

## Formatting Guidelines

The following guidelines are just one recommended by the Dramatists Guild, and will be used to publish PBD's winning plays. They are highly recommended for use on all submissions. However, teachers may use their own guidelines if the formatting is consistent throughout the script. The scoring rubric given to our judges includes a single formatting, grammar, and spelling component, and is 1/5 of the final score.

### **Title Page:**

- Top Margin: 1 inch
- Left Margin: 1 inch
- Right Margin: 1 inch
- Bottom Margin: 1 inch
- This page is not numbered
- The play's title is printed in ALL CAPS: centered on the page (both vertically and horizontally)
- Double-spaced under the title is an underscore line: \_\_\_\_\_ running the exact length of the title.
- Double-spaced under the underscore line is the description: **A Ten-Minute Play**
- Double-spaced below the description is the author's name: **by First Name Last Name**
- At the bottom right of the Title Page is the contact information:
  - Student:
    - Student's Name
    - Student's Grade
    - Student's School
  - Single-spaced below: Submitting Teacher/Administrator :
    - Teacher's Name
    - Teacher's School
    - Teacher's School Address
    - Teacher's School Email Address
    - Teacher's School Telephone Number or Cell Phone Number

## Formatting Guidelines

### Cast of Characters Page

- Top Margin: 1 inch
- Left Margin: 1.5 inches
- Right Margin: 1 inch
- Bottom Margin: 1 inch
- This page is not numbered
- At the top of the page: **Cast of Characters** is centered and underlined.
- Double-spaced under the **Cast of Characters** and at the left margin is a list of character names.
  - Underline the character name and add a colon.
  - After each character name, use one or two tabs (depending on the longest character name) and add a short description of the character. If the description is long, use hanging indentation so that the text is justified left.
  - Include exact age or age marker (teenager, high school junior, senior citizen, etc.) and qualities that are pertinent to understanding the character within the play's context.

### Example of above:

#### Cast of Characters

- Leon: A middle aged man who is very tired. He has given up, hardened by the cruel and hardened people he is often around.
- Shiloh: Younger than Leon, Shiloh is a prisoner in his twenties to mid-thirties. A quiet, honest man born and raised in a small town.
- Walter: Walter is in his 60s, and has worked hard all of his life.

- Add **Scene** ten spaces below the last character (adjust accordingly if there are a large number of characters)
  - **Scene** is centered on the page and underlined
  - Single-spaced below **Scene**, list all the locations of the play **in one sentence**. If multiple locations, list “various locations...” or something similar
- Add **Time** single-spaced below the **Scene** listing
  - **Time** is centered on the page and underlined
  - Single-spaced below **Time**, list the specific time of the play and any pertinent information

### Example of above:

#### Scene

An alleyway in Warsaw, Poland.

#### Time

Winter, 1939; shortly after the Nazi invasion

### Main Text Pages

#### **General Information:**

- Page Numbers: Place in Footer – justified right. No page number on the Title page or Cast of Characters page.
- Font: Times New Roman: size 12.
- Sentence spaces. One space following a full stop (period, exclamation point, or question mark).

#### **Page Setup:**

- 8.5" x 11"
- Top Margin: 1 inch
- Left Margin: 1.5 inches
- Right Margin: 1 inch
- Bottom Margin: 1 inch
- **Scene** Designation (a ten-minute play will not have **Act** designations)
  - All scene designations are indented 2.5 from the left (total of 4 inches) and underlined. For example: **Scene 1**.
  - If the play is only one scene, scene designations are not necessary.
- **SETTING** is added in all caps double-spaced under the **Scene** listing at the beginning of the play only (if no scene designation is needed, **SETTING** is at the top of page 1). It is followed by a colon.
  - The **SETTING** description is indented an additional 2.5 inches from the left (total of 4 inches).
  - The **SETTING** should describe how the stage is set at the beginning of the play. If a **SETTING** changes during the play, it must be noted in the appropriate location.
- **AT RISE** is double-spaced under the last **SETTING** description line. It is followed by a colon.
  - The **AT RISE** description is indented an additional 2.5 inches from the left (total of 4 inches)
  - The **AT RISE** describes what is happening just prior to the first line.

#### **Example of above:**

Scene 1

SETTING:

On a park bench in a quiet park at sunset.

AT RISE:

ELEANOR sits on the park bench fidgeting with a locket she's wearing around her neck. On her lap is a journal, with several crumpled and torn sheets of paper around her. She reads...

## Formatting Guidelines

### Styles Setup:

- **CHARACTER** names. Character names are in all caps, including in stage directions. Character names spoken in dialogue are written normally.
- **CHARACTER** names are indented an additional 2.5 inches from the left margin (total of 4 inches).
- Dialogue is a single-spaced hard return after the character name.
- Dialogue is set to the left margin
- Stage directions:
  - Stage directions within a single character's line describing their emotions or physical business is given its own line. It is in parentheses, and indented an additional 1.5 inches from the left and an additional 1.5 inches from the right (total of 3 inches from left and right).
  - Stage directions describing stage action occurring between two characters' lines are given their own line, and are single-spaced above and below the directions. It is in parentheses, and is indented an additional 1.5 inches from the left and an additional 1.5 inches from the right (total of 3 inches from left and right).

### Example of above:

FINN  
Okay. Continue.

KEVIN  
Let's just skip further into the story.  
(flipping forward through the journal)  
Okay, so in this part of the story, the guy and the girl have known each other for some time. The girl is caring, supportive, loving—

FINN  
(sarcastically)  
As demons usually are.  
(KEVIN quickly glares at FINN to shut him up)

KEVIN  
And the guy feels happy. This girl has made him feel something he's been missing his whole life.  
(ANGELICA appears in a warm light)

ANGELICA  
I love you, Kevin.

KEVIN  
But it doesn't last. This girl starts to change. She begins to say things—  
(ANGELICA's light turns menacing)

ANGELICA  
You're completely worthless.

## Formatting Guidelines

If dialogue from one character extends to the following page, include the CHARACTER name at the top of the page, and add (CONT.) in parentheses and in ALL CAPS.

### Example of above:

MARY (CONT.)

James, I hope your papa hurries back. We need food and we need to get out of this cold. The fire; we've got to keep this fire going.

- **End of Scene or Play Designations**

- Language to separate scenes (END OF SCENE or BLACKOUT, etc.) is written in ALL CAPS and in parentheses, and indented an additional 2.5 inches from the left (total of 4 inches). It is double-spaced below the last sentence of text.
- At the beginning of a new scene, add a new SETTING and AT RISE. If the setting doesn't change, note the setting is in the same location. See SETTING and AT RISE above.
- END OF PLAY is in all caps (without parentheses) and indented an additional 2.5 inches from the left (total of 4 inches). It is two spaces below the last sentence of text.

- **Simultaneous Dialogue**

- When two characters speak at once, each character's name and their dialogue is written on the same line. Center two columns within the same margins

### Example of above:

(David appears. Their voices overlap.)

MARY

Even as I write this letter my heart beats faster...

DAVID

Even as I write this letter my heart beats faster...

DAVID

...awaiting the moment we can be together again. We've only known each other a short while yet I realize I want to spend the rest of my life with you. We have so many happy days ahead of us, Mary. We can start a family here in Warsaw. My job at the factory will put food on the table and a fire in the stove; a roaring fire."