch, and a cigar is already a small law. The play will move to Ekdal's studio, a girl, and a wild duck in an attic. Eleanor Marx-Aveling is the translator of this play.

- The first spoken line is exact. Keep this file's wording of Mrs. Sörby / Mrs. Sorby as printed in the line you quote.
- Hedvig is fourteen in this play; teach the close with especial gravity. No spectacle.
- Do not skip the attic for a theme only.
- 11–12.

> *"This way, please, gentlemen. Anyone who wants a glass of punch must come here for it."*
> The Wild Duck, Act I, Mrs. Sörby

05

This File, and the Other Ibsen File

THE EDITION

A second hosted collection, A Doll's House and Other Plays, also contains Hedda, The Master Builder, and The Wild Duck, with other plays. If you assign those three, know which file you are quoting.

- Honesty about the overlap.
- Quote Gosse and Archer, or Marx-Aveling, as this file prints them.
- Not a later film.
- Complete plays, as hosted.

> *"Upon my word, I don't believe they are stirring yet! BERTA. [Also softly.] I"*
> Hedda Gabler, Act I, Miss Tesman

Three Late Plays · Houses Under Strain · A Builder's Nerve · An Attic, and a Child · Gravity, Not Spectacle

What to watch for as you read

GRADES 11–12

1. This file is three plays: Gosse and Archer's Hedda Gabler and The Master Builder (PG #4093, #4070), and Eleanor Marx-Aveling's The Wild Duck (#73631). Name both English versions. Quote the plays, not Archer's introductions. For grades 11–12.
2. Hedda Gabler opens: "Upon my word, I don't believe they are stirring yet!" Miss Tesman is at the door. Teach Hedda as a person, not a later slogan. Gravity at the close; no spectacle.
3. The Master Builder opens with Brovik: "No, I can't bear it much longer!" The Wild Duck opens at Werle's, with a call to punch. Hedvig's close needs especial gravity.
4. A Doll's House and Other Plays, in this library, also holds Hedda, The Master Builder, and The Wild Duck. Quote the file you are in.
5. Tact. No prurience on the map. Not a later film.

Quotations are verbatim from the Edmund Gosse and William Archer (Hedda Gabler; The Master Builder); Eleanor Marx-Aveling (The Wild Duck), Project Gutenberg #4093, #4070, #73631, the public-domain text hosted at classicslaunch.org/works/ibsen-hedda-gabler-master-builder-wild-duck/. Citations give book and chapter (or canto and line) so every line can be checked.