



Step Out Knowledge Organiser



What? (Definition)

A **"Step Out"** is a dramatic technique where a character *momentarily steps out* of the main action of a scene or narrative to speak directly to the audience.

The action on stage typically **freezes** or becomes less significant during the step out, allowing the character to share internal thoughts, feelings, motivations, or provide commentary on the situation.

Other characters on stage are generally portrayed as being **unaware** of the "step out" unless the convention is specifically altered for a particular play (e.g., they might become "frozen" or appear as if time has stopped for them).



Why? (Purpose)

"Step Outs" are powerful devices used to:

Reveal Inner World: Show a character's true thoughts, feelings, or secret plans.

Add Commentary: Offer personal opinions, judgments, or reflections on the scene.

Build Connection: Create intimacy and complicity between character and audience.

Enhance Plot: Provide subtle hints, foreshadowing, or explain motivations.

Add Impact: Inject humor, irony, tension, or highlight contradictions.

Break Realism: Add a distinct theatrical element to the performance.

How? (Making It Effective)

Executing a "Step Out" effectively requires clear choices:

Clear Physical Shift: Character steps distinctly out of the main action, changes posture, and faces the audience.

Clear Vocal Shift: Change in tone (e.g., confessional, intimate, conspiratorial) to match the internal thought.

"Time Freeze": Other characters on stage generally freeze while the "step out" occurs.

Brevity & Impact: Keep it short, focused, and impactful to avoid disrupting the main scene.

Justification: Ensure there's a clear reason why this specific thought or emotion needs to be shared directly with the audience.