## Ibsen: A Doll’s House

### Small Group Discussions

Directions:

After the class has divided into three groups, each is to choose a separate topic to discuss. Choose a recorder to describe your discussion and present your findings to the class. Develop your discussion along logical lines, and be sure everyone in the group has a chance to contribute. A second person may be chosen as facilitator so that the discussion proceeds smoothly. Record your rough notes on this sheet.

***Topic 1***

***Nora***

***Stage Directions: Messages to the Audience***

Considering the learning Nora has begun in the last few moments of act 1, decide on her state of mind in the first few pages you have just read from act 2. Account for the message to the audience to reinforce this state of mind, a message which comes from

a. the ornaments’ disappearance

b. the burnt-down candle ends

c. the street clothes of Nora in full view

d. Nora’s restless movements

e. Nora’s language: short, erratic thought groups; an identical line, “rip it into a million pieces,” used to refer to two different objects, the costume and the bond

***Topic 2***

***Dr. Rank***

***Symbol or Reality?***

A. Torvald thinks parents’ moral failures poison their children. What correspondence therefore does mention of Dr. RanWs illness make? Is it too obvious a point?

B. Christine has been much less sheltered from the world than Nora. As an outsider, and a worldly-wise one, how does she interpret the relationship of Dr. Rank and Nora? Account for the difference in her and Nora’s view of Dr. Rank as a source of financial help.

***Topic 3***

***The Playwright***

***Skill in Building Motivation and Suspense***

A. From what Nora says to Anne-Marie, what change do you think she has already made. at least mentally, in her relationship with the children?

B. What future change does Nora suggest? How does this possible change relate to her perception of the circumstances?

C. Nora’s remark to Christine, “Torvald can’t bear all this snipping and stitching,” both refers to a Torvald we already know and suggests a Torvald who has power over his wife. What do these qualities in Torvald indicate for the future, considering what we know of Nora’s secret? What kind of a speech or action do you think would come from Torvald if he knew Nora’s secret?

D. Considering the emergency that is pressing on Nora and our knowledge of her character, what is she likely to do in her interaction with Torvald from this moment on?

A Doll’s House and Hedda Gabler Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
Lesson 2  
Handout 3 Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Essay**

**Directions:**

Consider a decision you made during the last several years, a decision which, although it may have seemed insignificant at the time, has influenced the course of your life in an important way. What was your state of mind and what were the circumstances which led you to make the decision? How did you see yourself at the time: as an immature child not really strong enough to assume a new responsibility? as a person strong enough to accomplish what you wanted to? How would you describe yourself at the time?

What were the effects of your decision? How did it change other circumstances in your life? Your picture of yourself? Did you feel stronger or weaker as time went on? More talented, more competent, or less so?

Write an essay in which you narrate the events surrounding the decision and evaluate the decision’s importance in your own formation