

Ms. Slote's classes attended a performance of **"The Metamorphosis,"** an adaptation of a short story by Franz Kafka, created especially for English language learners, by the **Educational Theater of New York (ETNY)** under the direction of Barbara Bregstein. Students had the opportunity to request scenes to be repeated and to ask questions of the characters after the show. Following are some student reflections on this experience, using TASC vocabulary for fiction and drama.

Summarize the *plot* (sequence of events) of the play.

Gregor woke up and found himself changed into a gigantic insect. He can't go to work and make money. The boss was afraid of Gregor. His father disliked him. His family didn't care about him. Finally, he didn't eat and died in his room. --**Zhiqing Wang**

What was the *setting* (time and place) of the play? How was this suggested?

The setting of the play was in 1915 at Samsa's house. It was suggested by their clothes and house. --**Yongmei Wu**

What was your favorite *scene*? Explain.

My favorite scene is the first one because it surprised me. After a bad dream, he changed into an insect. --**Yu Min Zhu**

My favorite scene is scene 2 because at that time, Samsa's family still does not know yet. They are concerned about him. --**Yongmei Wu**

My favorite scene is when Gregor's boss was shocked by Gregor's appearance. First of all, it's very funny for me. I really like the boss' reaction. Second of all is the performance by the Boss and Gregor. The expression and the reaction was very appropriate. --**Junhao Zeng**

My favorite scene was when Grete brings food for Gregor and when she sees him she screams very loud because Gregor looks like a monster. -- **Dinesh Singh**

My favorite scene is when Gregor's father uses apple to hit Gregor. This scene highlights the character of Gregor's father. Gregor's father did not feel anxious for his son's appearance. He could not wait for the monster son to disappear soon. --**Wenting Wu**

Who is your favorite *character*? Explain.

My favorite character is Grete. Although she is scared about Gregor becoming an insect, she is first one who takes food to him. She takes care of Gregor. **–Linghui Tang**

My favorite character is Gregor's sister, Grete. First time when I saw her give some food to Gregor to eat, I think she loves him. But almost at the end I saw her want to drive him away. I think she was very selfish. Before and after, the way the character changed was dazzling.
–Wenting Wu

My favorite character is Mrs. Samsa. She is an ordinary woman and always concerned for her son and family. Her reaction after Gregor is dead and every dialogue she said made me feel she is a great mother. **--Junhao Zeng**

In your opinion, what was the *author's purpose* for writing the play? Cite evidence from the play to support your claim.

In my opinion, the author's purpose was to tell us the author's story, to tell us the author's own inner life ideal. **--Wenting Wu**

The author's purpose was to show that money is always the highest value in that era. It is more important than affection. When Gregor can also make money for the home, the family is concerned for him, but when they know Gregor can't go to work to earn money, they hate him.
-- Yongmei Wu

The author's purpose is to tell a story. This play shows the sequence of events and separates into 10 scenes. **--Rongxin Yang**

In your opinion, what is the *theme* of the play? Remember: theme is the "author's message." It is usually implicit and expresses a universal truth. Cite evidence from play to support claim.

In my opinion, the theme of the play was to show the family fell under the corruption of money. When Gregor can make money, his family loved him. But when he turned into a cockroach and can't make money, his family despised him. **--Wenting Wu**

The theme of the play was: feelings between the people as thin as paper. Gregor changed into an insect so he became a waste, lose himself in despair, and dies. Nobody cares about him. His family continues their work. The law of life is ruthless! **--Yongmei Wu**

The world's reality and cruelty. When you can work for family, they love you, but when you turn into insect and can't do anything for them, they do not love you anymore. **–Yumin Zhu**

The theme of the play is sacrificing oneself. Gregor is the only one who works for his family, but after he becomes an insect, his family all get jobs to support themselves. **--Rongxin Yang**

Did you enjoy ETNY's *adaptation* of "The Metamorphosis"? Explain.

Of course I enjoyed, because when I watch this play, I can reflect on myself, reflect on what I have in the same place as the protagonist and where do I need to correct myself.

–Wenting Wu

Yes, I enjoyed the full show. I liked the live drama and the story was good. They are all good characters and the actors played their roles very responsibly. **--Dinesh Singh**

I really enjoyed this drama and I am very thankful for ETNY to give a show especially for English learners. I enjoyed because this story has many grim details and the actors perfectly performed for us. **--Junhao Zeng**

Yes, because it's funny and live. We can watch again if we don't understand one scene.

--Rongxin Yang