

Mastering the Stage: Playscript Workshop

Learning objective: To identify and use the structural features of a playscript, including character names, stage directions, and dialogue.

Read the short scene featuring Leo the Lion and Pip the caterpillar. Use the passage to answer the questions below, paying close attention to how stage directions inform the reader about character emotion and movement.

SCENE: The Great Library Tree. (The stage is filled with colourful books. PIP is perched on a high branch, trying to reach a heavy dictionary. LEO enters, looking concerned.)

LEO: (Gently) Goodness, Pip! That book looks far too heavy for a small caterpillar. Would you like a lift?

PIP: (Struggling as she pushes the book) Oh, hello Leo! I am trying to find the perfect word to describe a sunset. This dictionary is a mountain of paper!

LEO: (He smiles warmly and uses his tail to carefully nudge the book down) Let me help you with that. Teamwork makes the best stories, don't you think?

PIP: (Beaming) Absolutely! Thank you, Leo. Now, let's find a word that sounds like gold.

Word bank: Dialogue · Stage direction · Cast list · Setting · Parentheses · Performance · Interaction

1. Identify two features of a playscript used in the passage above that would not usually be found in a storybook. Explain why they are necessary. (2 marks)

2. Find the stage direction regarding Leo's action. How does this specific movement change our perception of his character? (2 marks)

3. Why do you think stage directions are written in parentheses and often in italics? (2 marks)

4. Compare and contrast how Pip feels at the beginning of the scene versus the end. Justify your answer using evidence from the text. (3 marks)

5. What might happen if the stage directions were removed from this script? How would it affect the performance for an audience? (3 marks)

Draw: Sketch the scene of 'The Great Library Tree'. Include Leo and Pip, making sure to draw their expressions to match the stage directions provided in the script.



Extension challenge: Write an additional two lines of dialogue for this scene. Include one original stage direction that describes how the characters should move or speak. Then, explain why you chose those specific directions to enhance the drama of the scene.