

Writing a

# Play Script



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# Characters

Play scripts usually begin with a list of characters and a little bit of information about each one.

Here is an example of a character list.



## Characters

**Maria** – an animal-loving young girl with few human friends.

**Mrs Sipsmith** – Maria's teacher, who's a strict disciplinarian.

**Mr Woods** – Maria's father, who's a dishonest bank manager.

**Mrs Woods** – Maria's mother, who hates animals but likes quiz shows and celebrity magazines.

Where is the play set?

## Scenes

Plays are divided into sections called scenes. Each scene may have a different setting.

A description of the setting is included at the start of each scene.

Take a look at this setting description.

### Scene 1: The Woods' Living Room

*Mr and Mrs Woods are sprawled on the sofa, staring at the TV. Maria is on the floor, playing with her pet kitten.*



# Narrators

They do not act and often speak at the beginning of a new scene.

Many play scripts have narrators. Narrators tell the audience what is happening in the story.

**Lets have a look at an example**

## **Scene 1: The Woods' Living Room**

*Mr and Mrs Woods are sprawled on the sofa, staring at the TV. Maria is on the floor, playing with her pet kitten.*

**Narrator:** Maria's parents rarely spoke to her. No wonder her only friends were animals. Here they are on a typical Saturday afternoon.



# Dialogue

Remember, inverted commas are not used in a play script.

When writing dialogue, the character name comes first, followed by a colon and what the character says.



**Maria:** Here kitty, catch this.

**Mrs Woods:** Shut that cat up!  
I'm trying to watch my quiz show.

**Maria:** Sorry, Mum.

**Mr Woods:** Shh!

Actors do not read stage directions aloud.

# Stage Directions



Stage directions tell an actor what to do or how to speak. They are written in the present tense. Stage directions can be added in brackets when writing dialogue.

**Maria:** Here kitty, catch this.  
(She throws a ball of wool for the kitten, who leaps on it with a loud meow)

**Mrs Woods:** (crossly) Shut that cat up! I'm trying to watch my quiz show.

**Maria:** Sorry, Mum.

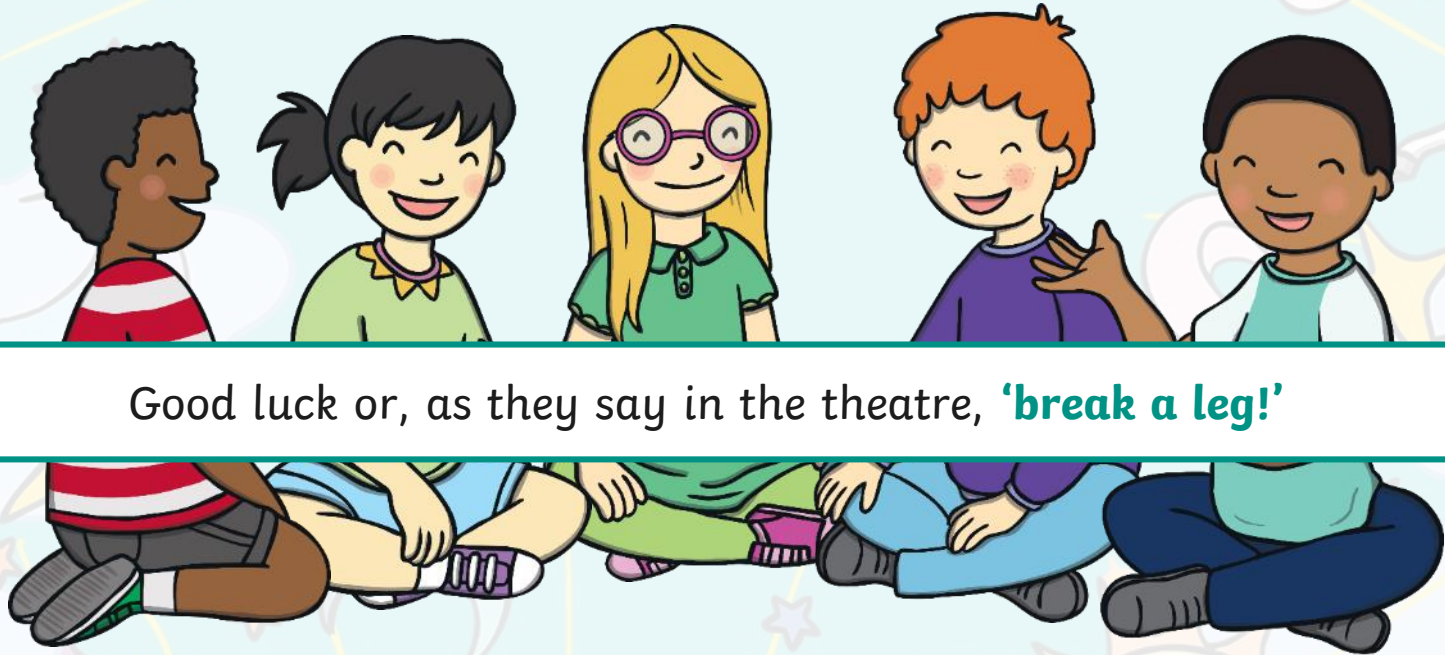
**Mr Woods:** Shh! (loudly, turning the TV volume up even more

# Writing Your Play Script

Now you are ready to write your own play script.

## Remember to include:

- a list of the characters;
- narrators (optional);
- a scene description;
- dialogue;
- stage directions in brackets.



Good luck or, as they say in the theatre, **'break a leg!'**



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