

PYGMALION

BY GEORGE
BERNARD SHAW



DOREEN, HAFIZAN & SOFEA

STORY REVIEW

- One rainy night in London's Covent Garden market, a crowd of people gathers in front of the church to wait out the storm.
- Among them are two ladies (Mrs. Eynsford Hill and Miss Eynsford Hill), Freddy, their son/brother, a flower girl (Eliza Doolittle), a gentleman (Colonel Pickering), and The Note Taker (Henry Higgins).
- A commotion starts after Eliza mistakes Higgins for a policeman and protests her innocence.

- Higgins steps forward and reveals himself to be a gifted linguist. He and Pickering, another gifted linguist who just so happens to be in town to see Higgins, introduce themselves.
- Higgins tells Pickering he could turn Eliza into a duchess in six months. The two give Eliza some money, and she takes a cab home.
- The next day, Higgins and Pickering are sitting in Higgins's laboratory when Eliza comes in and demands speech lessons. Pickering bets Higgins he can't turn Eliza into a duchess; Higgins takes the bet.
- Mrs. Pearce, Higgins's housekeeper, is a bit disturbed, but she can't do anything. Alfred Doolittle, Eliza's father, comes in and demands some cash in exchange for, well, the right to teach his daughter.

- He's a smooth talker and he's soon got the money, but his exit is interrupted by the appearance of Eliza, now clean (and beautiful). Everyone gapes in awe, Doolittle leaves, and Higgins and Pickering decide they've got a lot of work to do.
- A couple months pass. Higgins visits his mother and asks for her help. Mrs. Higgins is having a party, and he wants to bring Eliza along to it to see if she can handle herself like a lady in public.
- Mrs. Higgins objects, but Eliza comes in anyway. Her speech is flawless, but her grammar is not.
- When she deviates from the script, she shocks and/or amuses those in attendance: the Eynsford Hills, Colonel Pickering, Higgins, and...well, that's it.

- Higgins gives Eliza the signal to leave and, after the party's over, Mrs. Higgins warns him and Pickering about the possible dangers of their little experiment. They, of course, don't listen.
- A few more months pass. Higgins, Pickering, and Eliza return from a night of partying.
- Higgins, it seems, has won the bet, and he and Pickering are so busy discussing the evening that they forget to even congratulate Eliza.
- When Higgins is about to head off to bed, Eliza gets angry and throws his slippers at him.
- The two argue for a while – it seems Eliza's worried about her future – until Eliza annoys Higgins so much that he nearly hits her. She smiles, delighted to have made him so angry.

- The next morning, Higgins shows up at his mother's house in a fury. Eliza is missing, and he can't do anything without her.
- Mrs. Higgins tells him to act his age, but their conversation is interrupted by the appearance of Doolittle, who's come into a lot of money since the last time we saw him.
- Mrs. Higgins says Doolittle can take care of Eliza now that he has money. Higgins objects.

- Eliza comes down – turns out she was upstairs the whole time – and proceeds to ignore Higgins.
- When everybody leaves to go see Doolittle get married for the umpteenth time, Higgins and Eliza get into another argument.
- She still doesn't know what to do with herself. Higgins suggests she get married, maybe even to Pickering.
- Eliza says no way, and threatens to marry Freddy, or maybe even go into competition with him as a speech teacher.
- Higgins nearly strangles her, only to realize that her anger has now made her his equal.
- Eliza says goodbye for what she says is the last time, but Higgins is sure she'll be back.

The background features a gradient from deep red at the top to dark blue at the bottom, speckled with white dots. Overlaid on this are several faint, white circular and semi-circular patterns, some with arrows indicating a clockwise direction. A large, semi-circular scale with numerical markings (40, 150, 160, 170, 180, 190, 200, 210, 220, 230, 240, 250, 260) is visible on the left side.

CHARACTERIZ ATION

PROFESSOR HENRY HIGGINS



- Henry Higgins is a professor of phonetics.
- He is the author of Higgins' Universal Alphabet, believes in concepts like visible speech, and uses all manner of recording and photographic material to document his phonetic subjects, reducing people and their dialects into what he sees as readily understandable units.
- He is an unconventional man, who goes in the opposite direction from the rest of society in most matters.
- Indeed, he is impatient with high society, forgetful in his public graces, and poorly considerate of normal social niceties- the only reason the world has not turned against him is because he is at heart a good and harmless man.
- His biggest fault is that he can be a bully.

ELIZA DOOLITTLE



- "She is not at all a romantic figure." Everything about Eliza Doolittle seems to defy any conventional notions we might have about the romantic heroine.
- In other words, the character of Eliza Doolittle comes across as being much more instrumental than fundamental.
- The real (re-)making of Eliza Doolittle happens after the ambassador's party, when she decides to make a statement for her own dignity against Higgins' insensitive treatment.
- This is when she becomes, not a duchess, but an independent woman; and this explains why Higgins begins to see Eliza not as a mill around his neck but as a creature worthy of his admiration.

COLONEL PICKERING



- Colonel Pickering, the author of Spoken Sanskrit, is a match for Higgins (although somewhat less obsessive) in his passion for phonetics.
- But where Higgins is a boorish, careless bully, Pickering is always considerate and a genuinely gentleman. He says little of note in the play, and appears most of all to be a civilized foil to Higgins' barefoot, absentminded crazy professor.
- He helps in the Eliza Doolittle experiment by making a wager of it, saying he will cover the costs of the experiment if Higgins does indeed make a convincing duchess of her.
- However, while Higgins only manages to teach Eliza pronunciations, it is Pickering's thoughtful treatment towards Eliza that teaches her to respect herself.

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CONFLICTS OR ISSUES

- There are several conflicts worth mentioning in this play. First, Professor Higgins and Colonel Pickering have a playful "bet" that Higgins can't make a common flower girl speak and act like a duchess.
- There is the issue of language, pronunciation and what we actually hear and say as opposed to what we think we hear and say.
- There is also the issue when Eliza Doolittle does want to improve her situation in life, but is rather stuck in her position as flower girl since her income fluctuates and her education is limited.
- There is the issue of what to do with Eliza once she learns to speak and act properly. She can't go back to selling flowers, yet she has no real place among the aristocratic society she has been trained to infiltrate.

- There is the conflict with Higgins and everyone else -including his mother- since he is considerably rude and isn't really the ideal role model for Eliza's "proper" education.
- There is also the minor conflict of Eliza's father, who has come into some money himself (which he gets for exchange of his daughter) and is struggling about his impending marriage and adjusting to suddenly becoming "a gentleman".
- There is also the conflict of Eliza's romantic feelings for Higgins and for Freddy whom she meets at one of the outings to test her ability to fool others into thinking that she is high society.

they were someone other
“than themselves. The
transformations these
people wish for are in hopes
of improving their looks,
social status, or bank
accounts.”

In the play, *Pygmalion*, George Bernard Shaw approaches a different transformation. The transformation is improving upon the character, Eliza Doolittle's speech.

END OF SLIDE.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR
ATTENTION 😊