

English Activity — Ages 10-11



How It Works

Playscripts are stories that are written to be performed to an audience. They're usually split up into different scenes.

Before each scene, there's a short description of the setting.

Character names on the left show who is speaking. These names are always followed by a colon.

Brian and Geoff Danvers are in the living room. They've just discovered that the family hamster has escaped from its cage during the night.

BRIAN: *(frustrated)* How did she manage to get out? *(inspecting the door to the hamster cage)* The cage door is almost impossible for me to open, let alone a hamster.

Stage directions in brackets tell the actors how to perform their dialogue and what their character is doing. They're always written in the present tense.

(BRIAN stands with his hands on his hips, looking at the cage.)

GEOFF: *(determinedly, looking under the armchair)* Let's not worry about that right now, Brian. We need to find her before the kids come downstairs. They'll be so upset if they find out she's escaped.

(BRIAN sighs and nods, then starts looking under the furniture.)

Now Try These



1. Rewrite these sentences as stage directions. Remember to include brackets.

Geoff spotted Cookie scurry behind the bookcase.

.....

Brian crawled silently across the room.

.....



2. Can you rewrite these sentences as though they're part of a playscript? Don't forget to include the character names and stage directions.

"She's over there," whispered Geoff, pointing.

.....

"There you are, Cookie," said Brian calmly.

.....



3. Fill in the gaps in the playscript with your own words.

GEOFF: (*anxiously*) Try to get her from behind the bookcase Brian — I hope she's not stuck!

(*BRIAN*

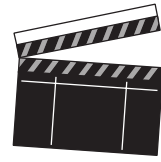
BRIAN: (.....) OW! You little devil!

(*Cookie runs across the floor. GEOFF chases after her and manages to catch her.*)

.....: (....., *while gently stroking Cookie*)

That's enough excitement for one day. You're officially grounded, young lady.

BRIAN: (*relieved*)



4. Read the next part of the story, then rewrite it as a playscript. Make sure you include all the dialogue and suitable stage directions.

"I need to talk to you, Talia," said Brian sternly. "Who was the last person to close the door on Cookie's cage last night?" Talia looked at her dad, a confused expression on her face.

"I thought you were, Dad," she said hesitantly. "You fed her before we went to bed, remember?"

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....



An Extra Challenge



The family bought Cookie from a pet shop in their town. Can you write a playscript about what happened? Think about all the details in the boxes below.

SCENE DESCRIPTION
Who is there?
Where is the action taking place?
What is happening in the scene?

DIALOGUE
What do the characters say to each other?

STAGE DIRECTIONS
How should the actors say their lines? How should their characters behave?

NARRATOR: How did you get on?
YOU: I'll tick a box to show you.



Answers

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1. Any sensible answers, e.g.
(GEOFF spots Cookie scurry behind the bookcase.)
(BRIAN crawls silently across the room.)
2. Any sensible answers, e.g.
GEOFF: (whispering and pointing) She's over there.
BRIAN: (calmly) There you are, Cookie.
3. Any sensible answers that make sense in the playscript, e.g. carefully reaches behind the bookcase. / (shouting in pain) / GEOFF / chuckling / Thank goodness we managed to find her.
4. Any sensible answer, e.g.
BRIAN: (sternly) I need to talk to you, Talia. Who was the last person to close the door on Cookie's cage last night?
(TALIA looks at BRIAN, a confused expression on her face.)
TALIA: (hesitantly) I thought you were, Dad. You fed her before we went to bed, remember?

An Extra Challenge

Any sensible playscript that includes a scene description, dialogue and stage directions.