

THE GIVEN CIRCUMSTANCES:

Everything that delineates or defines the special world of the play.

There are THREE kinds of Given Circumstances:

1. **PREVIOUS ACTION:** Any action mentioned in the play's dialogue that reveals any incident or action that took place BEFORE the current action of the play began. Often called, "EXPOSITION".
2. **ENVIRONMENTAL FACTS:** THERE ARE 6 KINDS OF ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS:
 1. Geographic Location: The specific area in which the play takes place. The exact place. This includes the CLIMATE.
 2. Date, year, season, time of day. What about the date is significant?
 3. Economical Environment: The character's relationship to wealth or poverty, and the class of the character in relationship to the society in which they live.
 4. Social Environment: The morals and social institutions under which the characters live; their values and societal beliefs.
 5. Political Environment: The character's relationship to the form of government under which they live.
 6. Religious environment: The formal or informal psychological controls place upon a character because of their religious beliefs.
3. **POLAR ATTITUDES:** Beliefs held by a character that are in direct opposition to the world in which the character lives. This opposition creates CONFLICT. Conflict creates DRAMATIC ACTION.