

LUIS VALDEZ  
**Los Vendidos**

Characters

HONEST SANCHO  
 SECRETARY  
 FARMWORKER

JOHNNY PACHUCO  
 REVOLUCIONARIO  
 MEXICAN-AMERICAN

*SCENE: HONEST SANCHO's Used Mexican Lot and Mexican Curio Shop. Three models are on display in HONEST SANCHO's shop. To the right, there is a REVOLUCIONARIO, complete with sombrero, carrilleras and carabina 30-30.<sup>o</sup> At center, on the floor, there is the FARMWORKER, under a broad straw sombrero. At stage left is the PACHUCO, filero<sup>o</sup> in hand. HONEST SANCHO is moving among his models, dusting them off and preparing for another day of business.*

SANCHO. Bueno, bueno, mis monos, vamos a ver a quién vendemos ahora, ¿no? *(To audience)* ¡Quihubo!<sup>o</sup> I'm Honest Sancho and this is my shop. Antes fui contratista, pero ahora logré mi negocio.<sup>o</sup> All I need now is a customer. *(A bell rings offstage.)* Ay, a customer!

SECRETARY *(entering)*. Good morning, I'm Miss Jimenez from . . .

SANCHO. Ah, una chicana! Welcome, welcome Señorita Jiménez.

SECRETARY *(Anglo pronunciation)*. JIM-enez.

SANCHO. ¿Qué?

SECRETARY. My name is Miss JIM-enez. Don't you speak English? What's wrong with you?

SANCHO. Oh, nothing, Señorita JIM-enez. I'm here to help you.

SECRETARY. That's better. As I was starting to say, I'm a secretary from Governor Reagan's office, and we're looking for a Mexican type for the administration.

LOS VENDIDOS First performed in 1967. The title may be translated both "men who are sold" and "the sellouts"—that is, traitors to the cause. Luis Valdez was born in 1940 in Delano, California, the son of migrant farmworkers (*campesinos*). Although his early education was interrupted by the need to work in the fields, he earned a B.A. in English from San Jose State College in 1964 and then joined the San Francisco Mime Troupe performing political and satirical plays in public parks. In 1965 he founded El Teatro Campesino in Delano to present satirical skits (called "Actos") in support of the farmworkers' cause and as a means of political protest. Like others of the Actos, "Los Vendidos" was presented free to an audience in a park. Subsequently, in 1972, it won an Emmy in a television production for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. At the time of its writing, Ronald Reagan was governor of California and another former film actor, George Murphy, was a U.S. senator.

carrilleras . . . 30-30: cartridge belts and 30-30 rifle filero: switchblade Bueno . . . Quihubo!: Good, good, my cuties, let's see who we can sell now. What's going on? Antes fui . . . negocio: I used to be a contractor, but now I run my little business.

SANCHO. Well, you come to the right place, lady. This is Honest Sancho's Used Mexican Lot, and we got all types here. Any particular type you want?

SECRETARY. Yes, we were looking for somebody suave . . .

SANCHO. Suave.

SECRETARY. Debonaire.

SANCHO. De buen aire.

SECRETARY. Dark.

SANCHO. Prieto.

SECRETARY. But of course, not too dark.

SANCHO. No muy prieto.

SECRETARY. Perhaps, beige.

SANCHO. Beige, just the tone. Así como cafecito con leche,<sup>o</sup> ¿no?

SECRETARY. One more thing. He must be hard-working.

SANCHO. That could only be one model. Step right over here to the center of the shop, lady. *(They cross to the FARMWORKER.)* This is our standard farmworker model. As you can see, in the words of our beloved Senator George Murphy, he is "built close to the ground." Also, take special notice of his 4-ply Goodyear huaraches,<sup>o</sup> made from the rain tire. This wide-brimmed sombrero is an extra added feature; keeps off the sun, rain and dust.

SECRETARY. Yes, it does look durable.

SANCHO. And our farmworker model is friendly. Muy amable.<sup>o</sup> Watch. *(Snaps his fingers.)*

FARMWORKER *(lifts up head)*. Buenos días, señorita. *(His head drops.)*

SECRETARY. My, he is friendly.

SANCHO. Didn't I tell you? Loves his patrones!<sup>o</sup> But his most attractive feature is that he's hard-working. Let me show you. *(Snaps fingers. FARMWORKER stands.)*

FARMWORKER. ¡El jale!<sup>o</sup> *(He begins to work.)*

SANCHO. As you can see he is cutting grapes.

SECRETARY. Oh, I wouldn't know.

SANCHO. He also picks cotton. *(Snaps. FARMWORKER begins to pick cotton.)*

SECRETARY. Versatile, isn't he?

SANCHO. He also picks melons. *(Snaps. FARMWORKER picks melons.)* That's his slow speed for late in the season. Here's his fast speed. *(Snap. FARMWORKER picks faster.)*

SECRETARY. Chihuahua.<sup>o</sup> . . . I mean, goodness, he sure is a hard-worker.

Así . . . leche: Like coffee with milk huaraches: sandals Muy amable: Very friendly patrones: bosses El jale: The job Chihuahua: Hot damn!

SANCHO (*pulls the FARMWORKER to his feet*). And that isn't the half of it. Do you see these little holes on his arms that appear to be pores? During those hot sluggish days in the field when the vines or the branches get so entangled, it's almost impossible to move, these holes emit a certain grease that allows our model to slip and slide right through the crop with no trouble at all.

SECRETARY. Wonderful. But is he economical?

SANCHO. Economical? Señorita, you are looking at the Volkswagen of Mexicans. Pennies a day is all it takes. One plate of beans and tortillas will keep him going all day. That, and chile. Plenty of chile. Chile jalapeños, chile verde, chile colorado. But, of course, if you do give him chile (*Snap*. FARMWORKER *turns left face*. *Snap*. FARMWORKER *bends over*), then you have to change his oil filter once a week.

SECRETARY. What about storage?

SANCHO. No problem. You know these new farm labor camps our Honorable Governor Reagan has built out by Parlier or Raisin City? They were designed with our model in mind. Five, six, seven, even ten in one of those shacks will give you no trouble at all. You can also put him in old barns, old cars, riverbanks. You can even leave him out in the field overnight with no worry!

SECRETARY. Remarkable.

SANCHO. And here's an added feature: every year at the end of the season, this model goes back to Mexico and doesn't return, automatically, until next spring.

SECRETARY. How about that. But tell me, does he speak English?

SANCHO. Another outstanding feature is that last year this model was programmed to go out on STRIKE! (*Snap*.)

FARMWORKER. ¡Huelga! ¡Huelga! Hermanos, sálganse de esos files.<sup>o</sup> (*Snap*. *He stops*.)

SECRETARY. No! Oh no, we can't strike in the State Capitol.

SANCHO. Well, he also scabs. (*Snap*.)

FARMWORKER. Me vendo barato, ¿y qué?<sup>o</sup> (*Snap*.)

SECRETARY. That's much better, but you didn't answer my question. Does he speak English?

SANCHO. Bueno . . . no, pero<sup>o</sup> he has other . . .

SECRETARY. No.

SANCHO. Other features.

SECRETARY. No! He just won't do!

SANCHO. Okay, okay, pues.<sup>o</sup> We have other models.

¡Huelga! . . . files: Strike! Strike! Brothers, leave those rows. Me vendo . . . qué?: My price is cheap, so what? Bueno . . . pero: Well, no, but pues: then

SECRETARY. I hope so. What we need is something a little more sophisticated.

SANCHO. Sophisti-qué?

SECRETARY. An urban model.

SANCHO. Ah, from the city! Step right back. Over here in this corner of the shop is exactly what you're looking for. Introducing our new 1969 Johnny Pachuco<sup>o</sup> model! This is our fast-back model. Streamlined. Built for speed, low-riding, city life. Take a look at some of these features. Mag shoes, dual exhausts, green chartreuse paint-job, dark-tint windshield, a little poof on top. Let me just turn him on. (*Snap*. JOHNNY *walks to stage center with a PACHUCO bounce*.)

SECRETARY. What was that?

SANCHO. That, señorita, was the Chicano shuffle.

SECRETARY. Okay, what does he do?

SANCHO. Anything and everything necessary for city life. For instance, survival: he knife fights. (*Snap*. JOHNNY *pulls out a switchblade and swings at SECRETARY*. SECRETARY *screams*.) He dances. (*Snap*.)

JOHNNY (*singing*). "Angel Baby, my Angel Baby . . ." (*Snap*.)

SANCHO. And here's a feature no city model can be without. He gets arrested, but not without resisting, of course. (*Snap*.)

JOHNNY. En la madre, la placa.<sup>o</sup> I didn't do it! I didn't do it! (JOHNNY *turns and stands up against an imaginary wall, legs spread out, arms behind his back*.)

SECRETARY. Oh no, we can't have arrests! We must maintain law and order.

SANCHO. But he's bilingual.

SECRETARY. Bilingual?

SANCHO. Simón que yes. He speaks English! Johnny, give us some English. (*Snap*.)

JOHNNY (*comes downstage*). Fuck-you!

SECRETARY (*gasps*). Oh! I've never been so insulted in my whole life!

SANCHO. Well, he learned it in your school.

SECRETARY. I don't care where he learned it.

SANCHO. But he's economical.

SECRETARY. Economical?

SANCHO. Nickels and dimes. You can keep Johnny running on hamburgers, Taco Bell tacos, Lucky Lager beer, Thunderbird wine, yesca . . .

SECRETARY. Yesca?

SANCHO. Mota.

SECRETARY. Mota?

SANCHO. Leños<sup>o</sup> . . . marijuana. (*Snap*. JOHNNY *inhales on an imaginary joint*.)

SECRETARY. That's against the law!

JOHNNY (*big smile, holding his breath*). Yeah.

Pachuco: a slang term for an urban tough En la . . . placa: Oh, oh, the cops Leños: Joints

SANCHO. He also sniffs glue. (*Snap. JOHNNY inhales glue, big smile.*)

JOHNNY. Tha's too much, man, ése.<sup>o</sup>

SECRETARY. No, Mr. Sancho, I don't think this . . .

SANCHO. Wait a minute, he has other qualities I know you'll love. For example, an inferiority complex. (*Snap.*)

JOHNNY (*to SANCHO*). You think you're better than me, huh, ése? (*Swings switchblade.*)

SANCHO. He can also be beaten and he bruises. Cut him and he bleeds, kick him and he . . . (*He beats, bruises and kicks PACHUCO.*) Would you like to try it?

SECRETARY. Oh, I couldn't.

SANCHO. Be my guest. He's a great scapegoat.

SECRETARY. No really.

SANCHO. Please.

SECRETARY. Well, all right. Just once. (*She kicks PACHUCO.*) Oh, he's so soft.

SANCHO. Wasn't that good? Try again.

SECRETARY (*kicks PACHUCO*). Oh, he's wonderful! (*She kicks him again.*)

SANCHO. Okay, that's enough, lady. You'll ruin the merchandise. Yes, our Johnny Pachuco model can give you many hours of pleasure. Why, the LAPD just bought twenty of these to train their rookie cops on. And talk about maintenance. Señorita, you are looking at an entirely self-supporting machine. You're never going to find our Johnny Pachuco model on the relief rolls. No, sir, this model knows how to liberate.

SECRETARY. Liberate?

SANCHO. He steals. (*Snap. JOHNNY rushes to SECRETARY and steals her purse.*)

JOHNNY. ¡Dame esa bolsa, vieja!<sup>o</sup> (*He grabs the purse and runs. Snap by SANCHO, he stops. SECRETARY runs after JOHNNY and grabs purse away from him, kicking him as she goes.*)

SECRETARY. No, no, no! We can't have any more thieves in the State Administration. Put him back.

SANCHO. Okay, we still got other models. Come on, Johnny, we'll sell you to some old lady. (*SANCHO takes JOHNNY back to his place.*)

SECRETARY. Mr. Sancho, I don't think you quite understand what we need. What we need is something that will attract the women voters. Something more traditional, more romantic.

SANCHO. Ah, a lover. (*He smiles meaningfully.*) Step right over here, señorita. Introducing our standard Revolucionario and/or Early California Bandit type. As you can see, he is well-built, sturdy, durable. This is the International Harvester of Mexicans.

SECRETARY. What does he do?

SANCHO. You name it, he does it. He rides horses, stays in the mountains, crosses deserts, plains, rivers, leads revolutions, follows revolutions, kills, can be killed, serves as a martyr, hero, movie star. Did I say movie star? Did you ever see *Viva Zapata?* *Viva Villa, Villa Rides. Pancho Villa Returns, Pancho Villa Goes Back, Pancho Villa Meets Abbott and Costello?*

SECRETARY. I've never seen any of those.

SANCHO. Well, he was in all of them. Listen to this. (*Snap.*)

REVOLUCIONARIO (*scream*). ¡Viva Villaaaaa!

SECRETARY. That's awfully loud.

SANCHO. He has a volume control. (*He adjusts volume. Snap.*)

REVOLUCIONARIO (*mousey voice*). Viva Villa.

SECRETARY. That's better.

SANCHO. And even if you didn't see him in the movies, perhaps you saw him on TV. He makes commercials. (*Snap.*)

REVOLUCIONARIO. Is there a Frito Bandito in your house?

SECRETARY. Oh, yes, I've seen that one!

SANCHO. Another feature about this one is that he is economical. He runs on raw horsemeat and tequila!

SECRETARY. Isn't that rather savage?

SANCHO. Al contrario,<sup>o</sup> it makes him a lover. (*Snap.*)

REVOLUCIONARIO (*to SECRETARY*). Ay, mamasota, cochota, ven pa 'ca!<sup>o</sup> (*He grabs SECRETARY and folds her back, Latin-lover style.*)

SANCHO (*Snap. REVOLUCIONARIO goes back upright*). Now wasn't that nice?

SECRETARY. Well, it was rather nice.

SANCHO. And finally, there is one outstanding feature about this model I know the ladies are going to love: he's a genuine antique! He was made in Mexico in 1910!

SECRETARY. Made in Mexico?

SANCHO. That's right. Once in Tijuana, twice in Guadalajara, three times in Cuernavaca.

SECRETARY. Mr. Sancho, I thought he was an American product.

SANCHO. No, but . . .

SECRETARY. No, I'm sorry. We can't buy anything but American<sup>®</sup> made products. He just won't do.

SANCHO. But he's an antique!

SECRETARY. I don't care. You still don't understand what we need. It's true we need Mexican models, such as these, but it's more important that he be American.

Al contrario: On the contrary Ay . . . pa 'ca: Hey, c'mere, big mama!

ése: man ¡Dame . . . vieja!: Give me that purse, old lady!

SANCHO. American?

SECRETARY. That's right, and judging from what you've shown me, I don't think you have what we want. Well, my lunch hour's almost over, I better . . .

SANCHO. Wait a minute! Mexican but American?

SECRETARY. That's correct.

SANCHO. Mexican but . . . *(A sudden flash.)* American! Yeah, I think we've got exactly what you want. He just came in today! Give me a minute. *(He exits. Talks from backstage.)* Here he is in the shop. Let me just get some papers off. There. Introducing our new 1970 Mexican-American! Ta-ra-ra-raaaa! *(SANCHO brings out the MEXICAN-AMERICAN model, a clean-shaven middle-class type in a business suit, with glasses.)*

SECRETARY *(impressed)*. Where have you been hiding this one?

SANCHO. He just came in this morning. Ain't he a beauty? Feast your eyes on him! Sturdy U.S. Steel frame, streamlined, modern. As a matter of fact, he is built exactly like our Anglo models, except that he comes in a variety of darker shades: naugahyde, leather or leatherette.

SECRETARY. Naugahyde.

SANCHO. Well, we'll just write that down. Yes, señorita, this model represents the apex of American engineering! He is bilingual, college educated, ambitious! Say the word "acculturate" and he accelerates. He is intelligent, well-mannered, clean. Did I say clean? *(Snap. MEXICAN-AMERICAN raises his arm.)* Smell.

SECRETARY *(smells)*. Old Sobaco, my favorite.

SANCHO *(Snap. MEXICAN-AMERICAN turns toward SANCHO)*. Eric? *(To SECRETARY)* We call him Eric García. *(To ERIC)* I want you to meet Miss JIM-enez, Eric.

MEXICAN-AMERICAN. Miss JIM-enez, I am delighted to make your acquaintance. *(He kisses her hand.)*

SECRETARY. Oh, my, how charming!

SANCHO. Did you feel the suction? He has seven especially engineered suction cups right behind his lips. He's a charmer all right!

SECRETARY. How about boards, does he function on boards?

SANCHO. You name them, he is on them. Parole boards, draft boards, school boards, taco quality control boards, surf boards, two by fours.

SECRETARY. Does he function in politics?

SANCHO. Señorita, you are looking at a political machine. Have you ever heard of the OEO, EOC, COD, WAR ON POVERTY? That's our model! Not only that, he makes political speeches.

SECRETARY. May I hear one?

SANCHO. With pleasure. *(Snap.)* Eric, give us a speech.

MEXICAN-AMERICAN. Mr. Congressman, Mr. Chairman, members of the board, honored guests, ladies and gentlemen. *(SANCHO and SECRETARY*

*applaud.)* Please, please. I come before you as a Mexican-American to tell you about the problems of the Mexican. The problems of the Mexican stem from one thing and one thing only: he's stupid. He's uneducated. He needs to stay in school. He needs to be ambitious, forward-looking, harder-working. He needs to think American, American, American, American, American! God bless America! God bless America! God bless America! *(He goes out of control. SANCHO snaps frantically and the MEXICAN-AMERICAN finally slumps forward, bending at the waist.)*

SECRETARY. Oh my, he's patriotic too!

SANCHO. Sí, señorita, he loves his country. Let me just make a little adjustment here. *(Stands MEXICAN-AMERICAN up.)*

SECRETARY. What about upkeep? Is he economical?

SANCHO. Well, no, I won't lie to you. The Mexican-American costs a little bit more, but you get what you pay for. He's worth every extra cent. You can keep him running on dry Martinis, Langendorf bread . . .

SECRETARY. Apple pie?

SANCHO. Only Mom's. Of course, he's also programmed to eat Mexican food at ceremonial functions, but I must warn you, an overdose of beans will plug up his exhaust.

SECRETARY. Fine! There's just one more question. How much do you want for him?

SANCHO. Well, I tell you what I'm gonna do. Today and today only, because you've been so sweet, I'm gonna let you steal this model from me! I'm gonna let you drive him off the lot for the simple price of, let's see, taxes and license included, \$15,000.

SECRETARY. Fifteen thousand dollars? For a Mexican!!!!

SANCHO. Mexican? What are you talking about? This is a Mexican-American! We had to melt down two pachucos, a farmworker and three gabachos<sup>o</sup> to make this model! You want quality, but you gotta pay for it! This is no cheap run-about. He's got class!

SECRETARY. Okay, I'll take him.

SANCHO. You will?

SECRETARY. Here's your money.

SANCHO. You mind if I count it?

SECRETARY. Go right ahead.

SANCHO. Well, you'll get your pink slip in the mail. Oh, do you want me to wrap him up for you? We have a box in the back.

SECRETARY. No, thank you. The Governor is having a luncheon this afternoon, and we need a brown face in the crowd. How do I drive him?

gabachos: whites

SANCHO. Just snap your fingers. He'll do anything you want. (SECRETARY *snaps*. MEXICAN-AMERICAN *steps forward*.)

MEXICAN-AMERICAN. ¡Raza querida, vamos levantando armas para liberarnos de estos desgraciados gabachos que nos explotan! Vamos . . . °

SECRETARY. What did he say?

SANCHO. Something about taking up arms, killing white people, etc.

SECRETARY. But he's not supposed to say that!

SANCHO. Look, lady, don't blame me for bugs from the factory. He's your Mexican-American, you bought him, now drive him off the lot!

SECRETARY. But he's broken!

SANCHO. Try snapping another finger. (SECRETARY *snaps*. MEXICAN-AMERICAN *comes to life again*.)

MEXICAN-AMERICAN. Esta gran humanidad ha dicho basta! ¡Y se ha puesto en marcha! ¡Basta! ¡Basta! ¡Viva la raza! ¡Viva la causa! ¡Viva la huelga! ¡Vivan los brown berets! ¡Vivan los estudiantes!° ¡Chicano power! (The MEXICAN-AMERICAN *turns toward the SECRETARY, who gasps and backs up. He keeps turning toward the PACHUCO, FARMWORKER and REVOLUCIONARIO, snapping his fingers and turning each of them on, one by one.*)

PACHUCO (*Snap. To SECRETARY*). I'm going to get you, baby! ¡Viva la raza!

FARMWORKER (*Snap. To SECRETARY*). ¡Viva la huelga! ¡Viva la huelga! ¡Viva la huelga!

REVOLUCIONARIO (*Snap. To SECRETARY*). ¡Viva la revolución! (The three *models join together and advance toward the SECRETARY, who backs up and runs out of the shop screaming. SANCHO is at the other end of the shop holding his money in his hand. All freeze. After a few seconds of silence, the PACHUCO moves and stretches, shaking his arms and loosening up. The FARMWORKER and REVOLUCIONARIO do the same. SANCHO stays where he is, frozen to his spot.*)

JOHNNY. Man, that was a long one, ése. (Others *agree with him*.)

FARMWORKER. How did we do?

JOHNNY. Pretty good, look at all that lana,° man! (He *goes over to SANCHO and removes the money from his hand. SANCHO stays where he is.*)

REVOLUCIONARIO. En la madre, look at all the money.

JOHNNY. We keep this up, we're going to be rich.

FARMWORKER. They think we're machines.

REVOLUCIONARIO. Burros.

¡Raza querida . . . Vamos: Beloved members of our Mexican race, let's take up arms to free ourselves from those damned whites who exploit us! Let's go . . . Esta . . . estudiantes!: This great mass of humanity has done enough talking! It has begun to march! Enough! Enough! Long live our race! Long live our cause! Long live the strike! Long live the brown berets! Long live the students! lana: money

JOHNNY. Puppets.

MEXICAN-AMERICAN. The only thing I don't like is how come I always get to play the goddamn Mexican-American?

JOHNNY. That's what you get for finishing high school.

FARMWORKER. How about our wages, ése?

JOHNNY. Here it comes right now, \$3,000 for you, \$3,000 for you, \$3,000 for you and \$3,000 for me. The rest we put back into the business.

MEXICAN-AMERICAN. Too much, man. Hey, where you vatos° going tonight?

FARMWORKER. I'm going over to Concha's. There's a party.

JOHNNY. Wait a minute, vatos. What about our salesman? I think he needs an oil job.

REVOLUCIONARIO. Leave him to me. (The PACHUCO, FARMWORKER and MEXICAN-AMERICAN *exit, talking loudly about their plans for the night.*

The REVOLUCIONARIO *goes over to SANCHO, removes his derby hat and cigar, lifts him up and throws him over his shoulder. SANCHO hangs loose, lifeless. To audience*) He's the best model we got! ¡Ajúa!° (Exit.)

## QUESTIONS

1. "Honest Sancho" runs his "Used Mexican Lot" like a used car lot. How is this metaphorical context developed in the play? How is the satire directed at both used car salesmen and a Mexican who has sold out his race?
2. Explore the stereotyping that characterizes the "models" that Honest Sancho offers for sale. At whom is the satire directed—the four "models," or people who stereotype others? What is the implication of these men being presented as if they were machines?
3. Of the characters in the play, only Miss Jimenez escapes being portrayed as a machine. Is she therefore treated sympathetically by the play?
4. How effective is the surprise ending?
5. How do you think an audience composed entirely of Mexican Americans would respond to this play? An audience of Anglos? A mixed audience? Would there be differences among these audiences as to how comic the play is?

## SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING

1. Review the chapter on "Characterization" in the Fiction section of this book, paying particular attention to the qualities that contribute to a convincing character. Write an essay demonstrating that one or more characters in one of the plays in Chapter 1 displays those qualities. If you are permitted the space to write a longer essay, extend the essay to include two of these plays, one more realistic than the other.
2. After reviewing the chapter on "Plot" in the Fiction section of this book, write an analysis of the plot of one of the plays in chapter 1. To what extent does plot help to determine whether a play is realistic or nonrealistic?

vatos: guys ¡Ajúa!: Wow!

3. The three plays in this chapter represent a range from realistic to nonrealistic conventions. Using the materials in the opening discussion of those conventions, write an essay on realistic elements in *A Doll House* or *The Glass Menagerie*; or an essay on nonrealistic elements in *The Glass Menagerie* or “Los Vendidos.” In each case, consider the way in which the conventions are used to represent human realities and themes.
4. In any classification of the plays in Chapter 1, Glaspell’s *Trifles* would undoubtedly be called realistic, Ives’s *Time Flies* nonrealistic. Write an essay in which you classify any of the other plays in Chapter 1 based on the criterion of faithfulness “to the outer appearances of life.”
5. In some plays, the audience only gradually realizes that the incidents are not literally possible. In others (such as Ives’s “Time Flies”), the play establishes its unreality early on. Using two or three of the plays presented so far, discuss the advantages and disadvantages of either approach.
6. Write an essay ranking the plays in Chapter 1 in terms of their presentation of “life’s inner meanings”—their revelation of “human truth.”
7. You have had the opportunity to read eight plays thus far. Write an essay in which you use some or all of them to create a hypothesis about the correlation between realistic conventions and significant insights into human behavior.
8. Through the centuries, theatrical producers and writers have sometimes sought to modernize older plays, chiefly by recasting them in the conventions of contemporary theater. Considering the plays you have read so far, and considering the remainder of the plays as you read on in this book, write an essay in which you explore what would be necessary to modernize one of them. Would you find it always appropriate to remove the nonrealistic elements in the play so as to appeal to today’s audience—or might you want to adapt the play for that part of the audience that prefers musical dramas?

## PRACTICE AP® WRITING PROMPTS

### Henrik Ibsen, *A Doll House* (pp. 1169–1229)

Many works of literature include characters who experience troubling conflicts with the accepted norms of their society. Choose such a character from *A Doll House* and write a well-organized essay in which you analyze the character’s divergence from these societal norms. Include in your essay the significance of this conflict to the work as a whole. Avoid mere plot summary.

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