

# Writing a show

## How to write your own play

I hope you've enjoyed performing some of the scripts from the Fly High Stories at Home website.

Perhaps you'd like to have a go at writing your own play.

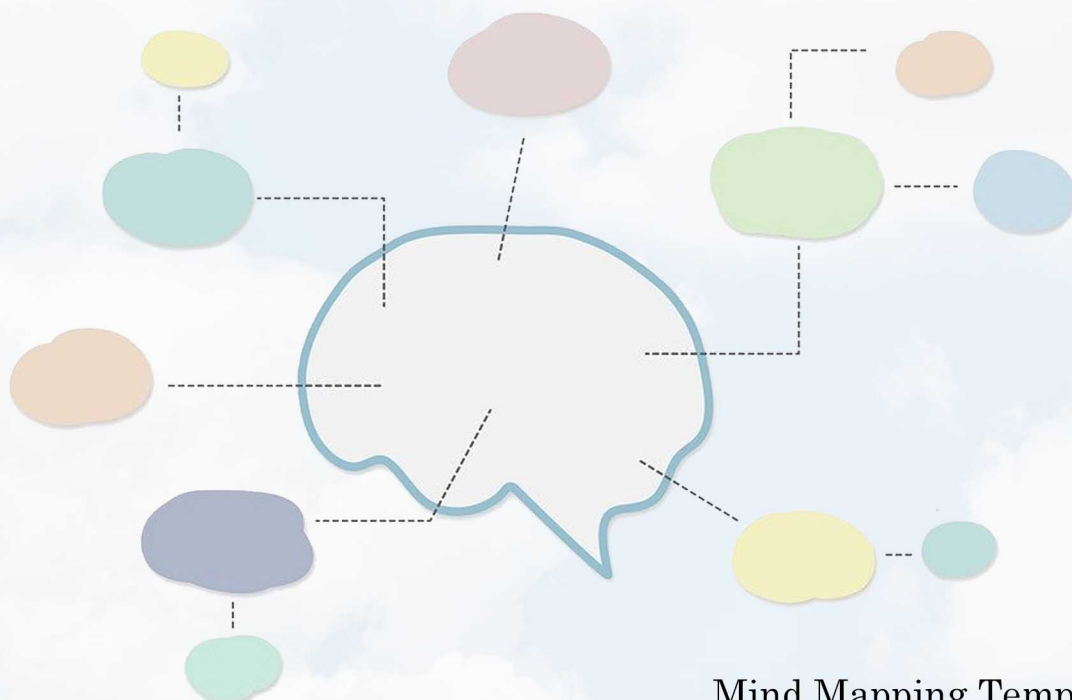
If you would then here are a few tips to get you started. If you follow these steps then you'll have written your own script in no time at all.

### ONE: Research

If you are writing your own version of a classic story then it's a good idea to have a read of a few different versions of it, or watch a few versions on film.

Then write down a big list of everything you remember and think is important about the story. I like to do this in the form of a mind map and then draw a ring around the bits that are really important.

I also do drawings and doodles on my mind map.

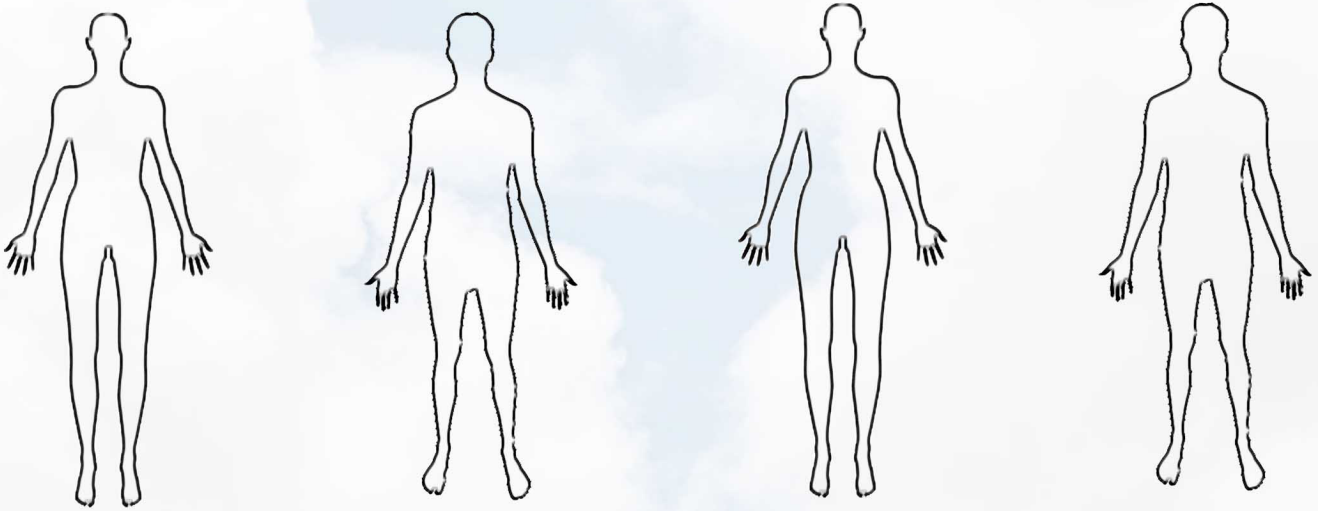


Mind Mapping Template

## TWO: Characters

Write a list of all the people who will turn up in your play.

You can also draw them or describe them.



## THREE: Locations

Think about WHERE each part of your story takes place.

You can do some drawings.

Each different location is called a 'Scene' - think about which of your characters is in each scene.

## FOUR: The story

Think about the story that you want to tell and work out what happens in each scene to tell the story.

For example when we wrote Sleeping Beauty we decided that our scenes would go a bit like this ...

Scene 1:

Location: Maleficent's House

Characters: Maleficent and Goblin Servant

Story: Maleficent is annoyed that she hasn't been invited to the party

Scene 2:

Location: The Castle

Characters: The King, Fairies Twinkletoes, Firelight, Knickerbonk and Maleficent

Story: At the Princess Aurora's naming party, Maleficent turns up and curses the baby princess.

Scene 3:

Location: The Forest

Characters: Aurora, Woodland Creatures, The Fairies

Story: Aurora dreams of going on an adventure. The Fairies tell her she's a princess and has to go back to the castle.

Scene 4:

Location: Aurora's Room in The Castle

Characters: Aurora, The Fairies, The King, The Spinning Wheel, Maleficent

Story: Aurora pricks her fingers on a spinning wheel and falls into a deep sleep (even though everyone else tries to stop her)

Scene 5:

Location: The Forest of vines

Characters: Princes

Story: Lots of princes get bounced about by cheeky vines as they try to reach the palace

Scene 6: Aurora's Room in The Castle

Characters: Aurora, Prince, King

Story: The Prince wakes Aurora up and she goes off on the adventure she's always wanted to go on

## FIVE: The dialogue (and the stage directions)

Plays are mostly people talking and we set them out in a very particular way. Here is a little play about writing a play:

### How to write a play

by

Rachel Barnett-Jones

Stage directions are in *italics* (slanted writing) - that's how the writer lets the actors and director know who's on stage and where they're standing.

Character 1: How do I set out my play?

Character 2: You don't need to write speech marks when you're writing a play, instead you write the character name followed by a colon - two dots one on top of the other like the eyes of a smiley - and then a space. That's because everything that happens is dialogue. Dialogue is what we call it when people are speaking.

Character 1: That sounds easy.

Character 2: It is. Very easy.

Character 1: I'm rubbish at spelling.

Character 2: It doesn't matter, so long as the actors can understand it, that's the important thing.

*Character 1 scratches his head and looks worried.*

Character 1: What happens if I don't know what to write next?

Character 2: Look at your plan and think about what your character would say next in that situation.



Character 1: *(stands up)* Well, I can't wait to start writing my play.

Character 2: Me neither.

Character 1: Mine's going to be great.

Character 2: *(stands up and shakes Character 1's hand)* Good luck.

Character 1: Thank you.

*They both grab paper and pencils and start writing their plays.*

## SIX: EDITING

A play is never finished after you've written **THE END** - that's the time to go and have a snack and a play and then you start editing your script to make it really good.

Lots of writers like to read their work aloud, or get other people to do it for them - then you can hear if the character's dialogue sounds realistic or not.

## SEVEN: PERFORMING

When you've finished with editing and made the script as good as it can possibly be then it's time to make your set and costumes (see Sam's brilliant workshop here), gather your performers, rehearse it and then perform it to your audience.

That's it. You've written a play. Well done. Fun isn't it!

If you'd like to send it to us to read or share with other families then please do - we'd love that!

# THE END