Mastering the Stage: Playscript Skills

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

Read each question carefully and use your knowledge of playscript conventions to complete the tasks. Ensure you use formal punctuation where required.

N/A - This worksheet focuses on independent application of playscript conventions.

Word bank: Stage directions · Dialogue · Character list · Setting description · Parentheses · Action

1. Identify two key features of a playscript that distinguish it from a traditional narrative story. Explain why these features are essential for an actor. (2 marks)

2. Max the monkey is preparing a play about a lost treasure. Write a short snippet of dialogue (two lines) between Max and Pip the caterpillar. Ensure you include stage directions in parentheses to show how they are moving or feeling. (3 marks)

3. Why do playwrights use capital letters for character names at the start of a line? How does this help the reader or the person acting in the play? (2 marks)

4. Rewrite the following sentence into the format of a playscript stage direction: 'Nova the owl looked up at the stars and sighed happily.' (1 mark)

5. If you were writing a play, where would you place the 'Setting Description'? Why is this information important to include before the dialogue begins? (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a bird's-eye view of a theatre stage. Label where you would place your characters and note where you would write the stage directions on your script.

Extension challenge: Choose a scene from your favourite history topic (e.g., the Ancient Mayans or the Victorians). Write a 10-line playscript featuring Ellie the elephant as a narrator, ensuring you use at least three different types of stage directions.