



EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH

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**The 2018
YOUNG PLAYWRIGHTS FESTIVAL**

**OFFICIAL
ENTRY PACKET**

Includes:

- General Information
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Official Entry Form
- Guide to Style
- Suggested Reading List



YOUNG PLAYWRIGHTS FESTIVAL 2018

GENERAL INFORMATION

ABOUT THE YOUNG PLAYWRIGHTS FESTIVAL

The Young Playwrights Festival (YPF) is an annual writing competition for Central New York high school students. YPF is made possible through the joint efforts of Syracuse Stage and The Syracuse University Dept. of Drama.

SUBMISSION CATEGORIES

Students may enter within one of the following categories:

Traditional 10-Minute Play

Characters speaking in dialogue within some set of given circumstances. **Ten minute plays should be around ten pages long with a maximum of four characters.**

Non-traditional Performance Writing

Possibilities include: monologues, performance-based storytelling, documentary drama based on interviews, performative texts, or slam poetry.

REQUIREMENTS

All submissions must be 10 pages or less (no smaller than 10 point font).

Submissions longer than 10 pages or with more than four characters will be disqualified.

JUDGING AND AWARDS

Plays are read and evaluated by a panel of theatrical and literary professionals. All students will receive a free t-shirt and an invitation to attend the evening Festival at Syracuse Stage.

Semi-finalists are invited to a professional writing workshop where they will hear their plays read by actors and critiqued by members of our panel. Semi-finalists will then have the chance to revise their play before the next round of judging.

Finalists see their plays performed at Syracuse Stage at the evening Festival and will be recognized.

HOW TO ENTER

To enter the festival, simply fill out the enclosed Entry Form, paper clip it to your play, and mail it to the address below. To ensure fairness in judging, **the Entry Form is the only place where the playwright's name and school should appear.**

Please create a separate title page for your play that does *not* include your name and school.

Mail to:
Syracuse Stage
Attn: Kate Laissle
Educational Outreach
820 East Genesee Street
Syracuse, NY 13210

ENTRY DEADLINE: Postmarked by Tuesday, FEBRUARY 13th, 2018

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What do the judges look for?

There are no universal standards for what makes a good play, but prizewinners tend to have some characteristics in common. These are considered the core principles of drama:

1. An interesting protagonist who wants something;
2. The protagonist stands to lose something if he/she fails, or to gain something if he/she succeeds;
3. The protagonist faces obstacles as he/she works to get what he/she wants;
4. The dialogue reflects unique characters while revealing the playwright's 'voice.'

In line with these characteristics, judges look for pieces that avoid the use of a narrator, instead focusing on pieces that are character driven.

For non-traditional "Performance Writing," the judges will expect the submission to be more than just a poem or a short story – it must be "performance-based." However you interpret this, it is important that your submission be able to capture the imagination of a live audience.

Can I submit more than one play?

Yes, so long as you have filled out a separate entry form for each play.

Can two or more people write as a team?

You are welcome to write as a team, so long as:

1. Each member of the team is a current high school student;
2. Separate entry forms are submitted for *each* member of the team;

My play is more than 10 pages, but not much... will it be disqualified?

Any piece over 10 pages long (font size no smaller than 10 point) will be disqualified.

Unfortunately, due to the number of submissions and the length of the final performance, we must limit length.

My play has five characters, but only character only says one line...will it be disqualified?

Any piece with over four characters, no matter the size of the fifth role, will be disqualified.

Can my teacher or parent(s) help me?

You are certainly allowed to seek feedback from adults, but the play must be your own work. This means that the character development, plot/story, and dialogue must be yours alone.

Can I submit via e-mail?

In general, we receive over 300 submissions. Unfortunately, we are not able to print this many plays ourselves. Please use "snail mail" instead. If you have special circumstances that require you to email your play, call (315) 442-7755.

How will I know the status of my play?

You will be notified either by email or phone as to the status of your play. Please make sure you have entered your home address, email, and phone number on your entry form. In the early rounds of judging, depending on the number of applicants, we may contact you via your teacher.



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2018 OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM

CONTACT INFORMATION

PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY!

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: NY Zip: _____
Phone: _____ Alt. Phone: _____
e-mail _____

SCHOOL INFORMATION

School: _____
Teacher's Full Name _____
Teacher's e-mail _____
Grade: (circle one) 9th 10th 11th 12th

SUBMISSION DETAILS

Title of play on cover page: _____
of characters: _____ (# Male: _____ # Female: _____ # Either gender: _____)
List of Characters: _____

Your tee shirt size: (circle one) Small Medium Large X-Large

[Tee shirts will be distributed at the evening Festival.]

*NOTE: Plays longer than 10 pages will be disqualified.

PLEASE SIGN

By signing below, I agree to the terms and guidelines of the Young Playwrights Festival as stated in this entry packet. I affirm that the work submitted is solely that of the student author(s) credited on the submission's title page, and no portion of the submission has been plagiarized or otherwise used without credit. I understand that my script will not be returned to me, but I will retain full ownership of, and rights to, the creative work. Syracuse Stage and SU Drama agree to not perform any submitted plays, in part or in full, without the consent of the author(s.) By signing below, I grant consent for the one-time performance of my play at the 2018 Young Playwrights Festival in the event that it is selected as a competition finalist.

Signature

Date



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GUIDE TO STYLE

Writers want to convey their plays clearly and concisely to each reader (actor, director, literary manager, and in this case, judges). Standardizing our typing format will allow the reader's eye to flow from character to character easily. This format also helps the reader judge the time it will take to perform the play. Using this format, each page lasts approximately one to one and a half minutes.

One last reason to learn proper formatting: the world is full of scripts. Theatres, publishers and agents receive countless submissions every day – far too many to read. Improperly formatted scripts look amateurish, and often end up in the recycling bin. If you are considering a career in writing, get into the habit of formatting your plays in this style.

1. Use a size 12 font (No smaller than size 10). Times New Roman, Courier, and Helvetica are the most common.
2. Names of characters should be capitalized and centered above their lines.
3. Dialogue should be justified along the left margin (not centered).
4. Stage directions should be placed in parentheses on a separate line and indented at least one tab from the left margin. You may italicize stage directions if you like.
5. There should be a double space between each character's lines.

EXAMPLE:

RULE #1 → NANCY

Did I tell you that I saw John last night? Well I did,
and it was... Well...
(NANCY pulls out a gun from her bag.)
I thought I'd better protect myself.

RULE #2 ←

RULE #3 →

LUCY
Nancy, a gun is serious business!

RULE #4 → (LUCY turns her back on NANCY and stifles a smile.)

RULE #5 ←

NANCY
Don't you think I know it? And he had that Susan woman
with him.

LUCY
You mean that redhead he brought with him to Joseph's?

NANCY
Yeah, that same one.

This page adapted from the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival
<<http://www.kcactf5.org/NPP/WritingFormat.htm>>



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SUGGESTED READING

Playwriting Brief & Brilliant- Julie Jensen

An excellent primer on playwriting. The whole book is only 80 pages long, yet the end of each chapter has a 'checklist' that Jensen believes every playwright should consider. For example, Jensen's checklist on dialogue states:

- Dialogue is action
- Exposition should be disguised
- Characters should sound different from one another
- Characters should want something
- Dialogue should be lean
- Sometimes dialogue is not spoken

A More Perfect 10 – Gary Garrison

Designed for aspiring playwrights, *A More Perfect 10* gives advice on the specific challenges of and tricks to writing a ten-minute play. Garrison focuses on the practical aspects of ten-minute plays, such as production requirements and getting your play produced at a professional company. Also included are examples of 10-minute plays.

Take Ten: New 10-Minute Plays –Edited by Eric Lane and Nina Shengold

An anthology of thirty-two 10-minute plays by multiple award-winning authors, including Tony Kushner, Christopher Durang, and David Mamet.