

Act 3: Summary

Hamlet gives the actors their instructions about the play they should perform, how to say the lines and to include a murder that mirrors how Claudius killed King Hamlet.

Things become very difficult for Hamlet: he struggles with the weight of his own pain and questions whether to end his life in his 'to be, or not to be'; and Ophelia (told to do so by Polonius) gives Hamlet back the love trinkets he has given her. He reacts angrily, claiming he never loved Ophelia and she would be better off joining a nunnery. Ophelia is deeply upset by this.

Polonius and Claudius, having secretly watched the conversation between Ophelia and Hamlet, discuss his strange behaviour. Claudius worries that Hamlet's madness is not just being lovesick: there is something more serious bothering him and this could be dangerous. They decide that Claudius will send Hamlet to Gertrude's room after the play. That way, Polonius can hide again and listen in to find out the true causes of Hamlet's madness.

The play begins. When poison is poured into the ear of the sleeping actor, Claudius reveals his guilt. He acts suspiciously, grows angry and cannot stand to be in the dark, faced with the reality of what he has done.

Hamlet and Horatio agree that Claudius' behaviour reveals his guilt.

Hamlet goes to see Gertrude in her chamber. They argue and Hamlet expresses his true feelings about her marriage to Claudius. Hamlet hears someone behind a curtain and stabs through it, thinking it is Claudius.

It is actually Polonius, Ophelia's father, who was sent by Claudius to spy on the conversation between Hamlet and Gertrude.

The ghost of Hamlet's father appears again, reminding Hamlet of his promise to get revenge. Because Gertrude does not see the ghost, she is now fully convinced that he is mad. Hamlet tries to convince her otherwise.

He drags Polonius' body out of the room.

Act 3, Lesson 1: Perform a playscript!

<p>Learning Intention</p>	<p>To explore the features of a playscript and their purpose.</p>
<p>Key Vocabulary</p>	<p>playscript, characters, character list, scene setting, stage directions, dialogue</p>
<p>Activities/ Lesson</p>	<p><u>Introduction:</u></p> <p>Ensure pupils are familiar with the plot up to and including the moment where Polonius is killed (Tony Ross/Leon Garfield retellings may support this as well as the Animated Tales https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OtNMjZoZNBm).</p> <p><u>Main Input:</u></p> <p>Give pupils copies of two short playscripts back-to-back. It is important that these are not too abstract or unfamiliar- ideally something children already know, i.e. based on a traditional tale or text they've read before. The dialogue should be the same on both, but one should be missing crucial features such as stage directions, cast list etc.</p> <p>With support of another member of staff such as your class TA, perform both (perform the boring one in a very boring, static way and really follow the stage directions on the other one to a tee, bringing the performance to life). Which did the children, as your audience, think was better and why? They will hopefully identify the one with all the necessary features! Then, ask them: What do you think helped me and ___ do a better job? Display the features menu on the board and talk them through each one. Can they find an example on their own playscript? How exactly did it help you and the other adult when you were performing?</p> <p><u>Main Activity – Prepare to perform!</u></p> <p>Split pupils into mixed attaining groups (numbers per group will depend on number of characters in your chosen model playscript). If possible, use a larger space such as a hall where they can spread out. In groups, give pupils time to prepare their playscript, really directing their attention to what features such as the stage directions are asking them to do as actors. You and any additional adults can circulate to provide feedback and support. Within the groups, pupils could also use the 'Help a friend improve' sentence stems to provide purposeful feedback to one another.</p> <p>Then, showcase each group's playscript and ask groups to feed back to one another- what went well? What could be even more brilliant?</p> <p><u>Reflection and looking ahead</u></p> <p>End with a game of 'fastest fingers first'. With the model playscripts in front of them, or new ones if you want to up the challenge, how quickly can pupils put their finger on... a stage direction? Character list? Scene setting? Repeat until pupils can confidently navigate the various features.</p>
<p>Notes for Teachers</p>	<p>This is designed to give pupils a practical, hands-on experience of working with a playscript before writing their own.</p> <p>Various model playscripts are available online on https://www.literacywagoll.com/scripts.html as well as other teaching resource websites your school may already be subscribed to. Depending on your cohort, it may even be</p>

	appropriate to use extracts from the original play of <i>Hamlet</i> .
Adaptive Teaching	Support: Playscript models could be adapted in length or the vocabulary simplified. Stretch: Can pupils annotate their model playscripts with additional stage directions or details?
Resources	Features menu 'Help a friend improve' sentence stems

Act 3, Lesson 2: Apply features

<p>Learning Intention</p>	<p>To apply the features of a playscript.</p>
<p>Key Vocabulary</p>	<p>playscript, characters, character list, scene setting, stage directions, dialogue</p>
<p>Activities/ Lesson</p>	<p><u>Introduction:</u></p> <p>Quickly recap the features of a playscript by displaying the features menu from the previous lesson and showing some snippets from example playscripts. What features can children spot? Can they give you a specific example?</p> <p><u>Main Input:</u></p> <p>Explain that writing a playscript is a fiddly process- there is LOTS to think about! Show an example on the board. What do children notice about the way it's laid out? How we separate the character's name from what they're saying? What happens with the lines when there is a new speaker?</p> <p><u>Main Activity – Turn a conversation into a playscript!</u></p> <p>Hand out speech bubble resource sheets. Explain that this is an imagined conversation between characters in Hamlet. Model turning the conversation into a correctly-formatted playscript, using the 'Playscript Rules' resource to remind you. As soon as pupils reach the end of the speech bubbles, they should continue the conversation- this will be a good opportunity to assess what they can do without the scaffolding of the speech bubbles.</p> <p><u>Reflection and looking ahead</u></p> <p>Using pre-prepared examples anticipating some of the common errors pupils might make (i.e. not using a colon to separate the character name from what they said, not beginning a new line for a new speaker etc), ask the class to help you fix each example. Then, children can look in their own work for any of these good mistakes and fix them up.</p>
<p>Notes for Teachers</p>	<p>Writing a playscript is quite a fiddly process, both in terms of the formatting and the features to include. This lesson is designed to give pupils a low-stakes opportunity to 'have a go' and also as an assessment for learning opportunity for you to know what might need extra focus when you model.</p>
<p>Adaptive Teaching</p>	<p>Support: Fewer speech bubbles could be given, or speech bubbles with a more familiar conversation (i.e. a teacher and a student) could be given for support.</p> <p>Stretch: You could give pupils a copy of the speech bubbles with no stage directions or shorten them so that pupils are flying solo without the scaffolding slightly earlier.</p>
<p>Resources</p>	<p>Speech bubbles resource</p> <p>Playscript rules</p>

Act 3, Lesson 3: Write!

<p>Learning Intention</p>	<p>To draft a playscript.</p>
<p>Key Vocabulary</p>	<p>playscript, characters, scene setting, stage directions, dialogue</p>
<p>Activities/ Lesson</p>	<p><u>Introduction:</u></p> <p>Display the playscript features menu from the first lesson in this sequence. Ask children to remind their partner- what does each one mean? What is its purpose (job)? Why is this feature important to include?</p> <p>NB before this lesson, it is important that children are very familiar with the events up to and including Claudius' reaction to the play.</p> <p><u>Main Input:</u></p> <p>Explain to pupils that over the next two lessons, we will be writing two scenes of a playscript to capture these moments:</p> <div data-bbox="608 898 1273 1205" data-label="Diagram"> <p>The diagram consists of two rectangular boxes connected by a right-pointing arrow. The first box, labeled 'Scene 1', contains two stick figures; one is speaking into a speech bubble. Below them is the text 'Hamlet gives an actor his instructions & tells Horatio his plan'. The second box, labeled 'Scene 2', contains a green bottle with a skull and crossbones, a pair of large eyes, and a silhouette of a person. Below them is the text 'Poison! Claudius' reaction'.</p> </div> <p>NB: these do not correspond with the scenes in the play itself, they are our own 'scenes' to help children structure their writing. The teaching point is that a new scene marks a new place, new characters or event- like a paragraph would in narrative writing.</p> <p>Reiterate that a playscript is NOT a story telling our readers what happened: it is a script to tell actors what to say and do in the present. Slipping into story writing is the most likely error/misconception. At this point, it may be helpful to introduce the narrative scaffold to make this teaching point as you are modelling.</p> <p>Model drafting Scene 1 of the playscript, 'thinking aloud' about the stage directions. Involve children in this process by asking them- <i>what would the character say? What would the character be doing/how would they say this? Show me the character's body language or <u>say</u> this line like they would- would they be whispering? Hissing? Shouting?</i> Throughout the modelling process, keep thinking aloud about the formatting, too, perhaps going to make some deliberate errors for pupils to stop you and correct, i.e. putting a long stage direction in brackets.</p> <p><u>Main activity & plenary</u></p> <p>Children can then write their own 'Scene 1', using the narrative scaffold to help them add detail and opportunities for stage directions. When they have had sufficient writing time, ask them to share their playscript with a partner, checking for any formatting errors or lines the character wouldn't say, i.e. very informal language.</p>

Notes for Teachers	<p>It is likely that children may fall into some of the following traps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Slipping into a story/using past tense - Incorrect formatting - Using informal or unrealistic language for the characters - Not using stage directions - Using dialogue that doesn't add value/move the plot along, i.e. "Okay then" <p>You can look out for these during the lesson and tailor tomorrow's input accordingly.</p>
Adaptive Teaching	<p>Some pupils may benefit from a word/phrase bank of possible stage directions.</p>
Resources	<p>Scene 1 and 2 visual prompts</p> <p>Narrative scaffold for children to turn into playscript form</p>

Act 3, Lesson 4: Finish drafting and proof-read!

<p>Learning Intention</p>	<p>To draft and proof-read a playscript.</p>
<p>Key Vocabulary</p>	<p>playscript, characters, scene setting, stage directions, dialogue</p>
<p>Activities/ Lesson</p>	<p><u>Introduction:</u></p> <p>Explain to pupils that today, we will be drafting our ‘Scene 2’ of the imagined playscript, where Claudius watches the play and reacts to what he sees, revealing that he is guilty. Recap this part of the story with the Tony Ross/Leon Garfield version of the text and ask children to listen out for anything Claudius says/does which reveal his guilt. They could make a note of these on a whiteboard/you could scribe these on flipchart paper.</p> <p><u>Main Input:</u></p> <p>Play the Animated Tales clip from 11:57-12:33. Ask pupils to imagine that they are Claudius, watching the uncomfortable scene, and show you with their body language, i.e. biting their nails, looking around them etc. What would they do? What would they say? How would they move or speak? Gather some ideas and scribe on flipchart paper so that pupils have plenty of ideas for stage directions when they write this scene independently.</p> <p>Using the same scaffolding as the previous lesson, model this part of the playscript. This will be trickier for pupils because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - they should include a short scene-setting paragraph, i.e. <i>“It is nighttime, and the stage is dark, apart from the light of a full moon. A figure wearing a crown sleeps on his side. He is surrounded by trees.”</i> - there will be less dialogue and more extended, full-sentence stage directions for what the actors are doing on stage and Claudius’ behaviour, i.e. ‘Claudius rises up out of his seat and crosses his arms angrily.’ - they need to think carefully about who else responds to Claudius- i.e. Gertrude noticing that Claudius seems uncomfortable, her reassuring him, servants obeying him, perhaps Hamlet whispering to Horatio... <p><u>Main activity & plenary</u></p> <p>Children then use the scaffolds to write this scene of their playscript. Give children plenty of writing time for this part of the playscript, stopping frequently for ‘debugging’ mini-plenaries, especially focusing on staying in the present tense when writing stage directions.</p> <p>For the main plenary, ask children to read each line of their playscript, perhaps tracking with their ruler so that they are only looking at one line at a time. Ask them to look out for missing words, missing/incorrect punctuation, spellings of key words and character names, and any formatting errors, i.e. forgetting brackets around short stage directions.</p>
<p>Notes for Teachers</p>	<p>Children can use their creativity to embellish the events in this part of the play but may need to be reminded that their ideas should be realistic and their words should sound like their character!</p>
<p>Adaptive Teaching</p>	<p>To reduce cognitive load, some children may benefit from including fewer characters in this scene, i.e. just Claudius and Gertrude, and focusing on writing less but making</p>

	thoughtful choices about what those characters would say/do.
Resources	Scene 1 and 2 visual prompts Narrative scaffold for children to turn into playscript form

Act 3, Lesson 5: Perform!

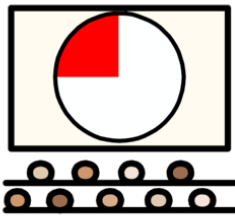
Learning Intention	To prepare my own playscript to perform.
Key Vocabulary	playscript, characters, stage directions, dialogue, tone, body language, facial expression, movement
Activities/ Lesson	<p><u>Introduction:</u></p> <p>Tell children that the focus of today’s lesson will be to perform a playscript: this time, their own! First, ask children to re-read their playscript but to imagine they are an actor about to perform this script. Would you be absolutely certain how to say each line and what to do? If not, you are probably missing a stage direction! Give pupils some time to make additions to their own playscripts, adding stage directions or more detail to the character dialogue.</p> <p><u>Main Input & Activity:</u></p> <p>Model reading through an example of a playscript from the previous day and thinking aloud about what you, as an actor, need to do in this moment. Ask for the children’s input, i.e. “This stage direction is ‘visibly worried’. How could I show that on my face?” Model any other processes you’d like pupils to take when preparing their own playscripts, i.e. repeating their lines to themselves, thinking about how their character would say each line, planning their movement etc.</p> <p>Organise pupils into groups depending on how many characters they have. Give them a set amount of time, in their groups, to prepare one playscript at a time to perform. As they do, it will become clear if they are missing any important stage directions, so they should have their editing pens at the ready throughout this process. If you are pushed for time, the groups could be assigned in advance and one successful playscript example could be chosen to work on.</p> <p>Circulate and provide support with following stage directions and saying lines with appropriate volume, movement and expression.</p> <p><u>Plenary</u></p> <p>Now that children are playscript experts, you could complete an exit assessment so that they can showcase their knowledge and skills. Provide pupils with a few lines of a playscript lacking ambitious dialogue or stage directions and challenge them to rewrite it, applying what they have learnt this week.</p>
Notes for Teachers	This lesson will be an opportunity to celebrate the success of children’s outcomes. It will also be handy to evidence for the National Curriculum requirement ‘preparing poems and play scripts to read aloud and to perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone, volume and action’ so would be helpful to capture video evidence of!
Adaptive Teaching	Groups can be arranged strategically to best support the needs of pupils or to maximise the effectiveness of any additional adults.
Resources	The ‘Help a friend improve!’ sentence stems from lesson 1 may come in handy during group work.

Resources

Playscript Features



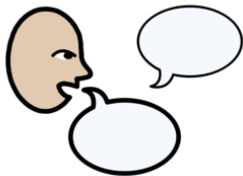
character list



scenes



scene setting



dialogue



stage directions

'Help a friend improve' feedback sentence stems

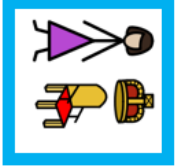


Help a friend improve!

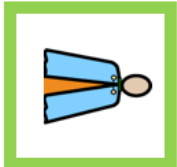
I like the way you... but you could...
On this line, why don't you...?
Next time, why don't you...?
It works well when you...
It would be great if...



Claudius



Gertrude



Polonius

Claudius and Gertrude are standing in a corner, watching Hamlet talk to himself.

What on earth is wrong with him?

shocked

I despair.

putting head in hands

We must do something. The man is mad!

whispering

I fear he will bring shame on our kingdom if he is not helped.

shaking head

Claudius strokes his chin thoughtfully.

My Lord? You called? What can I do?

Polonius comes scurrying in, panting from exhaustion.

That's it! I know just the fellow. Polonius?

excitedly

My poor boy.

with a deep sigh

He must be watched... for his own safety, of course.

faking worry

bowing at Claudius' feet

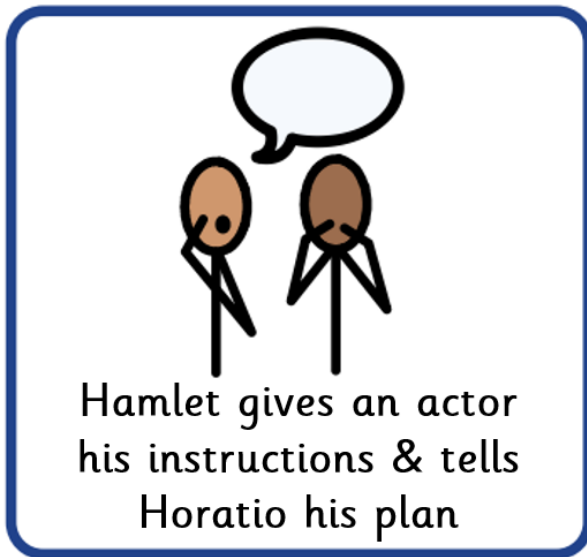
Continue the conversation!



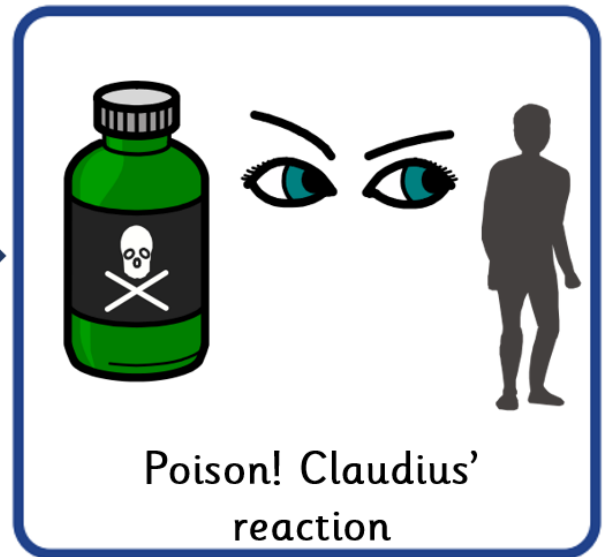
PLAYSCRIPT RULES

- longer stage directions → full sentences
- shorter ones in brackets with no capital letters
- character name + a colon: to introduce who is talking
- new line for a new character
- capital letters for the beginning of the character's line

Scene 1



Scene 2



For any children who might need more scaffolding, they could turn this narrative form into playscript form. NB some details are embellished/imagined to provide ideas about conversations or stage directions.

Hamlet goes up to an actor and flatters him about plays he's seen him in before. He asks the actor if he could perform a play where the main character, a king, is murdered by his brother. This wasn't what the actors were originally going to perform. Hamlet offers him a bag of gold coins. The actor agrees to help and asks how the murder should take place. Hamlet explains that the murderer should pour poison into his brother's ear while he is sleeping. The actor agrees. Hamlet warns him to tell no one about it, pretending that it's because it will be such a brilliant surprise. Hamlet then tells Horatio what he's done and asks him to watch Claudius closely during the play.

It is the part of the play where one actor sneaks up on the other and pours poison into his ear. Claudius begins to look very uncomfortable and asks Gertrude who these actors are and why they are performing such a violent play. She tries to comfort him. Claudius begins to demand that the lights are lit before running from the hall. He hides in a room and prays/talks to himself about his guilt.