



# How to Make a Playwright from Scratch

A Quick Guide

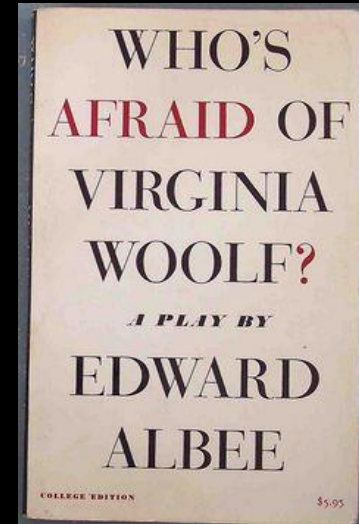
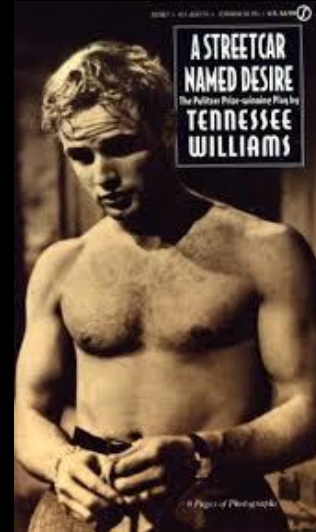
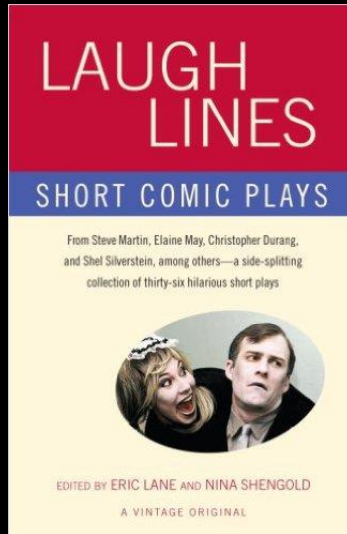
# Talk Time



# Students Should READ a lot

9th grade--Comedy

10th grade--Drama



# What I've Noticed...



Beginners always make the  
same mistakes.

# The 5 Basic Mistakes

1. Unneeded Characters.
2. Unneeded Scene Changes.
3. Too Much Focus on Plot.
4. Too Much Worry about Where It's Going.
5. Dialogue Without Subtext or Variation.



# Rule #1

## You Only Get Two Characters.

Create them now.

For each, you need:

- a name
- a goal

(the goals must endanger each other)



# Rule #2

You Only Get One Scene.

Your play occurs in one place. Pick it now.



# Rule #3

## You Do Not Get to Plan.



Let go of your ideas about plot and let the characters take control.

Let them be alive. Write down what they say and do. You are just a fly on the wall. You must discover the characters through the lines and behavior. Do not let your own intentions smother their natures.



# Rule #4

## You Cannot Exit or End.

You and your characters are in this together. Neither you nor they can leave.

If a character exits, the other remains to speak out loud, alone.

You cannot stop writing and you cannot end the play. Write as much as you can, in the time you have, but always play by the rules.



# Rule #5

## You Must Carefully Craft Your Dialogue

- Drop clues to the character goals through subtext.
- Vary the length of lines throughout.
- Reveal information bit by bit.
- Do not repeat information.

Give one of the characters a line now.

Insert the central conflict in that first line.

But use subtext.

Give the second character a response.

Write more if you have time.



# Cast and Produce

## Read Aloud Often.

- Cast it and do it now.
- Does it sound right?
- Get feedback.



# The Appeal Process

## The Appeal Process:

Rules are meant to free writers from beginners' mistakes. They are meant to be frustrating.

Still, all rules can be appealed with a well-reasoned argument.



# Breaking Free

Students write plays outside of class to break free. They prove me wrong by getting produced and winning awards. (Here is a picture of a student who won an audience favorite award for a play with three characters.)

