Script Writing

SUGGESTED LEARNING STRATEGIES: **QHT, Graphic Organizer, Double-Entry Journal, Think Aloud, Outlining, Drafting, Marking the Draft, Adding, Deleting, Rearranging, Substituting, Self-Editing/Peer Editing, Oral Reading, Role Playing, Sharing and Responding**

Focus:

Dramatic scripts are a type of creative text in which writers share insights and observations about life through characters, conflicts, and themes. This type of writing draws upon personal experiences and imaginative thinking. It provides rich opportunities for recollection of past, present, or imagined experiences.

Goal:

To write scripts that include:

- An effective setting.
- A clearly defined and engaging plot.
- Dialogue that develops characters and plot.
- Details that contribute to a definite mood or tone.
- An explicit or implicit theme.

To achieve this goal, you will engage in a series of activities in which you work with your teacher and with your classmates to create two model scripts. You will then use these models to write your own script.

Activity 1: Discovering Elements of Script Writing

1. Think about your own experiences with reading or writing dramatic scripts.
   - What are some features of scripts?
   - Why are scripts written?
   - How are scripts similar to and different from a short story?

2. Create the QHT chart below on a separate piece of paper. Then use the chart to rate your level of familiarity with the following terms: **script, plot, conflict, complications, climax, resolution, theme, setting, sensory details, characterization, narrator, dialogue, diction, syntax, voice, mood, tone, flashback, foreshadowing,** and **monologue**.

Q: Question (Unfamiliar)	H: Heard (Somewhat Familiar)	T: Teach (Very Familiar)

3. With your class, you will read and analyze a script as a model for your writing. Create a 4-square graphic organizer like the one below on your own paper. Use the guiding questions in the organizer to help you respond to and analyze the sample script your teacher will provide.

Ideas	Organization
Where and when does the story take place? How does the **setting** affect the story? What is the story about? How does the **plot** connect to the **theme**? Is the theme implicit or explicit? How would you describe the main **characters**? How do the characters change? Does the writer use a **narrator**? Why or why not? How does the writer use **literary techniques** to communicate ideas about the plot and create **voice**?	How does the writer **develop** the story? How do the events connect? How does the writer communicate **shifts,** or changes, in setting or characters in a scene? Why did the writer include these shifts? How do the shifts affect the characters and plot?
Language	**Conventions**
How does the writer use **diction** and **syntax** in the dialogue to create **voice, mood,** and **tone**? How do the stage directions contribute to the story?	What are the conventions of a script? How does the writer use punctuation to create voice? How does the punctuation help to communicate ideas?

4. When you write a script, you will need to know how to apply **literary techniques** to develop an effective plot and create believable characters. Write a definition for each of the terms in the graphic organizer on the next page.

Plot	
plot	
setting	
conflict	
complications	
climax	
resolution	
theme	
mood	
flashback	
foreshadowing	
Characterization	
characterization	
dialogue	
voice	
monologue	
Style	
diction	
syntax	
tone	

Activity 2: Writing a Class-Constructed Script

Prompt: You have been hired by a well-known producer to write a script for sophomores that is based on a text previously studied in class. To achieve success, your script must meet the requirements listed in the goal statements and include a variety of literary techniques to make your purpose and tone clear to your audience.

Script Writing

1. First, you will need to choose a literary text to transform into a script. As you read the selected text, copy the format for a double-entry journal in Activity 3 so you can record scripting ideas as you read.

2. Consider the questions below as you generate ideas for your section. Make notes here about your ideas.

Section 1: The Beginning of the Story	
Setting	What does the reader need to know about the **time** and **place** of the opening scene?
	How will you use **sensory detail** to make the setting vivid?
	What is the most effective way to provide information about the setting (e.g., a specific reference at the beginning of the scene, through dialogue, through narration)?
Characters	How and when will you introduce the characters?
	What must the reader know about each character's personality at the beginning of the story?
	What will characters say and do to show the reader who they are?
	How will you create **voice** through **dialogue**?
	What is the most effective way to show characters' actions and feelings (e.g., through stage directions, dialogue, or narration)?
Conflict	Describe the opening situation: What does the main character want, and what is the opposition?
	What will characters say and do to make this conflict clear?
	How will you create **mood** and **tone** through **dialogue**?
	What is the most effective way to show characters' actions and feelings (e.g., through stage directions, dialogue, or narration)?
Section 2: The Middle of the Story	
Setting	What does the reader need to know about the **time** and **place** of the scenes leading up to the climax?
	How will you use **sensory detail** to make the setting vivid?
	What is the most effective way to provide this information (e.g., a specific reference at the beginning of the scene, through dialogue, or through narration)?
Characters	How do characters' personalities develop?
	What will characters say and do to show the reader who they are?
	How will you create **voice** through **dialogue**?
	What is the most effective way to show characters' actions and feelings (e.g. through stage directions, dialogue, or narration)?
Conflict	What are the **complications**? What is the **climax**?
	What will characters say and do to effectively portray these conflicts?
	How will you create **mood** and **tone** through **dialogue**?
	What is the most effective way to show characters' actions and feelings (e.g., through stage directions, dialogue, or narration)?

Section 3: The End of the Story	
Setting	What does the reader need to know about the **time** and **place** of the closing scene?
	How will you use **sensory detail** to make the setting vivid?
	What is the most effective way to provide this information (e.g., a specific reference at the beginning of the scene, through dialogue, or through narration)?
Characters	How do characters change?
	What will characters say and do to show the reader who they are?
	How will you create **voice** through **dialogue**?
	What is the most effective way to show characters' actions and feelings (e.g., through stage directions, dialogue, or narration)?
Conflict	What is the **resolution**?
	What will characters **say** and **do** to show the reader that the opening conflict has been resolved and a lesson has been learned (**theme**)?
	How will you create **mood** and **tone** through **dialogue**?
	What is the most effective way to show characters' actions and feelings (e.g., through stage directions, dialogue, or narration)?

3. With your teacher and your class, you will now go through the process of writing and presenting a class-created script.

4. As you prepare to write a script with a partner, are there areas where you still need additional support? What questions do you still have?

Activity 3: Writing a Script with a Partner

Prompt: Your class was so successful that the same producer has hired you and your partner to write a second script for a sophomore audience, based on another text previously studied in class. Remember, to achieve success, your script must meet the requirements listed in the goal statements and include a variety of literary techniques to make your purpose and tone clear to your audience.

Generating Content

1. Select another high-interest text, and recreate the double-entry journal on the next page on a separate piece of paper.

Script Writing

Text Title	Ideas for Script
Setting	Time? Place? Shifts?
Characters	Voice? Actions? Thoughts/Feelings? Others' reactions?
Conflict	Internal? External?
Complications	Events? Conflicts: Internal? External?
Climax	What is the highest point of tension?
Resolution	How is the major conflict resolved?
Theme	How has the character changed? What has the character learned?

2. As you reread the story from the perspective of a script writer, use your double-entry journal to record ideas for the setting, characters, plot, and theme of your script.

3. Outline ideas for the beginning, middle, and end of your script using the guiding questions from the previous activity. Work to create a consistent and effective tone and voice.

4. Use your outline to draft your script. Each person should create a copy of the script to use as a model for a future activity.

Refining, Reflecting, and Rehearsing

5. Reread your text aloud and mark the draft, noting places to add, delete, rearrange, and substitute content to strengthen your ideas and achieve your desired purpose and tone. Revise as needed.

6. Edit your script. Pay close attention to your punctuation and its effect on voice.

7. Reflect on your script to determine the extent to which:
   - The ideas in the script are clear.
   - The organization, language, and conventions work to achieve the desired purpose and tone.
   - You have met the requirements listed in the goal statements.

8. Continue to revise and edit as needed. When finished, recopy your script.

9. In preparation for sharing your work with an audience, conduct an oral reading using the script's punctuation (e.g., pauses, exclamations, and questions) as a guide. Rehearse your delivery, focusing on using your voice to communicate meaning.

Sharing and Responding

10. Combine with another pair to form a writing group. In your writing group, decide which pair will present first. The listeners should be ready to give specific feedback focusing on the strengths, such as:

   • Clear plot and/or theme.

   • Definite mood or tone.

   • Effective characterization and distinct voice.

11. Exchange written copies of your scripts, and create a second 4-square graphic organizer on your own paper. With your original partner, use the guiding questions in the graphic organizer below to help you respond to and analyze the writer's craft.

Ideas	Organization
Where and when does the story take place? How does the **setting** affect the story?	How does the writer **develop** the story? How do the events connect?
What is the story about? How does the **plot** connect to the **theme**? Is the theme implicit or explicit?	How does the writer communicate **shifts**, or changes, in setting or characters in a scene?
How would you describe the main **characters**? How do the characters change?	Why did the writer include these shifts? How do the shifts affect the characters and plot?
Does the writer use a **narrator**? Was this an effective choice?	
How does the writer use **literary techniques** to communicate ideas about the plot and create **voice**?	
Language	**Conventions**
How does the writer use **diction** and **syntax** in the dialogue to create **voice**, **mood**, and **tone**?	How does the writer use punctuation to create voice?
How do the stage directions contribute to the story?	How does the punctuation help to communicate ideas?

12. Share feedback in your group.

13. As you prepare to write a script on your own, are there areas where you need additional support? What questions do you still have?

Activity 4: Independent Writing

Prompt: Because you have written two successful scripts, the producer has given you the opportunity to write an original script on a topic of your choice. Your script must meet the requirements listed in the goal statements and incorporate a variety of literary techniques (including flashback, foreshadowing, and monologue) to make your purpose and tone clear to your audience.

Writing Workshop 5   Script Writing
SCORING GUIDE

Scoring Criteria	Exemplary	Proficient	Emerging
Development of Ideas	The composition • creates a detailed and vivid setting • presents a clearly defined and intriguing plot with a well-developed conflict and resolution • clearly includes a thought-provoking explicit or implicit theme.	The composition • creates a specific and effective setting • includes a clearly defined plot with a clear conflict and resolution • includes an explicit or implicit theme.	The composition • presents a vague or ineffective setting • contains an incomplete plot with an unfocused conflict and resolution • includes an underdeveloped theme.
Organizational Structure	The composition • leads with an appealing and focused opening that establishes an effective setting • effectively sequences events that develop the conflict(s) and steadily build toward the dynamic climax • provides an insightful ending that contains a clear and reasonable resolution • uses conventions of script writing skillfully to enhance plot and characterization.	The composition • presents a clear opening that establishes setting • includes a sequence of events that develop the conflict and build toward the climax • provides an ending that contains a clear resolution • uses conventions of script writing to enhance plot and characterization.	The composition • contains an underdeveloped opening • presents disconnected events and an unfocused conflict or confusing climax • contains an underdeveloped ending with little or no resolution • uses the conventions of script writing incorrectly or inaccurately.
Use of Language	The composition • purposefully uses sensory details to enhance a definite mood or tone • effectively uses a range of literary strategies (e.g., dialogue, suspense) and devices (e.g., flashback, foreshadowing, motif, understatement, irony) to enhance the plot and characters • demonstrates technical command of conventions of standard English.	The composition • uses sensory details that contribute to a definite mood or tone • uses a range of literary strategies (e.g., dialogue, suspense) and devices (e.g., flashback, foreshadowing, motif, understatement, irony) to establish the plot and characters • demonstrates general command of conventions; minor errors in punctuation, grammar, capitalization, or spelling do not interfere with meaning.	The composition • uses limited sensory details to create an uncertain mood or tone • contains few or no literary strategies and devices that present an incomplete plot or confusing characters • demonstrates limited command of conventions; errors in grammar, punctuation, capitalization, or spelling interfere with meaning.
Writing Process	The composition reflects thoughtful revision and editing to produce a draft ready for publication.	The composition reflects revision and editing to produce a draft ready for publication.	The composition demonstrates minimal revision and editing and is not ready for publication.