Playwrights for Change: Year 14

"Creating Community"

Creative Tips for Student Playwrights

Having trouble getting started on your script? Suffering from writer's block?
Read on for some quick tips and strategies to get inspired or to keep your creativity going.

❖ **Elements To Think About**

➢ **Theme -** Think about the theme of "**Creating Community**"

- Creating Community is the intentional process of bringing people together around shared interests, needs, values, or goals while fostering belonging, trust, inclusion, and mutual support. It turns a group of individuals into a connected community where members can participate, contribute, and take shared responsibility for one another and the group's purpose. It allows people with a common purpose to disagree respectfully and understand diverse viewpoints and experiences within that community.

❖ **Now think of the elements of your play**:

- What might the central character discover that changes what they understand about who they are, who they used to be, or who they may become? How might the character make that discovery? Is the journey of discovery enlightening, painful, or both?
- What might the central character discover about another person or group of people that helps the character understand them, help them, or work together with them? What could motivate the character to make that discovery, or avoid making that discovery?
- Is the character determined to make a difference in the world (big or small)? Does the character resist taking a stand? Does the character discover something totally unexpected about themselves or others?

➢ **Setting -** Where is your play set? At a school? In your community? In the future or the past? In outer space? Get creative—your play can be set anywhere!

➢ **Characters -** You can have up to six characters in your play. Who are the characters you're working with? What do they want? How do they feel about one another? What are they afraid of? How do they feel about themselves? Interesting characters have thoughts, feelings, reactions to situations, and sometimes are unpredictable. Do the characters change over the course of your play?

➢ **Plot -** What happens to your characters over the course of your play? Is there a beginning, a middle, and an end? What is the central conflict or event in your play? If the character doesn't end up "happily ever after," does the discovery the character makes change her/his life in a small but significant way?

Does the discovery make a difference for anyone else?

❖ Brainstorming and Getting Started

- Create a "portrait" of your main character by making a list of words that describes him or her. Be as specific as possible.

- Try writing about a character's worst day, their favorite song, biggest fear, most treasured possession, person they most admire, or question they most want to ask another character.

- Outlining or mapping out your story or plot before you start writing your script is a great way to begin.

- Try telling the story of what happens in your play to a friend or family member and repeat this a couple of different times so you get the feel for the important events you're imagining.

- Create a storyboard with text and/or images, or even some kind of map. Use drawings, symbols, or doodles to represent events, characters, etc.

- Try putting key scenes on separate sheets of paper and lay them out in different orders to experiment with the sequence of events.

❖ What If I Get Stuck While Writing?

- Go back and read aloud what you have written so far. Sometimes reading out loud can give you fresh perspectives or new ideas!

- Stuck on a particular scene or detail? Skip ahead or go back! Sometimes the order of your plot or sequence of events in your play is not the order in which you write your script.

- Find a friend or family member to read your work and give you some feedback.

- Take a break! Get up from the computer, take a stretch break, eat a snack, take a walk, or just do something else for a little while. Then come back to your script with fresh eyes.