

TEI BY EXAMPLE



MODULE 5: DRAMA

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Last updated September 2020

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

4. Front and Back Matter.....	1
4.1 Cast List.....	2
4.2 Description of Setting.....	7
4.3 Prologue and Epilogue.....	7
4.4 Performance Description.....	9

4. Front and Back Matter

Besides peculiar basic structures in the actual text, drama texts can be preceded or followed by specific structural elements. Consider following fragments preceding and succeeding the play's body text:

[<front>](#)

CHARACTERS:
USER: a computer user
COMP: a DECPDP-10 computer
demigods:
PROG: the computer programmer
ENGI: an engineer
helpdesk, narrator
The play is situated in an anonymous
computer
lab room, at an undetermined time. Technical
equipment looks outdated, though, while
suggesting naive technological optimism.
Prologue, spoken by USER:
'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.
"Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun

[<back>](#)

Epilogue, spoken by PROG:
"And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?
Come to my arms, my beamish boy!
O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!"
He chortled in his joy.
'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.
Hello World, and Goodbye. Performed for
the first time on the Festival for Computing
in the Humanities, at Shakespeare's
New Globe Theatre, London,
on June 21, 2050. Actors: Alfred Brown -
PROG,
Barry Crowne - ENGI, Douglas Everett - USER.

The frumious Bandersnatch!"

CHALLENGE

What structural elements can you distinguish in these front and back sections?

SOLUTION

Following are significant elements in a drama text's front and back part:

- Cast list
- Description of setting
- Prologue
- Epilogue
- Performance information

The following sections of this tutorial explain how these structures can be encoded using TEI.

4.1 Cast List

The front matter of this play starts with an enumeration of all dramatic characters, and a brief explanation of their respective roles in the play. This could be encoded as a basic TEI [<list>](#), with each character and role set as a distinct [<item>](#). However, the **drama** module includes a dedicated [<castList>](#) element. Inside [<castList>](#), each named character is to be encoded as a distinct [<castItem>](#) element. This description of a cast item can consist of a [<role>](#) element, describing the name of the dramatic role; a [<roleDesc>](#) element, describing the role of that character; and an [<actor>](#) element, naming the actor performing the role:

```
<castList xmlns="http://www.tei-c.org/ns/1.0">
  <head>CHARACTERS:</head>
  <castItem>
    <role>USER</role>
    <roleDesc>a computer user</roleDesc>
  </castItem>
```

```

<castItem>
  <role>COMP</role>
  <roleDesc>a DECPDP-10 computer</roleDesc>
</castItem>
demigods:
<castItem>
  <role>PROG</role>
  <roleDesc>the computer programmer</roleDesc>
</castItem>
<castItem>
  <role>ENGI</role>
  <roleDesc>an engineer</roleDesc>
</castItem>
<castItem>
  <roleDesc>helpdesk</roleDesc>
</castItem>
<castItem>
  <roleDesc>narrator</roleDesc>
</castItem>
</castList>

```

Example 13. Encoding of a cast list with <castList>.

This example, however, is incorrect. A [<castList>](#) element doesn't allow plain text, as illustrated by the highlighted phrase "demigods:." Rather than naming or describing one single character, this functions as a kind of label for the following two character descriptions. This suggests a grouping, which can be accomplished in TEI by wrapping grouped [<castItem>](#) elements in a [<castGroup>](#) element. The label, then, can be encoded as a [<head>](#) for the [<castGroup>](#). The [@rend](#) attribute can be used to indicate any typographical indication of this grouping. If in our example, the PROG and ENGI character descriptions are grouped using a brace, this can be expressed by the value "braced" for the [@rend](#) attribute:

```

<castList xmlns="http://www.tei-c.org/ns/1.0">
  <head>CHARACTERS:</head>
  <castItem>
    <role>USER</role>
    <roleDesc>a computer user</roleDesc>

```

```

</castItem>
<castItem>
  <role>COMP</role>
  <roleDesc>a DECPDP-10 computer</roleDesc>
</castItem>
<castGroup rend="braced">
  <head>demigods:</head>
  <castItem>
    <role>PROG</role>
    <roleDesc>the computer programmer</roleDesc>
  </castItem>
  <castItem>
    <role>ENGI</role>
    <roleDesc>an engineer</roleDesc>
  </castItem>
</castGroup>
<castItem>
  <roleDesc>helpdesk</roleDesc>
</castItem>
<castItem>
  <roleDesc>narrator</roleDesc>
</castItem>
</castList>

```

Example 14. Grouping related `<castItem>` descriptions in `<castGroup>`.

If we look closely, we can see that the last two character descriptions could be considered a group as well. Yet, they are a mere enumeration of character names (without any grouping label). Minor “anonymous” roles in a play are often just listed together. Such groups of “anonymous” roles can be grouped in a single `<castItem>` element, with a `@type="list"` attribute. Notice how these character descriptions only consist of a role description:

```

<castList xmlns="http://www.tei-c.org/ns/1.0">
  <head>CHARACTERS:</head>
  <castItem>
    <role>USER</role>
    <roleDesc>a computer user</roleDesc>

```

```

</castItem>
<castItem>
  <role>COMP</role>
  <roleDesc>a DECPDP-10 computer</roleDesc>
</castItem>
<castGroup rend="braced">
  <head>demigods:</head>
  <castItem>
    <role>PROG</role>
    <roleDesc>the computer programmer</roleDesc>
  </castItem>
  <castItem>
    <role>ENGI</role>
    <roleDesc>an engineer</roleDesc>
  </castItem>
</castGroup>
<castItem type="list">
  <roleDesc>helpdesk</roleDesc>
  <roleDesc>narrator</roleDesc>
</castItem>
</castList>

```

Example 15. Grouping “anonymous” role descriptions in a single `<castItem>` element.

Notice how the `@rend` attribute on this `<castGroup>` element is used to indicate that the grouping of cast items is typographically supported by using braces.

Remember how other elements in the transcription of this drama text referred to the definition of dramatic characters “elsewhere in the transcription” (see sections 3.2 and 3.3)? Well, this is the place! Therefore, we’ll add the identification codes to the respective `<role>` elements, using the `@xml:id` attribute:

```

<castList xmlns="http://www.tei-c.org/ns/1.0">
  <head>CHARACTERS:</head>
  <castItem>
    <role xml:id="user">USER</role>
    <roleDesc>a computer user</roleDesc>
  </castItem>

```

```

<castItem>
  <role xml:id="comp">COMP</role>
  <roleDesc>a DECPDP-10 computer</roleDesc>
</castItem>
<castGroup rend="braced">
  <head>demigods:</head>
  <castItem>
    <role xml:id="prog">PROG</role>
    <roleDesc>the computer programmer</roleDesc>
  </castItem>
  <castItem>
    <role xml:id="engi">ENGI</role>
    <roleDesc>an engineer</roleDesc>
  </castItem>
  <castItem type="list"><roleDesc>helpdesk</roleDesc>, <roleDesc>narrator</roleDesc></castItem>
</castGroup>
</castList>

```

Example 16. Formally identifying `<role>`s in a cast list with `@xml:id`.

SUMMARY

A cast list can be encoded with the `<castList>` element. It consists of a number of `<castItem>` elements, providing information on the name of the role (`<role>`), the description of the dramatic role (`<roleDesc>`), and/or actors who perform(ed) the role (`<actor>`). Enumerations of minor characters can be encoded in a single `<castItem>` element, with a `<type>` attribute whose value is "list". Groups of character descriptions in `<castItem>` can be wrapped in a `<castGroup>` element.

4.2 Description of Setting

Sometimes, the front matter of a play contains a general description of the setting. This can be encoded with the specific `<set>` element. As `<set>` can't contain plain text, its text should be wrapped in paragraphs (or lines, for that matter). For example:²

```
<set xmlns="http://www.tei-c.org/ns/1.0">
  <p>The play is situated in an anonymous computer lab room, at an undetermined time.
    Technical equipment looks outdated, though, while suggesting naive technological
    optimism.</p>
</set>
```

Example 17. Encoding setting descriptions in `<set>`.

SUMMARY

If the front part of a drama text contains descriptions of the settings in which the action of the play takes place, these should be encoded in `<p>` elements inside a `<set>` element.

4.3 Prologue and Epilogue

A drama text may be preceded and/or concluded by a short speech. Such speeches can be encoded as `<prologue>` and `<epilogue>`, respectively. They can be encoded according to their genre-characteristics (most often prose or verse), or according to their rhetoric characteristics (as a speech in `<sp>`, which is particularly meaningful if the speech contains typical dramatical elements such as stage directions). Here is an example of both approaches:⁴

.....

- 2 Caution! Whereas a general description of the settings in the *front matter* of a drama text is to be encoded in a `<set>` element, descriptions of the setting in the *body* of a drama text should be encoded as stage directions with `<stage>` (see [section 3.3](#)).
- 4 Notice, that the analysis of a speech as prologue or epilogue is sometimes open to interpretation. When such speeches immediately precede or follow the actual drama text, they may as well be regarded as a separate division of the text body. Notice, however, that they should then be encoded inside the existing dramatic structure, or inside a separate textual division (`<div>`). When considered as part of the actual drama text, they may *not* be encoded as `<prologue>` or `<epilogue>`.

<front>

```

<front xmlns="http://www.tei-c.org/
ns/1.0">
  <!-- ... -->
  <prologue>
    <head>Prologue, spoken by U
    SER:</head>
    <lg type="stanza">
      <l>'Twas brillig, and the slithy
      toves</l>
      <l>Did gyre and gimble in the
      wabe;</l>
      <l>All mimsy were the
      borogoves,</l>
      <l>And the mome raths
      outgrabe.</l>
    </lg>
    <lg type="stanza">
      <l>"Beware the Jabberwock, my
      son!</l>
      <l>The jaws that bite, the claws
      that catch!</l>
      <l>Beware the Jubjub bird, and
      shun</l>
      <l>The frumious
      Bandersnatch!"</l>
    </lg>
  </prologue>
  <!-- ... -->
</front>

```

<back>

```

<back xmlns="http://www.tei-c.org/
ns/1.0">
  <epilogue>
    <head>Epilogue, spoken by P
    ROG:</head>
    <sp>
      <lg type="stanza">
        <l>"And hast thou slain the
        Jabberwock?</l>
        <l>Come to my arms, my beamish
        boy!</l>
        <l>O frabjous day! Callooh!
        Callay!"</l>
        <l>He chortled in his joy.</l>
      </lg>
      <lg type="stanza">
        <l>'Twas brillig, and the
        slithy toves</l>
        <l>Did gyre and gimble in the
        wabe;</l>
        <l>All mimsy were the
        borogoves,</l>
        <l>And the mome raths
        outgrabe.</l>
      </lg>
    </sp>
  </epilogue>
  <!-- ... -->
</back>

```

Example 18. Encoding of an introductory speech as <prologue>.

Example 19. Encoding of a concluding speech as <prologue>.

SUMMARY

Speeches serving as a prologue or epilogue to a play can be encoded with `<prologue>`, or `<epilogue>`, respectively.

4.4 Performance Description

The front or back matter of a drama text may include information on how it should be, or has been, performed. Such information should be encoded as structured text in one or more paragraphs. When descriptions of past performances include information on the cast, this can be captured in an embedded `<castList>` element. The back part of our example happens to feature a performance description:

```
<back xmlns="http://www.tei-c.org/ns/1.0">
  <performance>
    <head>Hello World, and Goodbye.</head>
    <p>Performed for the first time on the <name type="event">Festival for Computing
      in the Humanities</name>, at <name type="place.venue">Shakespeare's New Globe
      Theatre</name>, <name type="place.city">London</name>, on <date when="2050-06
      -21">June 21, 2050</date>.</p>
    <castList>
      <head>Actors:</head>
      <castItem>
        <actor>Alfred Brown</actor>
        <role>PROG</role>
      </castItem>
      <castItem>
        <actor>Barry Crowne</actor>
        <role>ENGI</role>
      </castItem>
      <castItem>
        <actor>Douglas Everett</actor>
        <role>USER</role>
      </castItem>
    </castList>
  </performance>
</back>
```

```
    </castItem>  
  </castList>  
</performance>  
</back>
```

Example 20. Encoding of information on the performance of a dramatic text in `<performance>`.

SUMMARY

Information relating to the performance of a drama text, be it descriptions of past performances or general directions for future ones, can be encoded in a `<performance>` element in the front or back matter of a drama text. Besides a heading and paragraphs, such performance descriptions can contain their own embedded `<castList>` elements, listing cast for cast lists relating to a particular performance.