



Sample Pages from 81 Playwriting Exercises

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81

Playwriting Exercises



TheatreFolk®

By Lindsay Price

81 Playwriting Exercises
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81 PLAYWRITING EXERCISES

Successful playwriting is all about consistency. Creating a habit. The more you write, the easier it becomes. The more you write, the more you can circumvent writer's block, insecurity, and first draft fizzle.

Successful playwriting is also all about small wins. Instead of asking students to write a full length play their first time out, have them practice the craft and build up to writing longer pieces. The more they write, the easier it will become.

To that end, this resource provides 81 exercises that can be used to get students in the habit of writing on a regular basis. Use these exercises:

- As a daily warm-up during a playwriting unit
- To keep students writing if they're stuck in the middle of a specific writing project
- To allow students to practice the craft of writing monologues and scenes
- For an emergency lesson plan when you can't be there
- If your classroom environment changes (e.g., distance learning)

Playwriting is possible for every student when you start with small, achievable exercises. Get writing!



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ONE: PASSWORD

Everyone uses passwords. Some people use the same one over and over again. Some use different passwords, and then can't remember which ones they used where. Passwords tell us a lot about a person. They are also an awesome jumping off point for theatre.

- Write a scene with the title QWERTY.
- Write a monologue in which a character deals with being named QWERTY.
- Write a monologue in which a character talks on the phone to tech support. They are asking for help getting into their computer but have forgotten their password. They are convinced it's something out of the ordinary, because they are out of the ordinary. Turns out, the password is very ordinary.
- Write a scene in which a character is berated for NOT using "password" as their password.
- Write a scene in which a hacker berates a character for using "password" as their password.
- Write a monologue in which a character explains why a password reveals everything about a person. This character's password? Monkey.
- Write a scene between a couple who have just started dating. Her password? Michael. His? Trustno1. What happens when they find out each others' passwords?
- Write a scene between a couple. One has snooped and found out their partner's password is Trustno1. How does the snoopers react?
- Write a monologue in which a character wants to change their password to reflect a big change in their life.
- A character is terrified of new password alternatives like fingerprints. How do they get around it? Write a monologue.
- Write a monologue in which a sour character has an uplifting password: Sunshine. Why did they choose this password?
- The scenario is a workplace where two disgruntled cubicle workers have come across a master list of passwords for the entire company. What do they do with it?
- Write a scene between a character and their talking computer. The computer has changed the character's password... for their own good.



TWO: PICTURE PROMPT

Ideas can come from anything and everything. But it's always good to give students a jumping off point.

Exercise: Use the picture on the next page and take the following steps:

- Automatic write on the picture. Set a timer for two minutes and write down everything and anything that comes to mind when you look at it. The goal is to keep writing, no matter what. Don't self-censor or judge any thought, just get it down on the page. You are creating source material to draw from.
- Answer the following questions:
 - Where is this location?
 - What happened here five minutes ago?
 - Who took the picture and why?
 - Why is this person in the forest?
 - What is this person thinking about?
 - Is there anything odd about this forest?
 - There is someone hiding in the forest. Who is it? Why are they hiding?
- Based on the automatic writing and the answers to the questions, write a monologue. Here are some suggestions:
 - Write an inner monologue from the perspective of the photographer. What are they thinking about as they look at the forest? What do they want from life?
 - Write a monologue where the photographer is saying goodbye to someone who isn't there. Who are they saying goodbye to and why?
 - Write a monologue from the perspective of the photographer. The first line of the monologue is, "I know you're there."
 - Write a monologue from the perspective of the forest. Personify one of the trees. What does the tree want?
 - Write a monologue from the perspective of the hiding person. Why are they hiding? What does the hider want?
- Want to write a scene? Here are some suggestions:
 - Two characters are lost in this forest. One is happy to be there; one is decidedly unhappy.
 - Two characters are lost in this forest. They went into the forest on a dare. What was the dare, and what is the outcome?
 - Two characters are running away and find themselves in this forest. Why are they running away?





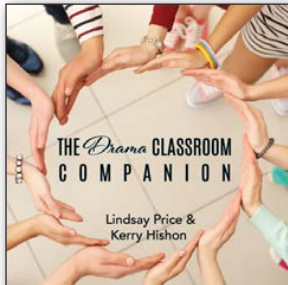
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Teaching Resources

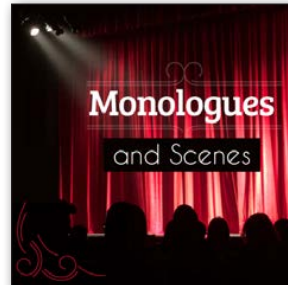
Quality resources to use in your drama classroom



The Drama Classroom Companion

The Drama Classroom Companion is filled with articles and exercises to build the skills needed for theatrical performance as well as real world skills like creative thinking, critical thinking, collaboration, and communication.

theatrefolk.com/companion

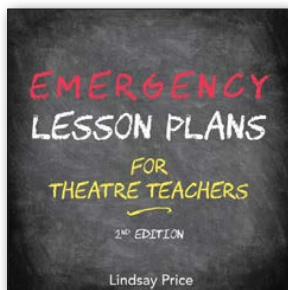


Monologue and Scene Collections

Whether it's for classwork, competitions or auditions, these collections of student-appropriate monologues and scenes can help you find what you're looking for.

All monologues and scenes come from published plays and include running-times, descriptions, character notes and staging suggestions.

theatrefolk.com/collections



Emergency Lesson Plans For Theatre Teachers

Emergency Lesson Plans For Theatre Teachers, 2nd edition gives you the tools and resources you need to confidently leave your class in the hands of a substitute teacher. Customize your lesson plans to suit the specific needs of your class when you can't be there.

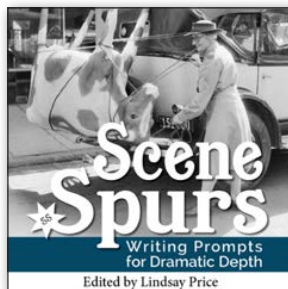
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The Student Director's Handbook

Help students take their show from first audition to opening night with *The Student Director's Handbook*. This easy-to-use ebook is full of guidelines, tips and templates designed to help students create a vision, circumvent problems and organize rehearsals on their way to a successful production.

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Scene-Spurs: Writing Prompts for Dramatic Depth

Scene Spurs is a collection of photo-based writing prompts developed by playwright Lindsay Price. The set includes 35 different Spurs along with an instruction guide to integrate them into your drama classroom.

theatrefolk.com/spurs

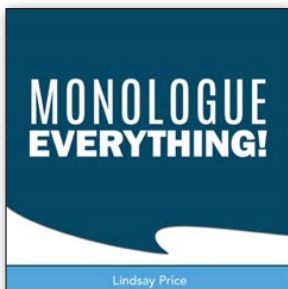


Write Your Own Vignette Play

Your students want to write and perform an original play. You want to include a playwriting unit in your program. But where to start? What if your students have never written a play before? What if you've never written before?

Write Your Own Vignette Play will answer all your questions and more

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The Monologue Everything Program

Want your students to write their own monologues? Have you tried to incorporate monologue units into the classroom with less-than-satisfactory results?

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Competition Material

Plays, monologues, and scenes for drama competitions including royalty information and exemptions.

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This series of instructional DVDs is perfect for the teacher who feels more at home with a prompt book than a hammer, and would welcome a new, visually oriented teaching tool for their tech classes and production crews.

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