

Staging the Story: A Playscript Adventure

Learning objective: To identify and use the key features of a playscript, including characters, dialogue, and stage directions.

Read the short playscript below featuring Pip the bookworm and Nova the owl. Then, answer the questions to test your knowledge of how playscripts are written.

SCENE 1: The Great Oak Library

(The stage is filled with piles of colourful books. PIP is sitting on a large dictionary. NOVA enters from the left, flapping her wings gently.)

NOVA: (Looking up at the stars through the skylight) It is a clear night, Pip! Perfect for stargazing. Would you like to join me?

PIP: (Closing his book with a soft thump) I would love to, Nova! But I am stuck on this tricky chapter. Do you think we could read under the moonlight?

NOVA: That sounds like a brilliant idea. Let us bring a torch and some blankets.

(PIP hops off the dictionary and follows NOVA off stage.)

Word bank: dialogue · stage directions · character names · scene · props · setting

1. In a playscript, what do we call the words written in brackets, such as '(Closing his book with a soft thump)'? (1 mark)

2. Why are character names written on the left-hand side, followed by a colon? (2 marks)

3. Look at the beginning of the passage. How does the playwright describe the setting of the scene? (2 marks)

4. If you were the director, what 'props' would you need to find for Pip and Nova to use on stage? (2 marks)

5. Write one line of dialogue that Pip might say if he discovers a new, exciting book in the library. (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a stage design for 'The Great Oak Library'. Show where Pip and Nova are standing and label the props you have included, like the books, the torch, and the blankets.



Extension challenge: Choose a favourite storybook scene and rewrite it as a short playscript. Remember to include a scene description, character names in capital letters, and stage directions in brackets.