**Ms. McLeod**

**ELA A30**

**MODE**

**Types of Modes**: Tragic, Comic, Romantic, Ironic, Philosophic, and Expository.

**Definition**- In literature a mode is a method or an approach used by the writer within their written work.

**Tragic Mode**

The tragic mode can be in all types of genres (poems, short stories, novels, plays). The literature written in the tragic mode that we will study in this unit portrays ordinary men and women that are destroyed by their environment. A pessimistic (negative) view of life is discussed and generally speaking the literary selection is dominated by doubt, sadness, despair, disillusionment or some other somber mood.

The tragic mode that we will study in this short story is unlike the traditional dramatic concept in which a hero of high social standing (ex. Hamlet) is brought to destruction because of a flaw in his own character.

**Biography**

Sinclair Ross-was born on January 22nd, 1908 in Shellbrook, SK; he grew up on a prairie homestead. Ross died at the age of 88. Ross is one of Canada’s most respected writers. His writing is often a powerful depiction of the prairies and the Great Depression. Ross’ best known work is As For Me and my House. This novel is set in a small Saskatchewan town during the depression. “The Painted Door” and “The Lamp at Noon” are some of his most published stories. The theme of intellectual isolation predominates in this selection as it does in many of Ross’ works. His well-crafted structures and precise images are genius. In 1992 he received The Order of Canada from Gov, Gen. Ramon Hnatyshyn and commented, ”not bad for a prairie farm boy”.

*The Lamp at Noon* exemplifies the main ideas often found in prairie literature: The impact of the landscape upon the mind, the urge to conquer the land, the power of nature as a force, and the type of individual produced by the landscape. As in most prairie literature, the weather, the environment and ‘the elements’ play a vital role in the story. As you read be conscious of the references to wind, dust and adverse weather conditions and the effect that the weather conditions and the isolation has on the moods and feelings of the characters.

**While reading the short story consider the following:**

What psychological impact does the isolation and loneliness have on the characters?

Find examples that support the definition of the tragic mode.

**After reading the story complete the following questions:**

1. In the exposition of the short story the setting is established.
2. Define the term exposition.
3. Define the term setting.
4. What is the setting of “The Lamp at Noon”?
5. Why is Ellen longing for her husband at the beginning of the short story?
6. Why won’t she pick up her child from the cradle when it cries?
7. As the story progresses, the reader realizes that a conflict exist between Ellen and her husband Paul.
8. What is this conflict?
9. What arguments does Ellen present for leaving the farm?
10. What reasons does Paul give for remaining on the farm?
11. Who do you agree with and why?
12. What realization does Paul make about Ellen when he is out tending the horses?
13. Why does he return to the house and peer through the window?
14. When Paul finally returns to his house and enters, he discovers that Ellen and the baby are missing.
15. Describe the condition of the house.
16. Where does he find Ellen and the baby?
17. What is their condition?
18. Why would Ellen have taken the baby out in the middle of a dust storm? Analyze her state of mind.
19. Find two examples of foreshadowing in the story.
20. How is the last line of the story ironic? In your answer, you should provide a definition of the term irony.
21. What is the significance of the title, “The Lamp at Noon”?
22. What is the theme of the story?
23. Give an example of the tragic mode in this story. Cite specific examples in the story to support the definition of the mode itself.