Medieval Theatre
History
• https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kX0jHv05FYM Crash Course Theatre, Liturgical Drama, early Medieval
• **Mumming**: early Medieval folk play, usually performed door to door.
Minstrel:  
(bard, troubadour)  
traveling musician, told  
epic tales of heroes and  
faraway places.
Eucharist: holy communion, the taking of the blood and body of Christ in the church.
**Trope**: Singing or responsive reading in the early church.
During the early Medieval Period, the Church banned theatrical performances.

Latin was official language of the church, all church messages and sermons were in Latin.

Common people could not speak Latin.

Priests & Clergy began to act out messages so the common people would understand them.
5 types of Medieval Religious Plays
• Mystery Play
• Miracle Play
• Morality Play
• Passion Play
• Cycle Play
Mystery Play
Early religious play, dramatized stories from the Bible.
Miracle Play

Play based on the life of a saint.
Morality Play
An ‘allegory’ play that teaches a lesson
Seven Deadly Sins

PLEGGAS

- Pride
- Lust
- Envy
- Greed
- Gluttony
- Anger (Wrath)
- Sloth
Seven Virtues

(The Chocolate Dancing Panda Knows How to Party)

- Temperance
- Charity
- Diligence
- Patience
- Kindness
- Humility
- Purity
Everyman

Most famous Morality Play
Passion Play
Play that dramatizes the ‘Passion of Jesus Christ’ (trial, suffering, death)
- [Link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5VI3qcSuUlk)
- (Crash Course Mystery/Cycle Play)
Cycle Play

Play with multiple scenes and multiple stages, all at the same time

(simultaneous staging)
Early Cycle Plays

• Inside churches
• Stages were stationary
• Audience would move from stage to stage

• ‘Haunted House’
Later Cycle Plays

• Performed Outside
• Actors on moving stages
• Audience didn’t move
  • ‘Parade Style’
Pageant Wagon
Horse drawn carts that were stages for later cycle plays
Guild

Medieval trade Unions that sponsored cycle plays
Corpus Christi Festival that became known for the presentation of cycle plays.
Hrosvitha
German Nun, first known female playwright.
Sacred:
Based on religion or worship
Secular
Not based on religion or worship
‘of the world’
Farce: Popular secular drama, dealing with infidelity and lying
Blocking the actor’s movement and actions on stage
Cheating out: turning your body toward the audience on stage
Curtain Call: taking a bow at the end of a performance