

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, present tense, 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. One should be missing crucial features such as stage directions, character list etc, and the other should have helpful details and stage directions.</p> <p>Tell children that they are going to have a go at performing both and give them 10 minutes to practise both. Then, discuss: Which script did the children think made their jobs easier as actors? They will hopefully identify the one with all the necessary features! Then, ask them: What do you think helped you 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? Make sure you also ask children why they think stage directions would be in the present tense.</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>Debate! Ask pupils to decide which playscript feature (beyond dialogue) they think is the most important. Without this feature, how would it impact the actors and their performances?</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 and satisfies the National Curriculum statement 'identifying the audience for and purpose of the writing... and using other similar writing as models for their own'</p> <p>Various model playscripts are available online on https://www.literacywagoll.com/scripts.html as well as other teaching resource websites</p>

	<p>your school may already be subscribed to. Depending on your cohort, it may even be possible to use extracts from the original play of <i>Hamlet</i>.</p>
Adaptive Teaching	<p>Support: Playscript models could be adapted in length or the vocabulary simplified.</p> <p>Stretch: Can pupils annotate their model playscripts with additional stage directions or details?</p>
Resources	<p>Features menu</p> <p>'Help a friend improve' sentence stems</p>

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, formatting, present tense</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 or from <i>Hamlet</i> itself. What features can children spot? Can they give you a specific example?</p> <p>Use this introduction to discuss why stage directions would be in the present tense.</p> <p><u>Main Input:</u></p> <p>Explain that writing a playscript is a fiddly process- there is LOTS to think about! Show a short example on the board demonstrating the features you will want children to apply in their own writing. How does it compare to story writing? What do they notice about the formatting/organisation?</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 beginning of the conversation into a correctly-formatted playscript, using the 'Playscript Rules' resource to remind you. Some of the stage directions are given; anything highlighted in yellow, children will need to think of themselves! Keep reminding children that their stage directions must be in the present tense to tell the actors what to do right now.</p> <p>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 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: If you think some pupils would just benefit from focusing on formatting, the LKS2 resource for this lesson might be more appropriate.</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>

Resources	Speech bubbles resource Playscript rules
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Act 3, Lesson 3: Crafting effective dialogue

Learning Intention	To use dialogue which sounds like and shows more about my characters.
Key Vocabulary	playscript, characters, dialogue, formal, informal, language, grammar
Activities/ Lesson	<p><u>Introduction:</u></p> <p>Display some quotes from <i>Hamlet</i> on the board from key characters alongside less formal alternatives, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder' • 'Get him back for the bad stuff he did' <p>... Which is the ghost of Hamlet's father more likely to have said?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'He's crazy!' • 'Mad as the sea and the wind' <p>... Which is Gertrude more likely to have said to Claudius about Hamlet?</p> <p><u>Main Input:</u></p> <p>Explain to children that the skill of playscript writing is making sure that all character dialogue (including stage directions) sounds like them and reveals more about their personalities, thoughts and feelings. If it doesn't tick those boxes, it doesn't belong.</p> <p>Our characters would have spoken in a more formal way that we would do on the playground, for example, and we need to adapt the language and grammar we choose to show this. Give out the talk task in pairs and ask pupils to discuss each one. Would this belong in a <i>Hamlet</i> playscript of our own? Why/why not? Discuss each line, unpicking why it would or would not belong.</p> <p>Hopefully, children will identify that they need to steer clear of informal language and grammatical structures like contractions, but this is something you can focus on when modelling too.</p> <p>Explain to pupils that we will be crafting some short (imagined) conversations between characters to explore how we can use dialogue effectively. This includes stage directions and the language/grammar our characters would use. Encourage pupils to use their creativity as these are imagined conversations, not all necessarily ones that occur in the text!</p> <p>Choose one conversation card at a time and model writing a short conversation based on it. 'Think aloud' about the words and stage directions you might choose for this moment, what you know about the character, and what grammar you would steer clear</p>

	<p>of.</p> <p><u>Main activity & plenary</u></p> <p>Children can then choose their own conversation card(s) from the selection to write their own character dialogue for. Encourage them to rehearse ideas out loud to ensure they make sense.</p>
Notes for Teachers	<p>This lesson will hopefully set high expectations of what the standard of dialogue between characters should be. It will also provide an opportunity to weed out any unsuitable/informal language or grammar choices before the main writing outcome tomorrow.</p>
Adaptive Teaching	<p>Some pupils may benefit from rehearsing the entire conversation out loud repeatedly before writing.</p>
Resources	<p>Talk task</p> <p>Conversation cards</p>

Act 3, Lesson 4: Write!

<p>Learning Intention</p>	<p>To draft a playscript.</p>
<p>Key Vocabulary</p>	<p>playscript, characters, character list, scene setting, stage directions, present tense, dialogue</p>
<p>Activities/ Lesson</p>	<p>NB before this lesson, re-read up to and including Polonius' death: it is important that the parts of the plot below are very familiar to the children.</p> <p><u>Introduction:</u></p> <p>Explain that today, we will be drafting our own imaged playscript for some of the moments in Act 3. We will be writing three scenes:</p> <div data-bbox="419 728 1460 1032" data-label="Diagram"> <p>The diagram illustrates three scenes in a sequence. Scene 1 shows two stick figures, one speaking into a speech bubble, with the text 'Hamlet gives an actor his instructions & tells Horatio his plan'. Scene 2 shows a green poison bottle with a skull and crossbones, a pair of eyes, and a silhouette of a person, with the text 'Poison! Claudius' reaction'. Scene 3 shows two stick figures, one pointing, a sword, and a red curtain, with the text 'Hamlet and Gertrude's argument & Polonius' death'. Arrows connect the scenes from left to right.</p> </div> <p>NB these do not correspond to the acts/scenes in the play itself; this is just to provide structure to the children's writing. The teaching point to make is that we start a new scene in a play when there is a change of characters, place or a new event- just like when we'd start a new paragraph in narrative writing.</p> <p>Generate some stage directions ideas for each scene by asking partners to show you key moments with their facial expressions or body language, i.e. 'Show me two people arguing' 'Show me Hamlet telling Horatio a plan he wants no one else to hear'. You can then scribe what you see, i.e. 'I love that ___ put his finger on his lips while he beckoned ___ over, I'm going to jot down 'beckoning with finger on lips' as a possible stage direction'.</p> <p><u>Main Input:</u></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 narrative form 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the scene setting paragraph- where are we? Which characters are on stage and what are they doing? - who will be in this scene? - 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 say this line like they would- would they be whispering? Hissing? Shouting?</i> Throughout the modelling process - the formatting- which stage directions should be formatted as full sentences Vs in brackets? Which of the 'playscript rules' are you applying?

	<p><u>Main activity & plenary</u></p> <p>Children then use the scaffolds to write their playscripts. 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>When they have had sufficient writing time, ask them to share their playscript with a partner, checking for any formatting errors and informal language/grammatical structures.</p>
<p>Notes for Teachers</p>	<p>This lesson relies on knowledge of the plot; ensure children 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>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 being given a limit/steer on which characters they should include in each scene, and focusing on writing less but making thoughtful choices about what those characters would say/do.</p> <p>Children may find the narrative scaffold helpful to have on tables- this gives some embellished detail in case they're stuck for ideas at any point!</p>
<p>Resources</p>	<p>Scenes 1-3 visual prompts</p> <p>Narrative scaffold for children to turn into playscript form</p>

Act 3, Lesson 5: Finish, edit, perform!

<p>Learning Intention</p>	<p>To peer-edit and perform my playscript.</p>
<p>Key Vocabulary</p>	<p>playscript, characters, character list, scene setting, stage directions, dialogue, grammar/language choices, formal/informal</p>
<p>Activities/ Lesson</p>	<p>NB before this lesson, ensure that children have had enough writing time to finish the first drafts of their playscripts.</p> <p><u>Main Input & Editing:</u></p> <p>Tell pupils that today, they are going to become very demanding actors! Build some excitement around this- could they choose a Hollywood name? Practise some diva-esque phrases or actions? Explain that they have been cast in a production of <i>Hamlet</i> and have been asked to review the scripts.</p> <p>In partners, they should take turns reading through their playscripts but must do so with a VERY beady eye on any mistakes or missing details that will make their jobs as actors harder. Their partner should have their editing pen at the ready and make changes as they go. For example, a missing stage direction, a sentence needing sense-checking, language/grammar choices that are too informal for their character... The aim is to inject some fun into the editing process and being 'in role' as a difficult actor makes any feedback less personal. Ensure that pupils have enough time to swap over.</p> <p><u>Performance:</u></p> <p>Model reading through an example of an edited playscript 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 '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 and give them a set amount of time, in their groups, to prepare one playscript at a time to perform (perhaps their strongest scene). 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.</p> <p>Circulate and provide support with following stage directions and saying lines with appropriate intonation, volume and movement.</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 OR give them a playscript extract with some deliberate errors/missed opportunities to rewrite.</p>
<p>Notes for Teachers</p>	<p>This lesson will be an opportunity to celebrate the success of children's outcomes. It will also be handy to evidence for the UKS2 National Curriculum requirement 'perform their own compositions, using appropriate intonation, volume, and movement so that meaning is clear ' so would be helpful to capture video evidence of!</p>

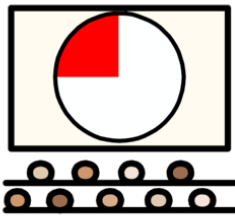
Adaptive Teaching	Groups can be arranged strategically to best support the needs of pupils or to maximise the effectiveness of any additional adults.
Resources	The 'Help a friend improve!' sentence stems from lesson 1 may come in handy during group work.

Resources

Playscript Features Menu



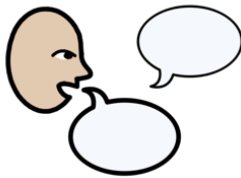
character list



scenes



scene setting



dialogue



stage directions

'Help a friend improve' feedback sentence stems

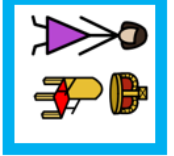


Help a friend improve!

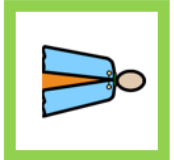
I like the way you... but you could...
On this line, why don't you...?
Next time, why don't you...?
It works well when you...
It would be great if...



Claudius



Gertrude



Polonius

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

What on earth is ailing him?

rolling his eyes

I despair. Something troubles him deeply.

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.

Now, continue the conversation!

My Lord? You called? What can I do?

bowing at Claudius' feet

Polonius comes scurrying in, panting from exhaustion.

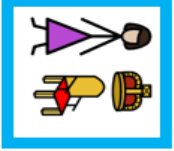
That's it! I know just the fellow. Polonius?

visibly excited

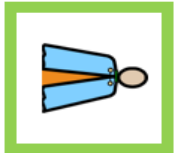




Claudius



Gertrude



Polonius

Describe who is on stage and where they are meant to be in the castle.
Claudius and Gertrude are standing in a corner, watching Hamlet.
Describe what Hamlet is doing.

What on earth is wrong with him?
visibly frustrated

I despair.
putting head in hands

We must do something. The man is mad!
Write a stage direction to show Claudius doesn't want to be heard.

I fear he will bring shame on our kingdom if he is not helped.
Write a stage direction to show Gertrude is beginning to agree.

Write a longer stage direction (at least one sentence) showing that Claudius is thinking.

My Lord? You called? What can I do?

Write a longer stage direction to show that Polonius has come running as soon as he's called for- would he panting? How would he enter the room? Who would he approach first?

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

My poor boy.
Write a stage direction to show Gertrude is sad and worried.

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

TALK TASK

For each line, ask yourself...

Does it **sound like** the character? Does it **show more** about the character's personality, thoughts and feelings?

Claudius: (beckoning) Polonius, cast a close eye over that man. I fear he has truly lost his wits.

Polonius: Yeah ok then.

Ophelia: (nervously pacing) Hamlet, what is up? You've been acting strange.

Hamlet: Nothing, relax! There's nothing wrong.

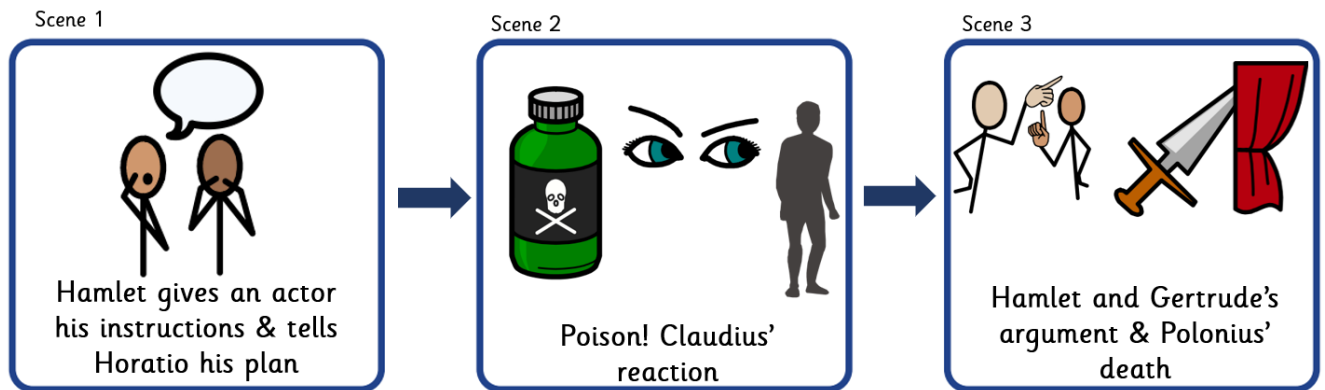
The actor playing Lucianus mimes pouring poison into the sleeping man's ear.

Gertrude: (placing a reassuring hand on Claudius' shoulder) My dear, you look awfully pale. The blood has drained from your face. Does something ail you?

Claudius: (voice trembling) This hall suddenly seems suffocating ... the-the-the dark itself seems to close in on me...

Conversation cards

<p><u>Ophelia and Hamlet</u> Ophelia questions Hamlet about his strange behaviour recently. She gives him back a box of love tokens and letters he has given her. Hamlet pretends he does not love her anymore and suggests she goes to a nunnery instead. Ophelia runs from the room, devastated.</p>	<p><u>Hamlet and Polonius</u> Hamlet pretends to be mad and responds to every question Polonius asks with a strange and random reply.</p> <p>Polonius becomes more and more frustrated and confused.</p>	<p><u>Polonius and Claudius</u> Polonius tells Claudius about Hamlet's strange behaviour. Claudius instructs him to spy on Hamlet's every move and shares his worries about the situation.</p>
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For any children who might need more scaffolding, they could turn this narrative form into playscript form. NB some details/events are embellished/imagined to provide ideas about conversations or stage directions.

Scene 1

Hamlet goes up to an actor and flattered 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 isn'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.

Scene 2

It is the part of the play where one actor sneaks up on the other and pours poison into his ear. The murderer in the play, Lucianus, speaks about his plan and the vile contents of the poison as he pours*. 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. Polonius agrees. Ophelia notices Claudius' strange behaviour. He hides in a room and prays/talks to himself about his guilt. Hamlet and Horatio discuss his behaviour and agree that he is definitely guilty.

Scene 3

Guildestern lets Hamlet know that his mother wants to see him. Hamlet still pretends to be mad and answers with random things but agrees. Polonius says the same and again, Hamlet keeps up his act of pretending to be mad. He goes towards her room, talking to himself about how furious he still is with her. He calls to her from outside her door and she quickly tells Polonius to hide. Hamlet and his mother argue about her marrying his uncle and Hamlet reminds her what an excellent man his father was. Hamlet hears a noise from behind the curtain and, thinking it's Claudius, stabs through it. He realises it is Polonius. He calls Polonius a meddling fool. Gertrude accuses Hamlet of being mad and he tries to persuade her that he is not. Hamlet drags Polonius' body out of the room.

***LUCIANUS**

*Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing,
 Confederate season, else no creature seeing,
 Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,
 With Hecate's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,
 Thy natural magic and dire property
 On wholesome life usurp immediately.*

[pours poison into PLAYER KING 's ears]