

The characters

1. Before reading the play, look through the following stage directions which are written before we see each character for the first time. What first impressions do you get of each character? Make notes and be prepared to share them with the rest of the group.
2. After reading, or seeing, the play, re-consider these descriptions of the characters and your notes. Are the characters as you expected them to be? In what ways, if any, are they the same or different?
3. Why do you think Ibsen has depicted the characters as he has? Remember that all authors create characters in a particular way for a reason; think about, and comment on, Ibsen's intentions.

Miss Juliana Tesman, wearing a hat and carrying a parasol, comes in from the hall, followed by Berta, who holds a bouquet wrapped in paper. Miss Tesman is a lady around sixty-five with a kind and good-natured look, nicely but simply dressed in a gray tailored suit.

Berta is a maid somewhat past middle age, with a plain and rather provincial appearance.

Hedda enters from the left through the inner room. She is a woman of twenty-nine. Her face and figure show breeding and distinction; her complexion is pallid and opaque. Her steel gray eyes express a cool, unruffled calm. Her hair is an attractive medium brown, but not particularly abundant. She wears a tasteful, rather loose-fitting gown.

George Tesman enters the inner room from the right, singing to himself and carrying an empty, unstrapped suitcase. He is a youngish-looking man of thirty-three, medium sized, with an open, round, cheerful face, blond hair and beard. He wears glasses and is somewhat carelessly dressed in comfortable lounging clothes.

Mrs Elvsted is a slender woman with soft, pretty features. Her eyes are light blue, large, round, and somewhat prominent, with a startled, questioning look. Her hair is remarkably light, almost a white-gold, and unusually abundant and wavy. She is a couple of years younger than Hedda. She wears a dark visiting dress, tasteful, but not quite in the latest fashion.

Judge Brack is a man of forty-five, thickset, yet well-built, with supple movements. His face is roundish, with a distinguished profile. His hair is short, still mostly black, and carefully groomed. His eyes are bright and lively. Thick eyebrows; a moustache to match, with neatly clipped ends. He wears a trimly tailored walking suit, a bit too youthful for his age. Uses a monocle, which he now and then lets fall.

Eilert Lovborg enters from the hall. He is lean and gaunt, the same age as Tesman, but looks older and somewhat run-down. His hair and beard are dark brown, his face long and pale, but with reddish patches over the cheekbones. He is dressed in a trim black suit, quite new, and holds dark gloves and a top hat in his hand. He hesitates by the door and bows abruptly. He seems somewhat embarrassed.