

# the shape of things play analysis

## The Shape of Things: A Play Analysis Delving into Power, Perception, and Art

### Introduction:

Neil LaBute's *The Shape of Things* isn't your typical love story. This provocative play, rife with complex characters and unsettling dynamics, explores the potent interplay of power, perception, manipulation, and the blurry lines between art and life. This in-depth analysis will dissect the play's core themes, examining the characters' motivations, their evolving relationships, and the ultimately disturbing implications of LaBute's unsettling narrative. We'll unpack the symbolism, explore the ethical dilemmas, and ultimately, challenge you to contemplate the lasting impact of *The Shape of Things* long after the curtain falls. This post provides a comprehensive exploration, perfect for students, theatre enthusiasts, and anyone intrigued by the complexities of human relationships and the power of artistic expression.

### I. Deconstructing the Power Dynamics: Evelyn and Adam's Unequal Relationship

From the outset, *The Shape of Things* establishes an unbalanced power dynamic between Evelyn, the alluring art student, and Adam, the initially naive and insecure museum worker. Evelyn's manipulative charm subtly, then overtly, controls Adam. Her artistic vision becomes a vehicle for reshaping not only his physical appearance but also his identity, his values, and his entire worldview. LaBute masterfully showcases how Evelyn's seemingly benevolent acts of "transformation" are, in reality, calculated steps in a larger plan of control. The gradual erosion of Adam's self-confidence, fueled by Evelyn's manipulation, highlights the vulnerability inherent in romantic relationships when one partner holds significantly more power. The play leaves the audience to grapple with the uncomfortable reality of how easily someone can be manipulated, particularly when blinded by attraction and desire.

### II. The Blurred Lines Between Art and Life: Evelyn's Sculpting of Adam

Evelyn's artistic project isn't confined to the gallery space; it extends into Adam's life, transforming him into a living sculpture. This blurring of art and reality is a central theme. Her influence is pervasive, extending to his hairstyle, clothing choices, and even his social interactions. The play questions the ethical implications of using a real person as the subject of such a controlling and invasive artistic endeavor. Does the artistic merit justify the violation of personal boundaries? The audience is forced to confront this uncomfortable question, recognizing that Evelyn's artistic ambition ultimately compromises Adam's autonomy and self-worth.

### III. The Role of Perception and Deception: Unreliable Narrators and Shifting Realities

LaBute employs the technique of unreliable narrators, particularly through Adam's perspective. Adam's initial perceptions of Evelyn are skewed by his own insecurities and desire for validation. He

readily accepts her manipulation, interpreting her actions through a lens of romance rather than control. This highlights the dangers of selective perception and the ease with which individuals can be deceived, particularly when their desires cloud their judgment. The play compels us to question the reliability of our own perceptions and to critically analyze the information presented to us. The narrative deliberately leaves gaps, allowing for multiple interpretations and reinforcing the theme of manipulation and deception.

#### IV. The Significance of Jenny and Phillip: Foils and Counterpoints

Jenny and Phillip, Adam's friends, serve as crucial foils to Adam and Evelyn's relationship. They offer a contrasting perspective, highlighting the unhealthy dynamics at play. Jenny's grounded and realistic approach offers a stark contrast to Evelyn's manipulative tactics. Phillip's cynicism further underscores the potential for deception and the dangers of unquestioning acceptance of others' motives. These characters provide a crucial counterpoint, enabling the audience to better understand the ethical implications of Evelyn's actions and the unsettling nature of Adam's complicity.

#### V. The Unsettling Conclusion and its Interpretations: A Lasting Impact

The play's ambiguous ending leaves the audience with lingering questions and allows for multiple interpretations. Did Evelyn genuinely care for Adam, or was her entire project solely a calculated exercise in artistic manipulation? The unsettling conclusion forces a prolonged reflection on the complexities of the relationships portrayed, the ambiguity of motivations, and the lasting impact of manipulation. The open-endedness emphasizes the lasting effects of the events on the characters, prompting audiences to ponder the consequences of their actions long after the play concludes.

#### VI. Symbolism and Motifs: Unpacking the Deeper Meanings

The Shape of Things is rich with symbolism and recurring motifs. The act of sculpting and shaping itself symbolizes the control Evelyn exerts over Adam. The museum setting serves as a backdrop against which the artificiality and constructed nature of Evelyn's project are highlighted. The play also utilizes visual imagery to emphasize the themes of transformation and manipulation, adding layers of meaning to the narrative. Analyzing these symbolic elements enhances a deeper comprehension of the play's central themes.

#### VII. Thematic Resonance: Relevance to Contemporary Society

The themes explored in The Shape of Things remain strikingly relevant to contemporary society. Issues of power dynamics, manipulation, the objectification of individuals, and the ethical boundaries of art continue to resonate. The play serves as a cautionary tale, reminding audiences of the importance of self-awareness, critical thinking, and the need to protect oneself from manipulative individuals. Its timeless themes ensure its continuing relevance for audiences across generations.

#### A Sample Play Analysis Outline:

Title: A Deep Dive into Neil LaBute's The Shape of Things

## I. Introduction:

Brief overview of *The Shape of Things* and its central themes.

Statement of the analysis's purpose and approach.

## II. Character Analysis:

Evelyn: Motivations, methods of manipulation, artistic vision.

Adam: Initial naiveté, evolving self-perception, complicity.

Jenny and Phillip: Their roles as foils and contrasting perspectives.

## III. Thematic Exploration:

Power dynamics and control.

The blurring of art and life.

Perception, deception, and unreliable narration.

Ethical implications of Evelyn's actions.

## IV. Symbolic Analysis:

Sculpting as a metaphor for control.

The museum setting as a symbolic backdrop.

Recurring visual imagery and their significance.

## V. Conclusion:

Summary of key findings and interpretations.

Reflections on the play's lasting impact and relevance.

## Detailed Explanation of Outline Points (Expanded from above):

Each point in the outline above would be elaborated upon in a similar fashion to the sections already presented in this blog post. For example, the "Character Analysis" section would delve deeper into the individual motivations of each character, providing textual evidence to support the analysis. Similarly, the "Thematic Exploration" section would provide detailed explanations of the key themes, linking them to specific scenes and dialogue within the play. The "Symbolic Analysis" would carefully examine the use of symbolism and motifs, offering interpretations based on textual evidence and dramatic context. The conclusion would synthesize the findings of the analysis, offering a coherent interpretation of the play's complex narrative and thematic concerns.

## FAQs:

1. What is the central conflict in *The Shape of Things*? The central conflict revolves around the manipulative relationship between Evelyn and Adam, exploring themes of power, control, and the blurred lines between art and life.
1. Is Evelyn a villain? Whether Evelyn is a villain is a matter of interpretation. Her actions are undeniably manipulative and exploitative, but the play doesn't offer a simple good vs. evil dichotomy.

1. What is the significance of Adam's transformation? Adam's transformation symbolizes the extent of Evelyn's control and the erosion of his self-identity.
1. How does the play use unreliable narration? Adam's perspective is presented as unreliable, as his perceptions are skewed by his own desires and insecurities.
1. What are the ethical implications of Evelyn's art? The play raises serious ethical questions about the use of a real person as the subject of an invasive and controlling artistic project.
1. What is the role of Jenny and Phillip in the play? Jenny and Phillip provide contrasting viewpoints, highlighting the unhealthy dynamics of Adam and Evelyn's relationship.
1. What is the meaning of the ambiguous ending? The ambiguous ending leaves room for multiple interpretations, emphasizing the lasting impact of the events and the complexities of the characters' motives.
1. What are some important symbols in the play? The act of sculpting, the museum setting, and recurring visual imagery are all significant symbols.
1. What is the contemporary relevance of *The Shape of Things*? The play's themes of power dynamics, manipulation, and the ethical boundaries of art remain strikingly relevant to contemporary society.

#### Related Articles:

1. Neil LaBute's Plays: A Critical Overview: An examination of LaBute's dramatic works, exploring recurring themes and stylistic choices.

1. The Power of Manipulation in Contemporary Theatre: A discussion of manipulative characters and relationships in modern plays.
1. Art and Ethics: A Philosophical Inquiry: An exploration of the ethical considerations involved in artistic creation and expression.
1. Unreliable Narration in Modern Drama: An analysis of the technique of unreliable narration and its use in contemporary plays.
1. Gender Dynamics in Neil LaBute's Work: A focus on gender roles and power relationships in LaBute's dramatic output.
1. Symbolism in *The Shape of Things*: A Detailed Analysis: A closer look at the symbolic elements of the play, with detailed interpretations.
1. The Psychological Impact of Manipulation: An exploration of the psychological effects of manipulative behavior on individuals.
1. A Comparative Study of *The Shape of Things* and other LaBute Plays: Comparing this play with other works by the same author to identify patterns and differences.
1. The Reception and Critical Response to *The Shape of Things*: Exploring reviews and critical interpretations of the play since its inception.

**the shape of things play analysis:** *The Shape of Things* Neil LaBute, 2001-11-15 How far would you go for love? For art? What would you be willing to change? Which price might you pay? Such are the painful questions explored by Neil Labute in *The Shape of Things*. A young student drifts into an ever-changing relationship with an art major while his best friends' engagement crumbles, so unleashing a drama that peels back the skin of two modern-day relationships, exposing

the raw meat and gristle that lie beneath. The world premi re of *The Shape of Things* was presented at the Almeida, London, in May 2001.

**the shape of things play analysis: *The Shape of Things to Come*** H. G. Wells, 2016-09-14  
First published in 1933, *The Shape of Things to Come* is science fiction novel written by H. G. Wells. Within it, world events between 1933 and 2106 are speculated with a single superstate representing the solution to all humanity's problems. A classic example of Wellsian prophesy, this volume is highly recommended for fans of his work and of the science fiction genre. Herbert George Wells (1866 - 1946) was a prolific English writer who wrote in a variety of genres, including the novel, politics, history, and social commentary. Today, he is perhaps best remembered for his contributions to the science fiction genre thanks to such novels as *The Time Machine* (1895), *The Invisible Man* (1897), and *The War of the Worlds* (1898). Many vintage books such as this are becoming increasingly scarce and expensive. We are republishing this book now in an affordable, modern, high-quality edition complete with a specially commissioned new biography of the author.

**the shape of things play analysis: *Reasons to be Pretty*** Neil LaBute, 2009 THE STORY: A love story about the impossibility of love, REASONS TO BE PRETTY introduces us to Greg, who really, truly adores his girlfriend, Steph. Unfortunately, he also thinks she has a few physical imperfections, and when he casually mentions t

**the shape of things play analysis: *The Shape of the Ruins*** Juan Gabriel Vasquez, 2018-09-25  
SHORTLISTED FOR THE 2019 MAN BOOKER INTERNATIONAL PRIZE A sweeping tale of conspiracy theories, assassinations, and twisted obsessions -- the much anticipated masterpiece from Juan Gabriel Vásquez. *The Shape of the Ruins* is a masterly story of conspiracy, political obsession, and literary investigation. When a man is arrested at a museum for attempting to steal the bullet-ridden suit of a murdered Colombian politician, few notice. But soon this thwarted theft takes on greater meaning as it becomes a thread in a widening web of popular fixations with conspiracy theories, assassinations, and historical secrets; and it haunts those who feel that only they know the real truth behind these killings. This novel explores the darkest moments of a country's past and brings to life the ways in which past violence shapes our present lives. A compulsive read, beautiful and profound, eerily relevant to our times and deeply personal, *The Shape of the Ruins* is a tour-de-force story by a master at uncovering the incisive wounds of our memories.

**the shape of things play analysis: *Look Both Ways*** Jason Reynolds, 2020-10-27 A collection of ten short stories that all take place in the same day about kids walking home from school--

**the shape of things play analysis: *A Little Piece of Ground*** Elizabeth Laird, 2016-02-01 A Little Piece Of Ground will help young readers understand more about one of the worst conflicts afflicting our world today. Written by Elizabeth Laird, one of Great Britain's best-known young adult authors, *A Little Piece Of Ground* explores the human cost of the occupation of Palestinian lands through the eyes of a young boy. Twelve-year-old Karim Aboudi and his family are trapped in their Ramallah home by a strict curfew. In response to a Palestinian suicide bombing, the Israeli military subjects the West Bank town to a virtual siege. Meanwhile, Karim, trapped at home with his teenage brother and fearful parents, longs to play football with his friends. When the curfew ends, he and his friend discover an unused patch of ground that's the perfect site for a football pitch. Nearby, an old car hidden intact under bulldozed building makes a brilliant den. But in this city there's constant danger, even for schoolboys. And when Israeli soldiers find Karim outside during the next curfew, it seems impossible that he will survive. This powerful book fills a substantial gap in existing young adult literature on the Middle East. With 23,000 copies already sold in the United Kingdom and Canada, this book is sure to find a wide audience among young adult readers in the United States.

**the shape of things play analysis: *The Skin of Our Teeth*** Thornton Wilder, 1972 An Eternal Family narrowly escape one disaster after another, from ancient times to the present. Meet George and Maggie Antrobus (married only 5,000 years); their two children, Gladys and Henry (perfect in every way!); and their maid, Sabina (the ageless vamp) as they overcome ice, flood, and war -- by the skin of their teeth.--Amazon

**the shape of things play analysis: *The Shape of the Pain*** Chris Thorpe, Rachel Bagshaw,

2018-02-20 One woman attempts to articulate her experience of physical pain. Pain with no apparent cause. Also, she's met someone, and they want to make this work. Words, light and an original sound score collide in a new piece from this Scotsman Fringe First award-winning team - exploring life in extremity, and the joy that can be found there.

**the shape of things play analysis: Mrs. Dalloway** Virginia Woolf, 2023-12-16 Mrs Dalloway, Virginia Woolf's fourth novel, offers the reader an impression of a single June day in London in 1923. Clarissa Dalloway, the wife of a Conservative member of parliament, is preparing to give an evening party, while the shell-shocked Septimus Warren Smith hears the birds in Regent's Park chattering in Greek. There seems to be nothing, except perhaps London, to link Clarissa and Septimus. She is middle-aged and prosperous, with a sheltered happy life behind her; Smith is young, poor, and driven to hatred of himself and the whole human race. Yet both share a terror of existence, and sense the pull of death. The world of Mrs Dalloway is evoked in Woolf's famous stream of consciousness style, in a lyrical and haunting language which has made this, from its publication in 1925, one of her most popular novels.

**the shape of things play analysis: The Things They Carried** Tim O'Brien, 2009-10-13 A classic work of American literature that has not stopped changing minds and lives since it burst onto the literary scene, *The Things They Carried* is a ground-breaking meditation on war, memory, imagination, and the redemptive power of storytelling. *The Things They Carried* depicts the men of Alpha Company: Jimmy Cross, Henry Dobbins, Rat Kiley, Mitchell Sanders, Norman Bowker, Kiowa, and the character Tim O'Brien, who has survived his tour in Vietnam to become a father and writer at the age of forty-three. Taught everywhere—from high school classrooms to graduate seminars in creative writing—it has become required reading for any American and continues to challenge readers in their perceptions of fact and fiction, war and peace, courage and fear and longing. *The Things They Carried* won France's prestigious Prix du Meilleur Livre Etranger and the Chicago Tribune Heartland Prize; it was also a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Critics Circle Award.

**the shape of things play analysis: Shape** Jordan Ellenberg, 2021-05-25 An instant New York Times Bestseller! "Unreasonably entertaining . . . reveals how geometric thinking can allow for everything from fairer American elections to better pandemic planning." —The New York Times From the New York Times-bestselling author of *How Not to Be Wrong*—himself a world-class geometer—a far-ranging exploration of the power of geometry, which turns out to help us think better about practically everything. How should a democracy choose its representatives? How can you stop a pandemic from sweeping the world? How do computers learn to play Go, and why is learning Go so much easier for them than learning to read a sentence? Can ancient Greek proportions predict the stock market? (Sorry, no.) What should your kids learn in school if they really want to learn to think? All these are questions about geometry. For real. If you're like most people, geometry is a sterile and dimly remembered exercise you gladly left behind in the dust of ninth grade, along with your braces and active romantic interest in pop singers. If you recall any of it, it's plodding through a series of miniscule steps only to prove some fact about triangles that was obvious to you in the first place. That's not geometry. Okay, it is geometry, but only a tiny part, which has as much to do with geometry in all its flush modern richness as conjugating a verb has to do with a great novel. *Shape* reveals the geometry underneath some of the most important scientific, political, and philosophical problems we face. Geometry asks: Where are things? Which things are near each other? How can you get from one thing to another thing? Those are important questions. The word geometry comes from the Greek for measuring the world. If anything, that's an undersell. Geometry doesn't just measure the world—it explains it. *Shape* shows us how.

**the shape of things play analysis: Things Fall Apart** Chinua Achebe, 1994-09-01 "A true classic of world literature . . . A masterpiece that has inspired generations of writers in Nigeria, across Africa, and around the world." —Barack Obama "African literature is incomplete and unthinkable without the works of Chinua Achebe." —Toni Morrison Nominated as one of America's best-loved novels by PBS's *The Great American Read* *Things Fall Apart* is the first of three novels in

Chinua Achebe's critically acclaimed African Trilogy. It is a classic narrative about Africa's cataclysmic encounter with Europe as it establishes a colonial presence on the continent. Told through the fictional experiences of Okonkwo, a wealthy and fearless Igbo warrior of Umuofia in the late 1800s, *Things Fall Apart* explores one man's futile resistance to the devaluing of his Igbo traditions by British political and religious forces and his despair as his community capitulates to the powerful new order. With more than 20 million copies sold and translated into fifty-seven languages, *Things Fall Apart* provides one of the most illuminating and permanent monuments to African experience. Achebe does not only capture life in a pre-colonial African village, he conveys the tragedy of the loss of that world while broadening our understanding of our contemporary realities.

**the shape of things play analysis:** *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* Mark Haddon, 2009-02-24 A bestselling modern classic—both poignant and funny—narrated by a fifteen year old autistic savant obsessed with Sherlock Holmes, this dazzling novel weaves together an old-fashioned mystery, a contemporary coming-of-age story, and a fascinating excursion into a mind incapable of processing emotions. Christopher John Francis Boone knows all the countries of the world and their capitals and every prime number up to 7,057. Although gifted with a superbly logical brain, Christopher is autistic. Everyday interactions and admonishments have little meaning for him. At fifteen, Christopher's carefully constructed world falls apart when he finds his neighbour's dog Wellington impaled on a garden fork, and he is initially blamed for the killing. Christopher decides that he will track down the real killer, and turns to his favourite fictional character, the impeccably logical Sherlock Holmes, for inspiration. But the investigation leads him down some unexpected paths and ultimately brings him face to face with the dissolution of his parents' marriage. As Christopher tries to deal with the crisis within his own family, the narrative draws readers into the workings of Christopher's mind. And herein lies the key to the brilliance of Mark Haddon's choice of narrator: The most wrenching of emotional moments are chronicled by a boy who cannot fathom emotions. The effect is dazzling, making for one of the freshest debut in years: a comedy, a tearjerker, a mystery story, a novel of exceptional literary merit that is great fun to read.

**the shape of things play analysis:** *The God of Small Things* Arundhati Roy, 2011-07-27 The beloved debut novel about an affluent Indian family forever changed by one fateful day in 1969, from the author of *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • MAN BOOKER PRIZE WINNER Compared favorably to the works of Faulkner and Dickens, Arundhati Roy's modern classic is equal parts powerful family saga, forbidden love story, and piercing political drama. The seven-year-old twins Estha and Rahel see their world shaken irrevocably by the arrival of their beautiful young cousin, Sophie. It is an event that will lead to an illicit liaison and tragedies accidental and intentional, exposing "big things [that] lurk unsaid" in a country drifting dangerously toward unrest. Lush, lyrical, and unnerving, *The God of Small Things* is an award-winning landmark that started for its author an esteemed career of fiction and political commentary that continues unabated.

**the shape of things play analysis:** *This Thing Between Us* Gus Moreno, 2021-10-12 A surreal excursion into heartache and horror narrated by a man undone by grief . . . Along with allusions to Rod Serling and *The Exorcist*, there are shades of H. P. Lovecraft, Stephen King, zombie literature and, at least once, *A Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* . . . You don't want to read this book right before bed. —Sarah Lyall, *The New York Times Book Review* "This intense cosmic horror with a touch of Mexican American folklore is incredibly creepy and moving." —Margaret Kingsbury, *BuzzFeed* It was Vera's idea to buy the Itza. The "world's most advanced smart speaker!" didn't interest Thiago, but Vera thought it would be a bit of fun for them amidst all the strange occurrences happening in the condo. It made things worse. The cold spots and scratching in the walls were weird enough, but peculiar packages started showing up at the house—who ordered industrial lye? Then there was the eerie music at odd hours, Thiago waking up to Itza projecting light shows in an empty room. It was funny and strange right up until Vera was killed, and Thiago's world became unbearable. Pundits and politicians all looking to turn his wife's death into a symbol for their own agendas. A barrage of texts from her well-meaning friends about letting go and moving on. Waking



to the sound of Itza talking softly to someone in the living room . . . The only thing left to do was get far away from Chicago. Away from everything and everyone. A secluded cabin in Colorado seemed like the perfect place to hole up with his crushing grief. But soon Thiago realizes there is no escape—not from his guilt, not from his simmering rage, and not from the evil hunting him, feeding on his grief, determined to make its way into this world. A bold, original horror novel about grief, loneliness and the oppressive intimacy of technology, *This Thing Between Us* marks the arrival of a spectacular new talent.

**the shape of things play analysis: *The House on Mango Street*** Sandra Cisneros, 2013-04-30 NATIONAL BESTSELLER • A coming-of-age classic about a young girl growing up in Chicago • Acclaimed by critics, beloved by readers of all ages, taught in schools and universities alike, and translated around the world—from the winner of the 2019 PEN/Nabokov Award for Achievement in International Literature. “Cisneros draws on her rich [Latino] heritage...and seduces with precise, spare prose, creat[ing] unforgettable characters we want to lift off the page. She is not only a gifted writer, but an absolutely essential one.” —The New York Times Book Review *The House on Mango Street* is one of the most cherished novels of the last fifty years. Readers from all walks of life have fallen for the voice of Esperanza Cordero, growing up in Chicago and inventing for herself who and what she will become. “In English my name means hope,” she says. “In Spanish it means too many letters. It means sadness, it means waiting. Told in a series of vignettes—sometimes heartbreaking, sometimes joyous—Cisneros’s masterpiece is a classic story of childhood and self-discovery and one of the greatest neighborhood novels of all time. Like Sinclair Lewis’s *Main Street* or Toni Morrison’s *Sula*, it makes a world through people and their voices, and it does so in language that is poetic and direct. This gorgeous coming-of-age novel is a celebration of the power of telling one’s story and of being proud of where you’re from.

**the shape of things play analysis: *The Crane Wife*** CJ Hauser, 2022-07-12 A memoir in essays that expands on the viral sensation “The Crane Wife” with a frank and funny look at love, intimacy, and self in the twenty-first century. From friends and lovers to blood family and chosen family, this “elegant masterpiece” (Roxane Gay, New York Times bestselling author of *Hunger*) asks what more expansive definitions of love might offer us all. A BEST BOOK OF THE YEAR: TIME, THE GUARDIAN, GARDEN & GUN Hauser builds their life’s inventory out of deconstructed personal narratives, resulting in a reading experience that’s rich like a complicated dessert—not for wolfing down but for savoring in small bites. —The New York Times “Clever, heartfelt, and wrenching.” —Time “Brilliant.” —Oprah Daily Ten days after calling off their wedding, CJ Hauser went on an expedition to Texas to study the whooping crane. After a week wading through the gulf, they realized they’d almost signed up to live someone else’s life. What if you released yourself from traditional narratives of happiness? What if you looked for ways to leave room for the unexpected? In Hauser’s case, this meant dissecting pop culture touchstone, from *The Philadelphia Story* to *The X-Files*, to learn how not to lose yourself in a relationship. They attended a robot convention, contemplated grief at John Belushi’s gravesite, and officiated a wedding. Most importantly, they mapped the difference between the stories we’re asked to hold versus those we choose to carry. Told with the late-night barstool directness of your wisest, most bighearted friend, *The Crane Wife* is a book for everyone whose path doesn’t look the way they thought it would; for everyone learning to find joy in the not-knowing and to build a new sort of life story, a new sort of family, a new sort of home to live in.

**the shape of things play analysis: *Before We Were Strangers*** Renée Carlino, 2015-08-18 From the USA TODAY bestselling author of *Sweet Thing* and *Nowhere But Here* comes a love story about a Craigslist “missed connection” post that gives two people a second chance at love fifteen years after they were separated in New York City. To the Green-eyed Lovebird: We met fifteen years ago, almost to the day, when I moved my stuff into the NYU dorm room next to yours at Senior House. You called us fast friends. I like to think it was more. We lived on nothing but the excitement of finding ourselves through music (you were obsessed with Jeff Buckley), photography (I couldn’t stop taking pictures of you), hanging out in Washington Square Park, and all the weird things we did

to make money. I learned more about myself that year than any other. Yet, somehow, it all fell apart. We lost touch the summer after graduation when I went to South America to work for National Geographic. When I came back, you were gone. A part of me still wonders if I pushed you too hard after the wedding... I didn't see you again until a month ago. It was a Wednesday. You were rocking back on your heels, balancing on that thick yellow line that runs along the subway platform, waiting for the F train. I didn't know it was you until it was too late, and then you were gone. Again. You said my name; I saw it on your lips. I tried to will the train to stop, just so I could say hello. After seeing you, all of the youthful feelings and memories came flooding back to me, and now I've spent the better part of a month wondering what your life is like. I might be totally out of my mind, but would you like to get a drink with me and catch up on the last decade and a half? M

**the shape of things play analysis: Lord of the Flies** William Golding, 2012-09-20 A plane crashes on a desert island and the only survivors, a group of schoolboys, assemble on the beach and wait to be rescued. By day they inhabit a land of bright fantastic birds and dark blue seas, but at night their dreams are haunted by the image of a terrifying beast. As the boys' delicate sense of order fades, so their childish dreams are transformed into something more primitive, and their behaviour starts to take on a murderous, savage significance. First published in 1954, *Lord of the Flies* is one of the most celebrated and widely read of modern classics. Now fully revised and updated, this educational edition includes chapter summaries, comprehension questions, discussion points, classroom activities, a biographical profile of Golding, historical context relevant to the novel and an essay on *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding entitled 'Fable'. Aimed at Key Stage 3 and 4 students, it also includes a section on literary theory for advanced or A-level students. The educational edition encourages original and independent thinking while guiding the student through the text - ideal for use in the classroom and at home.

**the shape of things play analysis: The Book Thief** Markus Zusak, 2007-12-18 #1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • ONE OF TIME MAGAZINE'S 100 BEST YA BOOKS OF ALL TIME The extraordinary, beloved novel about the ability of books to feed the soul even in the darkest of times. When Death has a story to tell, you listen. It is 1939. Nazi Germany. The country is holding its breath. Death has never been busier, and will become busier still. Liesel Meminger is a foster girl living outside of Munich, who scratches out a meager existence for herself by stealing when she encounters something she can't resist—books. With the help of her accordion-playing foster father, she learns to read and shares her stolen books with her neighbors during bombing raids as well as with the Jewish man hidden in her basement. In superbly crafted writing that burns with intensity, award-winning author Markus Zusak, author of *I Am the Messenger*, has given us one of the most enduring stories of our time. "The kind of book that can be life-changing." —The New York Times "Deserves a place on the same shelf with *The Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank." —USA Today DON'T MISS BRIDGE OF CLAY, MARKUS ZUSAK'S FIRST NOVEL SINCE THE BOOK THIEF.

**the shape of things play analysis: Bud, Not Buddy** Christopher Paul Curtis, 2015-01-31 The Newbery Medal and Coretta Scott King Award-winning classic about a boy who decides to hit the road to find his father—from Christopher Paul Curtis, author of *The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963*, a Newbery and Coretta Scott King Honoree. It's 1936, in Flint Michigan. Times may be hard, and ten-year-old Bud may be a motherless boy on the run, but Bud's got a few things going for him: 1. He has his own suitcase full of special things. 2. He's the author of Bud Caldwell's *Rules and Things for Having a Funner Life and Making a Better Liar Out of Yourself*. 3. His momma never told him who his father was, but she left a clue: flyers advertising Herman E. Calloway and his famous band, the Dusky Devastators of the Depression!!!!!! Bud's got an idea that those flyers will lead him to his father. Once he decides to hit the road to find this mystery man, nothing can stop him—not hunger, not fear, not vampires, not even Herman E. Calloway himself. AN ALA BEST BOOK FOR YOUNG ADULTS AN ALA NOTABLE CHILDREN'S BOOK AN IRA CHILDREN'S BOOK AWARD WINNER NAMED TO 14 STATE AWARD LISTS "The book is a gem, of value to all ages, not just the young people to whom it is aimed." —The Christian Science Monitor "Will keep readers engrossed from first page to last." —Publishers Weekly, Starred "Curtis writes with a razor-sharp intelligence

that grabs the reader by the heart and never lets go. . . . This highly recommended title [is] at the top of the list of books to be read again and again.” —Voice of Youth Advocates, Starred From the Hardcover edition.

**the shape of things play analysis:** *Zero History* William Gibson, 2010-09-07 Hollis Henry never intended to work for global marketing magnate Hubertus Bigend again. But now she's broke, and Bigend has just the thing to get her back in the game... Milgrim can disappear in almost any setting, and his Russian is perfectly idiomatic—so much so that he spoke it with his therapist in the secret Swiss clinic where Bigend paid for him to be cured of his addiction... Garreth doesn't owe Bigend a thing. But he does have friends from whom he can call in the kinds of favors powerful people need when things go sideways... They all have something Bigend wants as he finds himself outmaneuvered and adrift, after a Department of Defense contract for combat-wear turns out to be the gateway drug for arms dealers so shadowy they can out-Bigend Bigend himself. “Zero History is [Gibson's] best yet, a triumph of science fiction as social criticism and adventure.”—BoingBoing.net

**the shape of things play analysis:** *The Catcher in the Rye* J. D. Salinger, 2024-06-28 *The Catcher in the Rye*, written by J.D. Salinger and published in 1951, is a classic American novel that explores the themes of adolescence, alienation, and identity through the eyes of its protagonist, Holden Caulfield. The novel is set in the 1950s and follows Holden, a 16-year-old who has just been expelled from his prep school, Pencey Prep. Disillusioned with the world around him, Holden decides to leave Pencey early and spend a few days alone in New York City before returning home. Over the course of these days, Holden interacts with various people, including old friends, a former teacher, and strangers, all the while grappling with his feelings of loneliness and dissatisfaction. Holden is deeply troubled by the “phoniness” of the adult world and is haunted by the death of his younger brother, Allie, which has left a lasting impact on him. He fantasizes about being “the catcher in the rye,” a guardian who saves children from losing their innocence by catching them before they fall off a cliff into adulthood. The novel ends with Holden in a mental institution, where he is being treated for a nervous breakdown. He expresses some hope for the future, indicating a possible path to recovery..

**the shape of things play analysis:** *The Shape of Inner Space* Shing-Tung Yau, Steven J. Nadis, 2010-09-07 The leading mind behind the mathematics of string theory discusses how geometry explains the universe we see. Illustrations.

**the shape of things play analysis:** *Fences* August Wilson, 2019-08-06 From legendary playwright August Wilson comes the powerful, stunning dramatic bestseller that won him critical acclaim, including the Tony Award for Best Play and the Pulitzer Prize. Troy Maxson is a strong man, a hard man. He has had to be to survive. Troy Maxson has gone through life in an America where to be proud and black is to face pressures that could crush a man, body and soul. But the 1950s are yielding to the new spirit of liberation in the 1960s, a spirit that is changing the world Troy Maxson has learned to deal with the only way he can, a spirit that is making him a stranger, angry and afraid, in a world he never knew and to a wife and son he understands less and less. This is a modern classic, a book that deals with the impossibly difficult themes of race in America, set during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 60s. Now an Academy Award-winning film directed by and starring Denzel Washington, along with Academy Award and Golden Globe winner Viola Davis.

**the shape of things play analysis:** *Small Things Like These* Claire Keegan, 2021-11-30 Shortlisted for the 2022 Booker Prize A hypnotic and electrifying Irish tale that transcends country, transcends time. —Lily King, New York Times bestselling author of *Writers & Lovers* *Small Things Like These* is award-winning author Claire Keegan's landmark new novel, a tale of one man's courage and a remarkable portrait of love and family It is 1985 in a small Irish town. During the weeks leading up to Christmas, Bill Furlong, a coal merchant and family man faces into his busiest season. Early one morning, while delivering an order to the local convent, Bill makes a discovery which forces him to confront both his past and the complicit silences of a town controlled by the church. An international bestseller, *Small Things Like These* is a deeply affecting story of hope, quiet heroism, and empathy from one of our most critically lauded and iconic writers.

**the shape of things play analysis:** The Lieutenant of Inishmore Martin McDonagh, 2003 A family is the subject of THE ARCHITECTURE OF LOSS, Ms. Cho's touching new play...[The] scenes are very strong; they run deep. --NY Times. ...THE ARCHITECTURE OF LOSS is the kind of play one wishes there were more of: totally unpretentious, of the utmost s

**the shape of things play analysis:** *Sula* Toni Morrison, 2002-04-05 From the acclaimed Nobel Prize winner: Two girls who grow up to become women. Two friends who become something worse than enemies. This brilliantly imagined novel brings us the story of Nel Wright and Sula Peace, who meet as children in the small town of Medallion, Ohio. Nel and Sula's devotion is fierce enough to withstand bullies and the burden of a dreadful secret. It endures even after Nel has grown up to be a pillar of the black community and Sula has become a pariah. But their friendship ends in an unforgivable betrayal—or does it end? Terrifying, comic, ribald and tragic, *Sula* is a work that overflows with life.

**the shape of things play analysis:** *Sunday in the Park with George* , 1991 (Applause Libretto Library). This 1995 Pulitzer Prize-winning musical was inspired by the painting *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte* by Georges Seurat. A complex work revolving around a fictionalized Seurat immersed in single-minded concentration while painting the masterpiece, the production has evolved into a meditation on art, emotional connection, and community. This publication contains the entire script of the musical. *Sunday* is itself a modernist creation, perhaps the first truly modernist work of musical theatre that Broadway has produced ... a watershed event that demands nothing less than a retrospective, even revisionist, look at the development of the serious Broadway musical. Frank Rich, *The New York Times Magazine*

**the shape of things play analysis:** *Bash* Neil LaBute, 1999-11-01 Neil LaBute burst onto the American theater scene with the premiere of *BASH* at NYC's Douglas Fairbanks Theater in 1999 in a wildly praised production that featured Calista Flockhart, Paul Rudd, and Ron Eldard. It went on to play at the Almeida Theatre in London and since then has seen hundreds of productions across the U.S. and around the world. These three provocative one-act plays examine the complexities of evil in everyday life and thrillingly exhibit LaBute's signature raw lyrical intensity. Ablaze with the muscular dialogue and searing artistry that immediately established him as a major playwright, *BASH* is enduringly brilliant—classic and essential Neil LaBute. In *Medea Redux*, a young woman relates her complex and ultimately tragic relationship with her high school English teacher; in *Iphigenia in Orem*, a businessman confides to a stranger in a Las Vegas hotel room about a chilling crime; and in *A Gagggle of Saints*, a young couple separately recounts the violent events of an anniversary weekend in New York City.

**the shape of things play analysis:** *The Infinite Game* Simon Sinek, 2019-10-15 From the New York Times bestselling author of *Start With Why* and *Leaders Eat Last*, a bold framework for leadership in today's ever-changing world. How do we win a game that has no end? Finite games, like football or chess, have known players, fixed rules and a clear endpoint. The winners and losers are easily identified. Infinite games, games with no finish line, like business or politics, or life itself, have players who come and go. The rules of an infinite game are changeable while infinite games have no defined endpoint. There are no winners or losers—only ahead and behind. The question is, how do we play to succeed in the game we're in? In this revelatory new book, Simon Sinek offers a framework for leading with an infinite mindset. On one hand, none of us can resist the fleeting thrills of a promotion earned or a tournament won, yet these rewards fade quickly. In pursuit of a Just Cause, we will commit to a vision of a future world so appealing that we will build it week after week, month after month, year after year. Although we do not know the exact form this world will take, working toward it gives our work and our life meaning. Leaders who embrace an infinite mindset build stronger, more innovative, more inspiring organizations. Ultimately, they are the ones who lead us into the future.

**the shape of things play analysis:** *All the Light We Cannot See* Anthony Doerr, 2014-05-06 \*NOW A NETFLIX LIMITED SERIES—from producer and director Shawn Levy (*Stranger Things*) starring Mark Ruffalo, Hugh Laurie, and newcomer Aria Mia Loberti\* Winner of the Pulitzer Prize

and National Book Award finalist, the beloved instant New York Times bestseller and New York Times Book Review Top 10 Book about a blind French girl and a German boy whose paths collide in occupied France as both try to survive the devastation of World War II. Marie-Laure lives with her father in Paris near the Museum of Natural History where he works as the master of its thousands of locks. When she is six, Marie-Laure goes blind and her father builds a perfect miniature of their neighborhood so she can memorize it by touch and navigate her way home. When she is twelve, the Nazis occupy Paris, and father and daughter flee to the walled citadel of Saint-Malo, where Marie-Laure's reclusive great uncle lives in a tall house by the sea. With them they carry what might be the museum's most valuable and dangerous jewel. In a mining town in Germany, the orphan Werner grows up with his younger sister, enchanted by a crude radio they find. Werner becomes an expert at building and fixing these crucial new instruments, a talent that wins him a place at a brutal academy for Hitler Youth, then a special assignment to track the Resistance. More and more aware of the human cost of his intelligence, Werner travels through the heart of the war and, finally, into Saint-Malo, where his story and Marie-Laure's converge. Doerr's "stunning sense of physical detail and gorgeous metaphors" (San Francisco Chronicle) are dazzling. Deftly interweaving the lives of Marie-Laure and Werner, he illuminates the ways, against all odds, people try to be good to one another. Ten years in the writing, *All the Light We Cannot See* is a magnificent, deeply moving novel from a writer "whose sentences never fail to thrill" (Los Angeles Times).

**the shape of things play analysis:** *The Color Purple* Alice Walker, 2011-09-20 The Pulitzer Prize- and National Book Award-winning novel is now a new, boldly reimagined film from producers Oprah Winfrey and Steven Spielberg, starring Taraji P. Henson, Danielle Brooks, and Fantasia Barrino. A PBS Great American Read Top 100 Pick Celie has grown up poor in rural Georgia, despised by the society around her and abused by her own family. She strives to protect her sister, Nettie, from a similar fate, and while Nettie escapes to a new life as a missionary in Africa, Celie is left behind without her best friend and confidante, married off to an older suitor, and sentenced to a life alone with a harsh and brutal husband. In an attempt to transcend a life that often seems too much to bear, Celie begins writing letters directly to God. The letters, spanning 20 years, record a journey of self-discovery and empowerment guided by the light of a few strong women. She meets Shug Avery, her husband's mistress and a jazz singer with a zest for life, and her stepson's wife, Sofia, who challenges her to fight for independence. And though the many letters from Celie's sister are hidden by her husband, Nettie's unwavering support will prove to be the most breathtaking of all. *The Color Purple* has sold more than five million copies, inspired an Academy Award-nominated film starring Oprah Winfrey and directed by Steven Spielberg, and been adapted into a Tony-winning Broadway musical. Lauded as a literary masterpiece, this is the groundbreaking novel that placed Walker "in the company of Faulkner" (The Nation), and remains a wrenching—yet intensely uplifting—experience for new generations of readers. This ebook features a new introduction written by the author on the 25th anniversary of publication, and an illustrated biography of Alice Walker including rare photos from the author's personal collection. *The Color Purple* is the 1st book in the *Color Purple Collection*, which also includes *The Temple of My Familiar* and *Possessing the Secret of Joy*.

**the shape of things play analysis: Shaping Things** Bruce Sterling, 2005 A guide to the next great wave of technology -- an era of objects so programmable that they can be regarded as material instantiations of an immaterial system.

**the shape of things play analysis:** *Out of My Mind* Sharon M. Draper, 2024-10-08 From a multiple Coretta Scott King Award-winning author comes the story of a brilliant girl that no one knows about because she cannot speak or write. If there is one book teens and parents (and everyone else) should read this year, *Out of My Mind* should be it. O--Denver Post.

**the shape of things play analysis: The Thing in the Forest (Storycuts)** A S Byatt, 2011-11-17 Leaves rustle underfoot in a dark wood: two little girls, extracted from their homes in wartime London, encounter something terrifying in a forest. Later when they meet as grown women, they realise the experience has coloured their lives. A dark tale about the nature of stories

themselves. Part of the Storycuts series, this short story was originally published in the collection Little Black Book of Stories.

**the shape of things play analysis:** Arrow Sumita Chakraborty, 2020-09-24 Winner of the Seamus Heaney First Collection Poetry Prize 2021 Shortlisted for the Michael Murphy Memorial Poetry Prize 2021 Arrow is a debut volume extraordinary in ambition, range and achievement. At its centre is 'Dear, beloved', a more-than-elegy for her younger sister who died suddenly: in the two years she took to write the poem, much else came into play: 'it was my hope to write the mood of elegy rather than an elegy proper,' following the example of the great elegists including Milton, to whose Paradise Lost she listened during the period of composition, also hearing the strains of Brigit Pegeen Kelly's Song, of Alice Oswald and Marie Howe. The poem becomes a kind of kingdom, 'one that is at once evil, or blighted, and beautiful, not to mention everything in between'. As well as elegy, Chakraborty composes invocations, verse essays, and the strange extended miracle of the title poem, in which ancient and modern history, memory and the lived moment, are held in a directed balance. It celebrates the natural forces of the world and the rapt experience of balance, form and - love. She declares a marked admiration for poems that 'will write into being a world that already in some way exists'. This is what her poems achieve.

**the shape of things play analysis:** Great Expectations Charles Dickens, 2010-05-01

**the shape of things play analysis:** How Should One Read a Book? Virginia Woolf, 2021-11-24 First delivered as a speech to schoolgirls in Kent in 1926, this enchanting short essay by the towering Modernist writer Virginia Woolf celebrates the importance of the written word. With a measured but ardent tone, Woolf weaves together thought and quote, verse and prose into a moving tract on the power literature can have over its reader, in a way which still resounds with truth today. I have sometimes dreamt, at least, that when the Day of Judgement dawns and the great conquerors and lawyers and statesmen come to receive their rewards - their crowns, their laurels, their names carved indelibly upon imperishable marble - the Almighty will turn to Peter and will say, not without a certain envy when he sees us coming with our books under our arms, "Look, these need no reward. We have nothing to give them here. They have loved reading."

**the shape of things play analysis:** The Poisonwood Bible Barbara Kingsolver, 2009-10-13 New York Times Bestseller • Finalist for the Pulitzer Prize • An Oprah's Book Club Selection "Powerful . . . [Kingsolver] has with infinitely steady hands worked the prickly threads of religion, politics, race, sin and redemption into a thing of terrible beauty." —Los Angeles Times Book Review The Poisonwood Bible, now celebrating its 25th anniversary, established Barbara Kingsolver as one of the most thoughtful and daring of modern writers. Taking its place alongside the classic works of postcolonial literature, it is a suspenseful epic of one family's tragic undoing and remarkable reconstruction over the course of three decades in Africa. The story is told by the wife and four daughters of Nathan Price, a fierce, evangelical Baptist who takes his family and mission to the Belgian Congo in 1959. They carry with them everything they believe they will need from home, but soon find that all of it—from garden seeds to Scripture—is calamitously transformed on African soil. The novel is set against one of the most dramatic political chronicles of the twentieth century: the Congo's fight for independence from Belgium, the murder of its first elected prime minister, the CIA coup to install his replacement, and the insidious progress of a world economic order that robs the fledgling African nation of its autonomy. Against this backdrop, Orleana Price reconstructs the story of her evangelist husband's part in the Western assault on Africa, a tale indelibly darkened by her own losses and unanswerable questions about her own culpability. Also narrating the story, by turns, are her four daughters—the teenaged Rachel; adolescent twins Leah and Adah; and Ruth May, a prescient five-year-old. These sharply observant girls, who arrive in the Congo with racial preconceptions forged in 1950s Georgia, will be marked in surprisingly different ways by their father's intractable mission, and by Africa itself. Ultimately each must strike her own separate path to salvation. Their passionately intertwined stories become a compelling exploration of moral risk and personal responsibility.

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