

Staging a Story: The Theatre Workshop

Learning objective: To identify the features of a playscript and understand how dialogue and stage directions guide a performance.

Read the playscript extract below carefully. Pay attention to the layout, the character names, and the instructions written in brackets. Then, answer the questions provided to show your understanding of how plays are structured.

Setting: A dusty, sunlit attic filled with old trunks. Pip the caterpillar sits on a velvet cushion, holding a magnifying glass. Max the monkey is busy rummaging through a wooden crate.

PIP: (Examining a dusty map) Max, do you think we will find the hidden treasure today? My research suggests it is nearby.

MAX: (Holding up a brass compass) I have calculated the distance, Pip! Based on the angles of the sun, we must be very close. It is a brilliant mathematical puzzle!

PIP: (Adjusting his spectacles) Look! Underneath that loose floorboard. Is that a golden key?

MAX: (Jumping with excitement) It is! I knew my coordinates were precise. Let us investigate together.

(They both lean over the floorboard, peering into the shadows.)

PIP: This is much more thrilling than reading about adventures in my books. We are actually living one!

MAX: Indeed, Pip. Now, let us see if this key fits the lock on that heavy iron chest in the corner.

Word bank: Dialogue · Stage directions · Character · Script · Performance · Setting · Bracket · Act

1. Identify two items that Pip and Max find or use during their adventure in the attic. (2 marks) (2 marks)

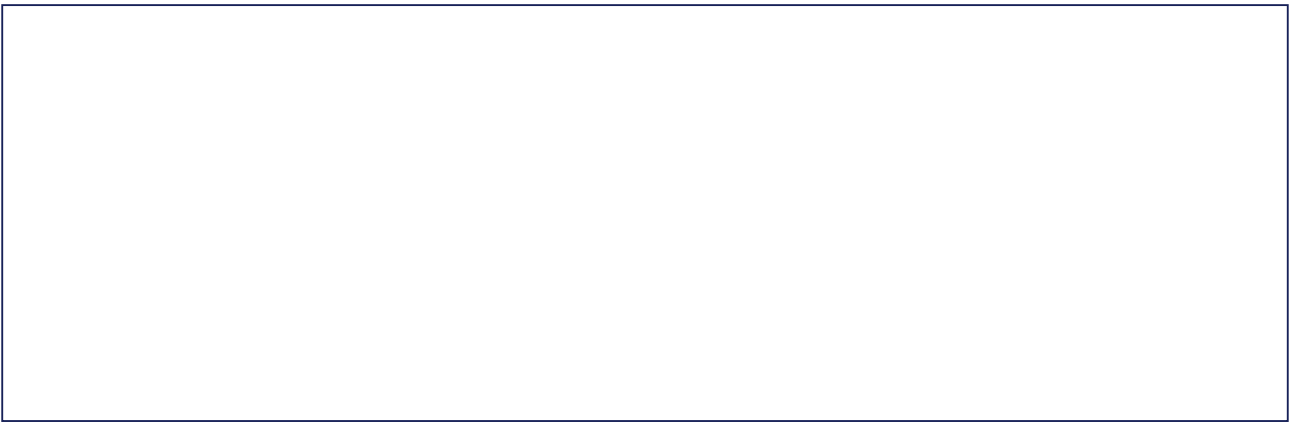
2. Where is the scene set, and what are the two characters doing at the start of the script? (2 marks) (2 marks)

3. Why does the author use brackets for the instructions, such as '(Jumping with excitement)'? (2 marks) (2 marks)

4. What can you infer about Max's personality based on his dialogue about the compass and the treasure? (2 marks) (2 marks)

5. Do you think Pip prefers reading books or going on real-life adventures? Justify your answer using evidence from the text. (3 marks) (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a detailed illustration of the attic scene. Ensure you include the dusty trunks, the sunbeams, Pip with his magnifying glass, and Max holding the brass compass.



Extension challenge: Write a short continuation of this script (approx. 50 words) featuring a new stage direction and a moment where Max uses maths to solve a problem regarding the iron chest. Explain why stage directions are essential for actors to give a convincing performance.