

# THEATRE CENTRE

Online Writing Course

Developing Characters and their stories

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*Please use this worksheet with the related video.*

## **Exercise 1: Automatic Writing (part 1)**

Write continuously for 2 minutes. Just write whatever comes to mind, but don't stop until the time is up.

TOP TIP: If you can't think of anything, write "I am writing" until something comes to mind.

## **Exercise 1: Automatic Writing (part 2)**

Read over what you've written and highlight anything you find particularly unexpected/surprising/interesting.

## Exercise 2: What's Your Story?

In 2 minutes write down the first word that comes to mind next to each letter of the alphabet. The word should start with the same letter – e.g. A: Animal

A:  
B:  
C:  
D:  
E:  
F:  
G:  
H:  
I:  
J:  
K:  
L:  
M:  
N:  
O:  
P:  
Q:  
R:  
S:  
T:  
U:  
V:  
W:  
X:  
Y:  
Z:

Make a quick list of 5 themes you could write a play about e.g. climate change, space, mental health.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Using the words you wrote down in the alphabet exercise above, write a monologue based on your chosen theme. You must use your words in the order which you wrote them above.

## Exercise 3: Character and Journey

Read and answer the character questions below.

TOP TIP: Respond with your 'gut' and remember there can be no wrong answer.

- Name

- Age

- Middle name, that somebody has given them.

- What's the story of how they got that name?

- What are your character's feet like?

- Do they have any scars on their body?

- Where is the scar?

- What's the story of that scar and how did your character get it?

- Where do they wake up every morning?

- Imagine your character is at that moment in between being half awake and half asleep. What is the distinctive smell of this place?

- There is something your character has to do today, a significant thing and they are very uncomfortable or unhappy about having to face. What is it?

- Your character is now awake, they have opened their eyes and they are looking at a photograph and in this photograph is a person or an animal which is very significant to them - who or what is that?

- A bit of what they were dreaming comes back to them suddenly. Fractured bits of it - what is it?

- Complete the sentence for the character:

- I wish...

- I regret...

- I resent...

- I deny...

- I forgive...

- A likeable quality

- A quality they have which you find extremely difficult, objectionable.

- Where does this difficult quality come from? What event from their past?

- An objective your character wants in their life at the moment.

- What does your character need?

## Exercise 4: Storyboard

You have created a character who has a journey. Use the 8 boxes below to plot the journey your character goes on during your story.

In each square use pictures, colours, drawing to help shape your character's journey. Take your character on a journey of change through images.

### Beginning

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*Once upon a time...*

*There was...*

### Middle

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*Something happened...*

*That made them want...*

**Middle – part two**

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*They went on a journey to get it...*

*They faced many obstacles...*

**End**

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*They either got it or they didn't...*

*In the end, they were somehow  
changed by their journey and experience*