**Writing a Short Play**

By Macy Hanson

**UNIT OBJECTIVE**

Students will demonstrate their understanding of playwriting principles by writing a short play.

**Class Level:**

Beginning-Intermediate

**Prior Experience:**

Knowledge of stage directions

Knowledge of the Aristotelian Plot Structure

Knowledge of what objectives and tactics are

**2014 National Core Arts Theatre Standards:**

**TH:Cr3.1.HSI** a. Practice and revise a devised or scripted drama/theatre work using theatrical staging conventions.  
**TH:Pr4.1.HSI** a. Examine how character relationships assist in telling the story of a drama/theatre work.  
b. Shape character choices using given circumstances in a drama/theatre work.

**TH:Re7.1.HSI** a. Respond to what is seen, felt, and heard in a drama/theatre work to develop criteria for artistic choices.

**TH:Cn10.1.HSI** a. Investigate how cultural perspectives, community ideas and personal beliefs impact a drama/theatre work

**Main Concepts**

Formatting

Characterization

Inspiration

For additional learning activities to use throughout the unit, see the following lesson outlines:

<http://teacherlink.ed.usu.edu/tlresources/units/Read_S/Script%20writing%20grade%204-6%20by%20Natalie%20Holt.pdf>

Lessons

LESSON 1 Playwriting vs. Improv

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Students will understand what playwriting is by discussing its advantages and disadvantages compared to improv.

LESSON 2 Playwriting Inspiration

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Students will demonstrate their understanding of how inspirations for plays are found by thinking of personal experiences in their lives that could inspire their plays.

LESSON 3 Script Writing – How To

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Students will demonstrate their understanding of the proper way to write a script by correcting a poorly formatted script.

LESSON 4 Aristotelian Plot Structure

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Students will demonstrate their understanding of why the Aristotelian Plot Structure is important in playwriting by performing scenes without all five elements and discussing the elements in other stories.

LESSON 5 Characterization is Important!

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Students will demonstrate their understanding of the importance of characterization in their plays by reviewing character development, emotion, and objectives.

LESSON 6 Peer Reviewing

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Students will demonstrate their understanding of peer reviewing by reviewing a classmate’s short play.

LESSON 7 Turn in Plays and Present

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Students will demonstrate their playwriting abilities by turning in their short plays and presenting them.

LESSON 1 TITLE

Playwriting vs. Improv

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Students will understand what playwriting is by discussing its advantages and disadvantages compared to improv.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Playwriting project explanation and rubric, *Whose Line* and *Modern Family* clip loaded on YouTube

HOOK

When the students are all seated, name one student by name and ask them to come up to the front of the classroom with you. Tell the student and the rest of the class that you are going to start a scene of something that happened in your life once in college and you will play yourself and the student will play the professor. Start the scene with no further explanation. Let the scene play out until you feel it is a good place to end and call scene. Tell the students that the scene did not play out the way that it actually did in real life. But now they all need to think of an experience in their lives when there was a problem/argument/disagreement between them and another person. It should be a problem that was very soon after solved. Give them time to think.

GROUP WORK

Tell the students to find a partner and then once they have found a partner, find another pair to create a group of 4 with. Within their groups, 4 short scenes will be performed. Each person needs to perform that problem in their life with their partner for the other pair. But make sure to tell them that they are NOT allowed to tell their partner how their problem happened or was solved, just start the scene and let it flow. Action!

DISCUSSION

After the students have finished performing, ask a few students if their scenes went the same in performance as it did in real life. What made it so hard to make it happen the same way?

MODEL

Bring up the same student who helped you in the beginning. Tell the students to sing a song to themselves as you whisper to your helper how your college problem with the professor actually happened. Now perform the scene again and when you are done. Explain that when I was able to tell the student how that time in my life went, the scene was a much better portrayal.

GROUP WORK

Tell the students to get back in their duos and their groups of 4 and now tell your partner how your experience went. Don’t give exact dialogue but explain the general situation and how it was solved and then perform it.

DISCUSSION

Was that better? Why was it easier? But were there still problems? What were the problems that you ran into?

GUIDED PRACTICE

Tell everyone to take out a piece of paper. Now that they have performed (or tried to) perform their scene twice, they are now going to write down lines for their scene. This way, their experience from life can be accurately portrayed in the scene. Give them about 8 minutes to write down some lines for their scene.

GROUP WORK

Tell them to get back in their groups and do what they’ve always done but this time you will be reading a script.

DISCUSSION

As the students finish and gather back to their seats, write the words “playwriting” and “improv” on the board. What is the difference between these two words? What are the advantages and disadvantages to both? What we just did was go from improv-ing a scene to playwriting a scene. Many times playwriting can seem scary and daunting but when you know what you’re writing about and you have learned the right elements, it’s not as scary as it might seem.

MODEL

Show this clip <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R-hD-HXx7xc>

And then show this clip <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V_CmBsi17_0>

How do they differ? Add more differences, advantages, and disadvantages to the board under improve and playwriting.

INSTRUCTION

Hand out the rubric for the playwriting project. Read it over with the students and ask if there are any questions.

**Playwriting Project**

**PART 1: Writing a Short Play**

You will be creating your own 4-6 minute play. This can be a complete scene that stands alone or it can be as if it is just one scene in a larger play. However, either way it must contain the following elements that we will learn in the rest of the unit:

1. Correct formatting of a script including title page, page numbers, capitalization, indenting, character and setting description, stage directions, etc.
2. Follow the Aristotelian Plot Structure with the five elements clearly visible.
3. The characters are well developed with clear emotions and objectives. They are also named and described in the character description.
4. The setting is clearly described in the setting description as well as evident in the dialogue.
5. The scene needs to be well thought out with a creative and unique plot.

You will want to pay attention and take notes in class to know the correct way to do all of the above noted elements. The rubric explains the expectations clearer.

You will need to bring in a rough draft to class for peer-reviewing. The final draft will be due on **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**.

**PART 2: Playwriting Presentation**

On the day that the final draft is due, you must be prepared to present a 2-3 minute pitch for your play. You are trying to convince your fellow classmates to want to read/see your play. Your presentation should include:

1. Your title
2. Your inspiration for your play
3. A general description of the setting of your play
4. A brief description of your main characters
5. The general plot BUT NO SPOILERS!

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| CATEGORY | **Superior** | **Excellent** | **Good** | **Fair** |
| **Format** | Script is formatted correctly, including setting and character descriptions. | Script is mostly formatted correctly with a few errors and does not include setting and character descriptions. | Script has many errors in the way it is formatted and does not include setting and character descriptions. | Script has so many errors that it makes it very difficult to read and follow. |
| **Plot Structure** | The scene follows the proper Aristotelian Plot Structure where you can clearly see the five elements. | The scene follows the Plot Structure but it is hard to find where the five elements are. | The scene vaguely follows the Plot Structure correctly and is missing some elements. | The scene does not follow the Plot Structure and is missing many elements. |
| **Characters** | The characters are named and clearly described in the character description. The characters are also well developed within the scene with clear emotions and objectives. | The characters are not described in a character description. The characters have character development, emotion and objectives but they all lack clarity. | The characters have one of the following: development, emotion, objectives. | The characters were not clearly thought out and it is hard to keep track of them. |
| **Presentation** | Your presentation contains all of the required elements and you present a convincing argument for why your fellow classmates should read/watch your play. | Your presentation contains all of the required elements and you tell your classmates why they should read/watch your play. | Your presentation contains most of the required elements. | Your presentation is unorganized and unconvincing. |
| **Creativity** | The scene contains many creative details and descriptions that contribute to the audience's enjoyment. The playwright has really taken time to think about his/her script to make it unique. | The scene contains creative details and/or descriptions that contribute to the audience's enjoyment. The playwright took some time to think about his/her script. | The scene contains a few creative details and/or descriptions. The playwright thought a little bit about their script before writing it. | There is little evidence of creativity in the scene and the playwright did not take time to think before writing. |

LESSON 2 TITLE

Playwriting Inspiration

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Students will demonstrate their understanding of how inspirations for plays are found by thinking of personal experiences in their lives that could inspire their plays.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Scripts or cuttings of scripts for each group (not included), laptops or access to a computer lab

HOOK

Invite the students to sit in a circle on the floor for “story time.” Read or tell them a story from your childhood. Invite others to share stories from their childhood but don’t let story time go longer than 10 or 15 minutes.

TRANSITION

Explain that many plays and musicals come from experiences in people’s lives. It does not mean that their play necessarily is an exact replication of their experience (although sometimes it is). More often, playwrights take emotions, or characters, or one moment to inspire an entire play.

GROUP WORK

Put the students into groups of about 5 and give each group a script and tell them to read, as a group, the first scene or act (or the equivalent thereof). They may read it however they want in their groups, whether that’s aloud or on their own. This will take a while but that is OK! Tell them that as they read be thinking because when they are done, they must come up as a group with five possible inspirations that the playwright could have had to write this play. They can be emotions, made up characters, historical events, ANYTHING!

TRANSITION

After they have come up with five possible inspirations, have them take out laptops/go to a computer lab. But before they move or get laptops and become distracted, tell them what they will be doing. Tell them that this will be solo work so there can be some chit-chat but not much.

DIRECTION

They will be researching the playwright who wrote the script excerpt that they read. They should be looking for stories and facts about their childhood, relationships, romances, education, where they lived/travelled etc. They may also research the time period that the play was written in. From the research they find, they need to come up with at LEAST one more inspiration that the playwright could have had. Explain that the five they came up with in their groups was based on interpretation from the text while this one should be based on their research. Tell them to print out (or write down if printing is not an option) any important facts, names or dates that they may need because they will be explaining their research and inspiration to their groups and **they will be turning in their research**. Also, during the time that they are allotted for this research, they need to think of one experience, character, or feeling from the playwright’s life that could have possibly inspired this play. It does not need to be the exact same as the play, but something that could have sparked the idea for the playwright.

GROUP WORK

Put laptops away/return to classroom and get back into their groups. Each person should share their researched idea and their personal idea for the inspiration for the play.

DISCUSSION

Bring the students back together and call on a few people to share what they found as inspiration. How did their ideas change before and after their research? If they are comfortable sharing with the class, what was their personal experience that they thought could have inspired the play?

**BUT does it really matter whether or not we know exactly what the playwright’s exact inspiration was? The interpretation of the play is all up to the audience.**

GUIDED PRACTICE

Have the students bring out a piece of paper and tell them that we are now focusing on the short plays that each student will write. Each student needs to write down at least ten life experiences or influential people in their lives that could potentially be inspirations for their plays. Make sure to stress the idea once more that it does not mean that the play has to be exactly about the experience, it just means that the emotions or issues are present.

REINFORCING THE LEARNING

Check to make sure that everyone has written down ten items but let the students keep them. Tell the students that they don’t have to use these ideas, it is just to help them start thinking and being creative. Their playwriting project is not something that you can write the night before, they need to be thinking about it starting now.

LESSON 3 TITLE

Script Writing – How To

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Students will demonstrate their understanding of the proper way to write a script by correcting a poorly formatted script.

MATERIALS NEEDED

6 hats, Birthday month labels, stage directions written for each birthday months, script formatting site loaded, poorly formatted script copies

HOOK

Clear the desks and tape the floor like a stage writing “Audience” on the board so they know which way is up and down stage. As students walk in, have 6 hats/bowls that are labeled “January & February” “March & April” “May & June” “July & August” “September & October” and “November & December.” Tell them to draw out a piece of paper from their birthday month hat and follow the direction.

January & February: Crawl C, roll DL, and then hop to UR.

March & April: Prance UL, laugh as you strut DC, and then tiptoe C.

May & June: Waltz DL, creep UR, and then sing as you skip UL.

July & August: Crab walk CR, twirl UC and then hum as you run backwards to DL.

September & October: Float UR, “moo” as you sneak to UL and then lunge to DC.

November & December: Slide DR, cry as you fly to UL and then hula DR.

TRANSITION

Have them all sit down in their groups in the place that they ended up at. Does anyone know what those commands are called? Stage Directions! In your scenes, you are going to want to write stage directions because you don’t want your characters to just stand there the entire time or have to decide for themselves where to go. Some of that can be left up to the actor/director’s interpretation but there still needs to be stage directions in your scenes. Another thing that they can and need to add into their scenes is emotion.

GUIDED PRACTICE

Have everyone stand up and tell them that you are going to call out different emotions and they are to walk all around the stage with that emotion. Start out with emotions like happy, sad, and angry. Then call out emotions like hyper, ashamed, exhausted, hopeless, humored, and delirious. Encourage them to be creative in the way they walk.

GROUP PRACTICE

Have the students return to their groups in the place on the stage they ended up. Each group needs to take out a piece of paper and pen. Each group needs to write out a stage direction similar to what they did at the beginning of class but with one addition. This time, their stage direction needs an emotion as well. Give them an example of “Tip-toe upstage left happily” or “Dance center stage depressed.” Each group needs to write down five stage directions that includes an action, stage direction, and emotion. When they are done, have all the students sit where the audience is. Have the January & February group stand up and have one person from the March & April call out the stage directions that their group wrote down. The Jan/Feb group must follow these five directions all across the stage. The Jan/Feb group will then call out their directions for the Mar/Apr group and so on for the rest of the groups.

INSTRUCTION

Bring up <http://playwrightscentersf.org/submissions/docs/PCSFPlayFormat2012.pdf> on the projector and go through the correct way of formatting: Capitalization, headers, alignment, stage directions, emotion, page numbers, title page, character and setting description.

GROUP PRACTICE

Have them get back into their birthday groups from the beginning of class. Bring out the five stage directions that they wrote and they must now create a scene that contains all five of those stage directions. Every member of the group must have at least one line. It needs to be written out in the proper format. Make sure they know that they are writing this but all final drafts of their plays should be typed. They may add other stage directions, but the 5 that they wrote earlier **MUST** be included.

MODEL

With the time left, have groups who want to, perform their scenes.

CHECKING FOR UNDERSTANDING

Leave time for a small quiz. Hand out the one page script with many mistakes on it in regards to formatting. Tell the students to correct it.

Collect the quizzes.

STUDENT’S COPY

FRANKENSTEIN By Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, adapted for radio by Antony Ellis (06/07/1955)

Characters

DR. VICTOR FRANKENSTEIN FRANKENSTEIN’S MONSTER

HENRY (Victor’s friend) ELIZABETH (Victor’s cousin & girlfriend)

Setting: Henry’s house, on the back porch, late in the evening.

Prior to this scene, Dr. Frankenstein created a monster. When his monster starts destroying

things and killing people, Dr. Frankenstein runs away to England, hoping to leave the evil

monster behind him.

ELIZABETH

screaming

Victor! Victor!

VICTOR

We’re out here, Beth.

ELIZABETH

Oh I’ve just had a horrible experience. Darling, I’m so glad to see you!

VICTOR

You’re pale, Beth. Sit down right here next to me.

HENRY

Oh, what happened, Beth?

ELIZABETH

I was . . . I was walking in the woods not far from here when I looked up and saw . . . and saw a man . . . sort of a man standing over me.

HENRY: Well men aren’t so bad, that is if you happen to know the right ones, and you do.

Elizabeth:

I’m not joshing, Henry. He was not exactly a man. He was twice the height of anyone I’d ever seen. And his skin looked like dried parchment. It’s incredible, but I think I’ve seen a monster.

HENRY

Monster?

ELIZABETH

Yes, I . . . I ran away. He didn’t follow me; just, just stared after me. Watching me. You do believe me, don’t you?

HENRY:

A monster stared after you?

ELIZABETH:

Oh, look, look! Henry, Victor, through the trees right out there! Look! There he is again!

(wind blowing)

TEACHER’S COPY/KEY

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ELIZABETH

(screaming)

Victor! Victor!

VICTOR

We’re out here, Beth.

ELIZABETH

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VICTOR

You’re pale, Beth. Sit down right here next to me.

HENRY

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A monster stared after you?

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is again!

(wind blowing)

January & February:

Crawl C, roll DL, and then hop to UR.

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March & April:

Prance UL, laugh as you strut DC, and then tiptoe C.

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May & June:

Waltz DL, creep UR, and then sing as you skip UL.

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July & August:

Crab walk CR, twirl UC and then hum as you run backwards to DL.

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September & October:

Float UR, “moo” as you sneak to UL and then lunge to DC.

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November & December:

Slide DR, cry as you fly to UL and then hula DR.

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LESSON 4 TITLE

Aristotelian Plot Structure

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Students will demonstrate their understanding of why the Aristotelian Plot Structure is important in playwriting by performing scenes without all five elements and discussing the elements in other stories.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Tape, Signs for each of the five elements

HOOK

Before the students walk in, clear the desks to the sides of the classroom and use tape to create the Aristotelian Plot Structure diagram on the floor in a way that covers all of the floor space that you have. As they walk in just tell them to sit anywhere on the line. Ask if anyone remembers what this is from last year. Hopefully someone will and will say “Plot Structure!”

INSTRUCTION

Pull out the five signs that have each of the five elements written on them (exposition, inciting incident, rising action, climax, denoument). Review each one by one in order and hand it to a person on the area of the line that corresponds to the element. If a student knows what the element is before you explain it, then have the student explain it. Now split the students into five groups according to where they are on the line but make the groups relatively equal.

GROUP PRACTICE

Tell the groups that they are to create a short scene that only contains the element of their group. So the group with the element of “Exposition” will create a scene where the exposition is the only part of the scene and the group with the element “Climax” will create a scene with only a climax. Tell the students that these scenes will and should be terrible scenes if they only include that one element.

PERFORMANCE

After discussing and rehearsing in their groups for five minutes, students will perform their scenes. Have them perform in the order of the elements they have: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and denouement.

DISCUSSION

Ask the students what they thought about the scenes. Did they feel complete? How did they feel after watching each scene? Draw the plot structure on the board and ask a member from each group to come write a few words that described their element from their scene on the appropriate place on the diagram. Ask the students if the five random elements would make a good scene? Can you just choose a random exposition, some random rising action points, etc. and put them together to form a story? Does a student want to volunteer to try and tell a story with the five random elements? Did it turn into a good story?

GROUP PRACTICE

Tell the students to split back into their groups and create a scene with their element again but this time add all of the other elements as well.

PERFORMANCE

After discussing and rehearsing for 5-10 minutes, have the groups perform. After each group performs, discuss with the class where each element of the plot structure was in the scene.

DISCUSSION

After doing this, why is this plot structure so important? What does it add to a scene? How, as the audience, does it help? Can you think of some movies or books that don’t follow this structure traditionally? But can you see that in some shape or form, they all follow a type of this plot structure?

CHECKING FOR UNDERSTANDING

Choose a fairy tale title to examine together as a class:

Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty, Rapunzel, Snow White, Rumpelstiltskin, Pinocchio, Aladdin, Jack and the Beanstalk, Little Red Riding Hood, Beauty and the Beast, The Three Little Pigs, Goldilocks and the Three Bears etc.

Together go through the storyline of the fairy tale and highlight the five elements of the story. Remember that personal interpretation has a large effect on the analysis – as long as the class can agree on the elements it will work.

REINFORCING THE LEARNING

Ask the students to think about their day yesterday. Do they see a plot structure within their day? What was the exposition? The climax? Etc. Think about their past week? Is there a plot structure there as well? The month? Tell them to turn to a partner, choose a time period within the last month and explain how their lives followed the Aristotelian plot structure. Make sure they hit every element. After they have shared, tell the students that this is a very good jumping off point for writing their scenes. They should be able to label each part in their story with these elements.

INDIVIDUAL PRACTICE

Have students pull out a piece of paper and writing utensil and begin to outline their play/story. They should take their idea and flesh it out to the plot structure elements considering the storyline and arc of the play.

ASSESSMENT

Students can turn in their outlines for evaluation and feedback.

LESSON 5 TITLE

Characterization is Important!

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Students will demonstrate their understanding of the importance of characterization in their plays by reviewing character development, emotion, and objectives.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Candy, clear bowl, strips of paper

HOOK

When all of the students are in their seats, bring a desk in front of the class and set a bowl of candy on it. Go to the board and write “**Objective: Get a piece of candy.”** Wait and wait until someone asks about the candy/mentions it/takes a piece. The first person to do something like this gets a piece and then you should go to the board and write the tactic on the board. For example, if a student asks you for a piece, write “Asking” on the board. If a student just takes a piece, write “by force” on the board. If the student makes you feel bad for them so you give them a piece, write “pity” on the board. They can’t use the same tactic twice and keep this up until everyone has gotten a piece of candy.

DISCUSSION

All of these ways that people got candy, what are these called in relationship to the objective? **TACTICS!** Why are objectives and tactics important in scenes? These are things that everyone should be thinking about as they create their characters for their plays. Every single character needs an objective not matter how small the character is, even if it’s the delivery man that has one line. Is his objective to deliver the package? Or is his objective to deliver the package as fast as he can so that he can finish his route and get home to his wife and newborn baby boy? Obviously this entire backstory does not have to be evident in what he says, but the emotions that come with that objective should be evident. By creating a backstory with an objective and tactics, you will be able to create more meaningful dialogue. What else is important to include in your characters in your plays? Write the ideas on the board. All of these ideas are awesome but are all of your characters going to immediately start like this? **Character development** is key in all plays.

TRANSITION

Hand out everyone two strips of paper. As you do this, remind everyone that we already briefly talked about emotions when we talked about stage directions. Think about those emotions that we used in the stage directions. Tell them that everyone needs to write one emotion on each piece of paper and put them all in the hat.

MODEL

Pick two students who are brave and are willing to be the first to perform and have them come up to the front of the class. Ask the class for a suggestion of a location/relationship/genre for a scene. Then each student will draw out a strip one at a time and announce it to the class. The first emotion they pull out is the emotion they will start as in the scene and the second emotion they pull out is the emotion they must develop into and end the scene as. For example, if a student pulls out “depressed” and “embarrassed,” he must start the scene acting depressed but slowly transition into being embarrassed.

DISCUSSION

After the first couple, ask the students what they observed the performers do to make the transition. Why does this kind of development make for an interesting scene? All of their plays must involve character development and each character must have some sort of development.

GROUP PRACTICE

Have more duos choose two emotions and perform scenes with the emotional transition.

INDIVIDUAL PRACTICE

Have students take their play outlines from last class period and add characterization to them. Students should consider relationships, objectives, tactics, etc. as they begin to write dialogue in the outline.

Have student take their outlines home to write out in proper format with more detail for their rough draft.

REINFORCING THE LEARNING

Remind the students that their rough drafts are due next class period.

LESSON 6 TITLE

Peer Reviewing

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Students will demonstrate their understanding of peer reviewing by reviewing a classmate’s short play.

MATERIALS NEEDED

“Arsenic and Old Lace” script cutting

HOOK

Pass out the “Arsenic and Old Lace” script cutting but don’t tell anyone that they are from a famous play. Some students may recognize the play but others may not.

INDIVIDUAL PRACTICE

Tell the students to read through the script and ‘peer review’ it. Within the script, they must make at least three notes and at the end of the script, they need to write two things that they like about it and one thing that they would improve/change about it. Give them time to do so.

DISCUSSION

Reveal to the students that this is ‘Arsenic and Old Lace” by Joseph Kesselring, a very famous play and playwright. Discuss that this play is super famous but you were all able to still find things to change/improve about it. It is **ALL** up to the playwright whether or not they want to take the edits and reviews into consideration.

GUIDED PRACTICE

Students will now switch their rough drafts with another student. Write these instructions on the board but explain that they need to write their name at the top of the scripts so we know who edited it. Then explain that they need to find 10 edits to make within the script and then at the end, they must write out three things that they liked about the script and two things that they would improve/change about it. Tell them that they will be getting a grade for completing this peer review.

PARTNER WORK

After a suitable time for peer review, have the students get back with the student that they switched with and discuss. They should explain why they made the edits, what changes they would personally make but most importantly, explain what you loved about the script.

REINFORCING THE LEARNING

Remind the students that they are to take their rough draft home with them so they can make the edits if they choose to do so. But make sure that their editor’s name is on it. They need to bring this rough draft/edited script to class tomorrow along with their **FINAL DRAFT.**

ABBY

Well… it’s Jonathan… It’s been a long time since you ran away from us.

MARTHA

Yes. Where have you been all these years?

JONATHAN

Oh, England, South Africa, Australia. The last five years, Doctor Einstein and I have been in Chicago.

ABBY

Really? We were in Chicago for the World’s Fair.

MARTHA

We didn’t like it. We found Chicago awfully warm.

DOCTOR

Year, it got too hot for us, too.

ABBY

Well, Jonathan, it was nice to see you again. I-I mean, if you’re in a hurry to get somewhere-

JONATHAN

Not at all, Aunt Abby.

MARTHA

But, ah-

ABBY

(Interrupting)

Martha, dear, Martha we mustn’t let the soup boil over. Ah, Jonathan, if you’ll excuse us for a minute?

JONATHAN

Of course.

ABBY

Come along, Martha.

(The Aunts go into the kitchen and close the door behind them)

DOCTOR

Jonny, we have got to work fast. The police… the police have got pictures of your face… I’ve got to find a place to operate… And we’ve got to find a place for Mr. Spenalzo, too.

JONATHAN

Don’t waste any worry on that rat.

DOCTOR

But, ah-ah, we can’t leave a dead body in the rumble seat. Ohh, ohh, you shouldn’t have killed him, Jonny. He was a nice fellow. He gives us a lift and what happened?

JONATHAN

He said I looked like Boris Karloff.

LESSON 7 TITLE

Turn in Plays and Present

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVE

Students will demonstrate their playwriting abilities by turning in their short plays and presenting them.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Rubrics to grade the presentations

HOOK

Have the numbers 1 through 30 written on the board and tell the students that they will all come up and put their name by a number and that is the order they will be presenting their plays in.

INSTRUCTION

Go over the elements that their presentation must contain. Ask them to bring up their final draft to hold as they present. After they are done, they will hand their script to you.

PRESENTATION

Students will present their plays and turn them in.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| CATEGORY | **Superior** | **Excellent** | **Good** | **Fair** |
| **Format** | Script is formatted correctly, including setting and character descriptions. | Script is mostly formatted correctly with a few errors and does not include setting and character descriptions. | Script has many errors in the way it is formatted and does not include setting and character descriptions. | Script has so many errors that it makes it very difficult to read and follow. |
| **Plot Structure** | The scene follows the proper Aristotelian Plot Structure where you can clearly see the five elements. | The scene follows the Plot Structure but it is hard to find where the five elements are. | The scene vaguely follows the Plot Structure correctly and is missing some elements. | The scene does not follow the Plot Structure and is missing many elements. |
| **Characters** | The characters are named and clearly described in the character description. The characters are also well developed within the scene with clear emotions and objectives. | The characters are not described in a character description. The characters have character development, emotion and objectives but they all lack clarity. | The characters have one of the following: development, emotion, objectives. | The characters were not clearly thought out and it is hard to keep track of them. |
| **Presentation** | Your presentation contains all of the required elements and you present a convincing argument for why your fellow classmates should read/watch your play. | Your presentation contains all of the required elements and you tell your classmates why they should read/watch your play. | Your presentation contains most of the required elements. | Your presentation is unorganized and unconvincing. |
| **Creativity** | The scene contains many creative details and descriptions that contribute to the audience’s enjoyment. The playwright has really taken time to think about his/her script to make it unique. | The scene contains creative details and/or descriptions that contribute to the audience’s enjoyment. The playwright took some time to think about his/her script. | The scene contains a few creative details and/or descriptions. The playwright thought a little bit about their script before writing it. | There is little evidence of creativity in the scene and the playwright did not take time to think before writing. |