

CORE PLAYWRITING SCHEME OF WORK

Lesson 7: Structure and timeframe

PLTS: Creative Thinking; Reflective Learning

APP: WAF1; WAF3

1 Prepare for and Connect the Learning

Welcome. Play 'washing line' strung up in room as students enter. Different pieces of clothing on washing line (these don't have to be real clothes but could be different-sized pieces of paper/card if you prefer. Clothes work well though!). Question class: how does this washing line represent a play? Tease out from the group how the different pieces of clothing represent different-sized scenes and that each scene is a unit of action along the way to the end of the play.

10 min

2 Agree Learning Objectives

- **Identify** the different units of action in our plays and the timeframe of our plays
- **Create** a further three scenes for our plays, using our timeframes

3 Present New Information Through the Senses

Students consider their own play 'washing lines'. Refer back to the second lesson and the five key events that they decided would happen in their play. In their books/journals, pupils draw a washing line (or they could create literal washing lines!) and add the different-sized scenes, deciding whether they are small, medium or large units of action and outlining how the character(s) is/are changed by the end of each scene.

15 min

4 Construct

Ask the students to consider how their plays will be structured and how scenes will be sequenced and why (reference WAF3). The washing line follows a linear, sequential model but it doesn't have to be like that. Plays can jump forwards and backwards in time, too. Playwrights also use dramatic devices to propel the action forward and build tension.

Provide the following examples of plays for students to read in class (in additional lessons) or at home to give them ideas about dramatic structure and dramatic devices:

The chorus as a character in itself, helping to push the story forward – *Stolen Secrets; Red Red Shoes*

The use of monologues to explore multiple realities and worlds within a play, but still active and in the present, not reflective –

My Face; Listen to Your Parents; The Urban Girl's Guide to Camping

Symbolic objects – *Red Red Shoes; 'Make 'n' Mend' (Stolen Secrets); The Miracle; Fugee; The Urban Girl's Guide to Camping*

Repetition of scenes and repeated linguistic riffs – *Liar; My Face*

Characters 'creating' the world of the play – *School Journey to the Centre of the Earth*

In *School Journey to the Centre of the Earth* the characters physicalise different events that they think might happen – e.g. the rollercoaster.

You could spend some time this lesson (or in an additional lesson) exploring one or more of these elements of dramatic structure or dramatic devices, depending on the ability of the group. It's important to consider how structure is intrinsically linked to the characters' journey, and any decisions on structure (and first, timeframe) must be about pushing the story forward. So, in effect, the structure becomes another character. Encourage students to look at their starting point and where they want the character to end up; they should look at the events that happen that change the character.

20 min – but you may want to spend another lesson exploring some of these ideas

6 Review – step back and reflect on your learning

Explain to the group that the lesson after next will be a workshop lesson where we workshop our plays with actors to see what improvements we could make. Students instructed to have play scripts typed out (it doesn't matter if they're not finished) and ready to hand in for copying so the actors have enough copies.

5 min

5 Apply to Demonstrate your New Understanding

Students now write any three scenes of their play, using their play 'washing line' to help. The scenes don't have to be linear; they can be from any point in the play and can introduce new characters.

20 min

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