

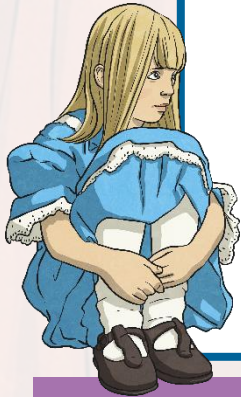
Features of a Play Script



twinkl

Features of a Play Script:

Character List



Characters

Alice In Wonderland

Alice The main character – A young girl who is lost in Wonderland. Has a great imagination.

The Mad Hatter As the name suggests, he is 'crazy'. He gives out riddles, dresses fashionably and likes tea.

Hare A friend of the Mad Hatter, thinks it is always time for afternoon tea, is also mad.

Dormouse Incredibly sleepy friend of the Mad Hatter.

At the beginning of a play script, you'll find a list of all the characters that are in the play.

Sometimes they will have a short description with them.

Why do you think this is?

This helps anyone who wants to perform the play know how many actors they need.

How might this help someone who wanted to perform the play?

This tells people what the characters are like before reading the play.

Features of a Play Script:

Scene Number, Title and Setting Description



A bit like chapters in a book, the sections of a script are broken down into 'scenes'. A new scene usually means a new **setting**.

Scene 7 – A Mad Tea Party

The Mad Hatter, Dormouse and Hare are sitting at a table having afternoon tea.

Just after the scene number and title is a short description of the **setting**. This tells you what the stage looks like.

Features of a Play Script:

Speaker Name, Colon and Dialogue

A colon **always** comes after the name.

Queen of Hearts: Guards! Get her! Off with her head!
Off with her head!

In a script, the name of the character who is speaking goes on the left.

After the colon is the dialogue (the words the character says).



How is this different to writing speech in a story?
No inverted commas!

Features of a Play Script:

Stage Directions

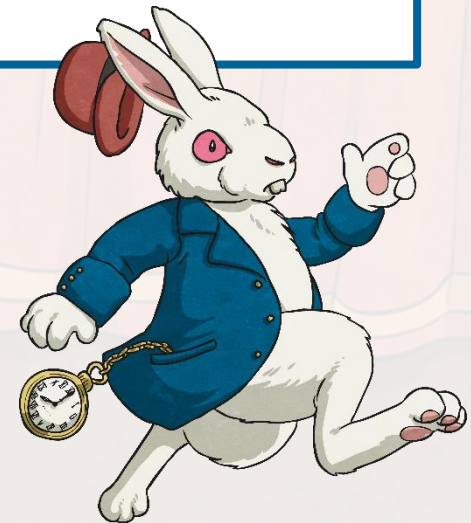
Words in brackets are stage directions. These are instructions to the actors so they know what their character should be doing.

White Rabbit: (anxiously, whilst rushing across the stage) I'm late! I'm late!

Alice: (confused) A talking rabbit? It can't be...

Sometimes they tell the actor how to say their words.

The actors don't **say** the stage directions.



Features of a Play Script:

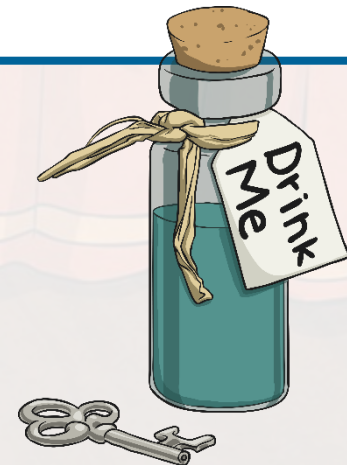
Stage Directions and Narrators

Some plays have a narrator to help set the scene for the audience, but lots of plays don't.

Narrator: Alice found herself in a strange room, inside was a small table. On top of it, sat a small, peculiar-looking bottle with a label on.

(Alice looks around, confused, then goes over to the table and studies the bottle.)

Stage directions can be given to any character, not just the ones speaking. They are always written in **present** tense.



Can you find the play script features in the text here?

Scene
number
and title

Setting
description

Speaker's
name,
followed by
a colon (:)

Stage
directions in
brackets

Speech –
without
inverted
commas!

Present tense

Scene 7 – A Mad Tea Party

The Mad Hatter, Dormouse and Hare are sitting at a table having afternoon tea.

Narrator: Lost and lonely, Alice continued towards the sound. She didn't know what to expect when she reached a clearing...

(Alice enters the scene, stage left)

Mad Hatter: (starts for a moment, pauses and a broad grin appears across his face. He gets up out of his chair and walks across the table towards Alice) It's you.

Dormouse: (exasperated) No it's not! Hare brought us the wrong Alice!

Hare: (gasps and throws his hands against his head) It's the wrong Alice!

Mad hatter: You're absolutely Alice, I'd know you anywhere.

(to the rest of the characters at the table)

I'd know him anywhere!

(Dormouse and Hare laugh manically)

Well, as you can see we're still having tea.
You're terribly late you know... naughty.

Alice: I'm incredibly intrigued.

click the
different
features to
show the
answers

Your task

You are going to analyse a number of different play scripts and identify the key features in each. For each script you will:

- Colour the different features.
- Annotate the features, explaining why they are used.

One star:

Jack and the Beanstalk Playscript.

Two star:

The story of Baucis, Philemon, Zeus and Hermes Playscript.

Three star:

The Story of Rama and Sita Playscript.

Extension: Which is the best play script? What makes it better than all of the others?

Who was William Shakespeare? Click on the link below or watch the video on the next slide.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AhEQDKZxvZY>

Look at the William Shakespeare's play – Macbeth. (You can watch scene one of this play on the next few slides or click on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6yo9XbFA1zU>). What do you notice is different to the other playscripts you looked at? Why do you think this is?

The Story of Baucis and Philemon Play Script

Cast List and Costume Ideas

Baucis - long cloak with hood, white robe and a golden crown

Hermes - long cloak with hood, white robe, golden winged sandals and a golden winged hat

Baucis (old) - old and ragged long dress

Philemon (bearded) - old and ragged long tunic

crowd men - robes

Narrator

Scene 1

Lights go up to show a track road with houses along one side. It is beginning to get dark outside one of the houses, Baucis and Hermes are standing on the track road. They are dressed in robes.

Hermes (father, I shall knock on the next door)

(Philemon looks on the door and the man said (in a whisper))

Baucis (disappointed) Come along, let's try another door

(The man moves to the house next door. Baucis looks)

crowd man: (overly opening the door and peering out) Can I help you?

Baucis: (loud whisper) Please can you help us? We are two very young travellers, who need shelter for the night.

crowd man: We do not know you well enough to let you into our home. (to Baucis)

(Baucis runs about the door)

Hermes: (looking at Baucis) I'm so disappointed with these mortals. That was the eighth house in the village to turn us away.

(The man walks further down the track and are heading for an old, rickety wooden hut. They stand by the front door)

Hermes: Let's try this door.

(Philemon looks on the door. An elderly lady appears dressed in old clothes)

Baucis: Well

Annotations:

Can you write a short description of each character to tell the actors how making people are needed and what they need to wear.

Annotations:

Scene 2

Lights go up to show inside Baucis and Philemon's home. Baucis and Hermes are sitting at a small, round table. Baucis and Philemon are drinking

Baucis: Let me introduce you to my dear husband, Philemon.

Philemon: You are most welcome in our humble home, gentlemen. You have been walking and must be thirsty. Would you like some wine?

(Philemon pours to the only cup on the table)

Hermes: We wouldn't drink your last cup of wine.

Baucis: You are our guests and we will offer you whatever we have. Please, take some wine.

(Baucis and Hermes look at each other. Philemon pours the wine out for the man while Baucis disappears into the kitchen area, returning with a plate of food and bread, placing it down on the table)

Baucis: It isn't much, but please enjoy this bread and meat.

Baucis: This is a wonderful feast. Some wine bread would have sufficed. We are so hungry that we wouldn't have noticed.

(The man begins to eat and drink as Philemon and Baucis sit down at the table. Once they are seated, there is a flash of light on the right go down)

Lights down

Scene 3

Lights go up and give the impression that time has passed. Seated around the table, Baucis, Philemon, Baucis and Hermes are talking, laughing and enjoying each other's company.

Feature:	Colour:	Feature:	Colour:
A cast list with a short description of each character		A colour after the speaker's name	
A scene number and title		Diagrams (what the character says) without speech marks	
Description of the setting		Speech or action stage directions in brackets	
A speaker's name on the left		The present tense	
A new line for each speaker		Narrator:	

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