Victorian Playwrights

August von Kotzebue:
• He is considered to have written the first melodramatic play (Misanthropy and Repentance).
• His plays established melodrama as the dominant form of drama in the Victorian Era and 19th Century overall.
• He wrote his plays for a variety of cultures.

Rene Charles Guilbert de Pixerecourt:
• A French playwright who wrote melodramas for Victorian theatre.
• He is best known for his modern melodrama, The Dog of Montarges.

Oscar Wilde:
• One of the most successful playwrights of late Victorian London.
• The majority of his plays were comedic.
• Wilde’s most famous plays include The Importance of Being Earnest and A Woman of No Importance.
• Wilde went against the Victorian emphasis on instructional and informative qualities in literature and other types of art, and he instead focused on aesthetics.

Douglas Jerrold:
• A playwright whose audience was largely working class.
• One of his most famous plays is Black Eyed Susan, a nautical melodrama featuring a sailor. It is said to be a black comedy.