

Features of a play script

What is a play script?

A written version of a play used by actors to prepare and rehearse for a performance.



Pangu and the Egg



The Tempest

Title

*The name given to
the play script.*



The Greatest
Archer



Romeo and Juliet

Character List

- Found at the beginning of a play script.
- It tells us what characters are in the play.
- Sometimes it gives us a description of the character and their characteristics.

War Horse character list:

Characters:

Narrator 1
Narrator 2
Albert
Albert's father
Mother
Joey
Captain Nicholls
Corporal Samuel Perkins
Captain Jamie Stewart
Trooper Warren
Tophorn
Doctor
Herr Hauptmann
Wounded Soldier
Girl/Emilie
Grandpapa
Bespectacled Officer
Ve t
Herr Major
Rudi (young soldier) Karl
(young soldier) Crazy Old
Friedrich
Soldier 1
Soldier 2
Sarge
Welshman
German
Sergeant Thunder
David
Major Martin
Auctioneer

Stage directions

ACT I

SCENE 1

The football-club locker-room. The locker-room is dark and empty. The main lights are switched on. OLD JOHN and TONY enter stage right. OLD JOHN is walking with the help of a stick.

OLD JOHN New paint job is it?

TONY New paint. New benches. New lockers. Even got new soap for the showers.

OLD JOHN *(Sits on a bench)* I don't recognise anything anymore. Except the smell.

TONY Don't suppose that ever changes

(BRIAN enters stage left. BRIAN is wearing a tracksuit. He's been on a run and looks flushed; out of breath.)

BRIAN Hi, Tony. Who's your boyfriend?

- Used to set the scene.
- They are an instruction. They tell an actor what they should be doing in that scene (their actions) or how they should talk.
- Normally presented in brackets or in *italics*.

Scene 1

The drawing room of Lady and Lord Montague, which is furnished with plush carpets, silk curtains and beautifully carved antique furniture. Lord Montague is sitting on a velvet sofa, smoking a pipe and reading the paper. Lady Montague is sitting at a grand piano, trying but failing to play a melody.

Setting the scene

It is a dark, cold night and Mel and Sid are sitting on a green park bench. The street lights are dim and the sound of the traffic can just be heard in the background.

SCENE ONE: *Daddy bear comes into the house. Mummy and baby follow him. They are tired after their morning walk in the woods.*

- Gives the actors information/a description about the scene
- Where it is
- What it is like (weather)
- Who is there

Dialogue

Stage Script - Macbeth

Act 1, Scene 1

SCENE I. A desert place.

Thunder and lightning. Enter three Witches

First Witch: When shall we three meet again
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

Second Witch: When the hurlyburly's done,
When the battle's lost and won.

Third Witch: That will be ere the set of sun.

First Witch: Where the place?

Second Witch: Upon the heath.

Third Witch: There to meet with Macbeth.



- The speech between characters
- The character's names are on the left hand side of the page
- No speech marks
- The speech is separated by a colon (:)

Scenes

Scene 1

The drawing room of Lady and Lord Montague, which is furnished with plush carpets, silk curtains and beautifully carved antique furniture. Lord Montague is sitting on a velvet sofa, smoking a pipe and reading the paper. Lady Montague is sitting at a grand piano, trying but failing to play a melody.

Lady Montague: Try as I might, I simply cannot get this blessed melody right!

Lord Montague: You are trying too hard, darling. Relax, look at the notes and let your fingers find their way to the right notes. Stop trying to get it right. Just feel the music.

Lady Montague: *(pushing a strand of hair from her face wearily)* Yes. Perhaps you are right.

- Like chapters in a book, it is a different part of the play.
- Used when you want to change the location or the time the dialogue is taking place.
- At the start of a new scene, it is important to say where and when it is happening.

Now try writing your own scene based at home using the features of a playscript.

Make sure there are no speech marks! Look at the different examples for guidance...