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Anatomy of script

Duration: 2 weeks

Driving question

How does a performer, director, designer or dramaturg navigate the various facets of a script?

Overview

Students are introduced to the key conventions of a script and explore how they can be used by actors, directors and dramaturgs to create an engaging theatrical work.

| Stage 4 outcomes | Stage 5 outcomes |
| --- | --- |
| A student: | A student: |
| 4.1.3 devises and enacts drama using scripted and unscripted material | 5.1.3 devises, interprets and enacts drama using scripted and unscripted material or text |
| 4.3.1 identifies and describes elements of drama, dramatic forms, performance styles, techniques and conventions in drama | 5.3.1 responds to, reflects on and evaluates elements of drama, dramatic forms, performance styles, dramatic techniques and theatrical conventions |
| 4.3.3 describes the contribution of individuals and groups in drama using relevant drama terminology. | 5.3.3 analyses and evaluates the contribution of individuals and groups to processes and performances in drama using relevant drama concepts and terminology. |

[Drama 7-10 Syllabus](http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/learning-areas/creative-arts/drama-7-10-syllabus) © NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales, 2003.

Content

Through workshop exercises, students gain an understanding of the importance of clear and consistent formatting and understand how to format scripted drama. Students document and critically reflect on their experiences reflecting on how this information supports their learning in drama.

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| Cross-curriculum content and key competencies |
| Information and communication technology  |
| Literacy  |

Embedded elements of drama

* Role and character
* Time and place
* Language

Assessment

All activities require students to demonstrate their learning and are all assessment for learning activities.

Teaching and learning activities

The following learning experiences are structured to provide students with a practical and theoretical understanding of how to structure a script.

Brainstorm

In the centre of the room place a large sheet of butcher’s paper, markers and an assortment of scripts.

Students will:

1. read and review the scripts
2. brainstorm and write down anything they note about the script form and structure. This may include:
	* titles of scripts
	* layout
	* page numbers
	* dialogue
3. discuss students’ notes on the butcher’s paper.

Use the butcher’s paper as a starting point for student learning. As students’ progress through the tasks they can add to this sheet of butcher’s paper which will be placed on a wall or accessible space in the classroom.

Before the action

At the beginning of a script, key information is provided to performers, directors, designers and dramaturgs. As a class review a selection of scripts and determine if the following information is presented:

* title page
* dramatis personae
* scene list
* time.

Teacher in role – contentless scenes

1. Provide students with a copy of the **contentless scenes handout.**
2. Explain to students that you are a director with a specific idea for the scene on the handout and that you will be auditioning the actors for a role in your up and coming Hollywood movie. Their job is to stage the scene for the director using the script provided.
3. Provide students with some time to stage and rehearse the scene. It is important not to answer any questions regarding, time, place and character and encourage students to interpret the scene as they see appropriate.
4. After an appropriate amount of rehearsal time ask students to present their performances to the class.
5. After the performances, explain that none of the students met the director’s vision.
6. Facilitate a discussion and logbook reflection of the importance of clarity in scriptwriting. A question to guide their reflection could be:
	* What information would have helped you achieve the director’s vision?

Anatomy of a script

1. Review slides 5-10 of the supporting **powerpoint** highlighting how the conventions of a script provide a clear picture from the playwright and provide us with more information to create the ‘world of our production’.
2. Highlight the Drama-specific terminology to foster literacy and build students’ vocabulary. If these are new terms it may be beneficial for students to develop a glossary of key terms in their logbooks.

Scriptwriting

Now students are aware of the key conventions of scripted drama ask them to log onto a scriptwriting software such as [www.celtx.com](http://www.celtx.com/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank).

Students will:

* create a new project by adjusting the contentless scene to include all of the conventions of a script covered within the workshop OR by adopting the role of a playwright and create a new scene. Within their scene they must include the following conventions of a script:
	+ title page
	+ dramatis personae
	+ scene list
	+ time
	+ scene description
	+ stage directions
	+ dialogue
	+ end scene designations.

Reflection

Students will:

* contribute any new information they have learnt to the mind-map created at the beginning of the sequence
* respond to the reflective question: what are the conventions of a script and why are they important?
* encourage students to use their workshop experiences to support their findings.

Differentiation

Extension

Students could:

* create a new script on Celtx.com.
* write a scene or play based on a stimulus idea or script provided by the teacher.

Life skills

|  |
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| Life skills outcomes  |
| A student: |
| LS 1.2 explores a variety of playbuilding activities |

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Students could:

* read and perform a given script
* write a short scene about a daily ritual
* highlight the different parts of a script.

Evaluate

Feedback is formative during the lessons.

Reference list and resources

Access to [www.celtx.com](http://www.celtx.com/)

Contentless scene script

[Drama 7-10 Syllabus](http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/learning-areas/creative-arts/drama-7-10-syllabus) © NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales, 2003.

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