Playwrights for Change: Year 14
"Creating Community

AATE's National Middle School/High School
Ten-Minute Play Writing Competition

Utah Regional Competition
Hosted by the Theatre for Youth and Education (TYE) Center at UVU

SUBMISSION RULES
Submission deadline: January 8, 2027

1.) Only plays written by students in grades 6 through 12 will be accepted. Students in **grades 6-8** will be entered in the **middle school division** while students in **grades 9-12** will be entered in the **high school division.**

2.) **Playwrights may enter only one script**. Playwrights may not enter plays to more than one host organization. (*There are multiple regional contests and host organizations around the country; this one is hosted by the TYE Center)*

3.) Playwrights **must have permission from a parent or guardian to enter the contest**. A signed competition application must be included with all submissions.

4.) Plays **must be the original work of the playwright** and not an adaptation of pre-existing work.

5.) Scripts **may not be co-authored**. Each script must be written by only one playwright.

6.) Completed scripts **must be no longer than 10 minutes when read aloud**.

7.) Scripts may have **up to, but no more than six characters.**

8.) Plays **must address or relate to the 2027 theme, "Creating Community"**

9.) Student playwrights **must include their name and title of their play on a cover page and nowhere else** on the script. Also, **include a character breakdown** with character names and identifying information.

10.) The contest **recommends (but does not require) 12-point Times New Roman font.** The advantage is that when the standard playwriting format is followed, one-page equals about one minute of reading time. **Scripts should be printed in standard American script format** described in the formatting guide on the AATE website, also available via email, tyecenter@uvu.edu.

11.) **Scripts will be reviewed by UVU theatre education students**. Each student playwright will receive at least two feedback sheets for their script. **Playwrights whose scripts are selected for the next round will be given a certain number of days to submit a revised version** of the script that may be shaped by the suggestion on the feedback sheets.

12.) **The winner and runner up script in each division will be filmed as a book-in-hand performance** and the video will be made available to the playwright and to their host school.

13.) **Scripts and entry forms must be submitted as pdf attachements to tyecenter@uvu.edu on or before Friday, January 8, 2027**

The winning script in the Utah regional contest will be submitted to the

AATE National Contest to compete with the winning scripts from other regional contests.

Here is the information on the AATE National Contest:

14.) Winning playwrights may revise their plays after they are selected by a host organization to be submitted to the national contest on or before March 1, 2027 They may receive coaching from the host organization on those revisions.

15.) Plays may be made available on the AATE website for organizations to use for educational purposes.

16.) AATE reserves the right to change any contest rule.

17.) AATE reserves the right to accept or reject any play submitted to the contest for any reason.

18.) AATE reserves the right to request changes and revisions from submitted scripts.

23.) AATE may post the names of the chosen playwrights on marketing and press materials.

24.) Playwrights agree to allow AATE to document, through all methods and media, all stages of the process (photos and recording) for educational, publicity, or any other uses.

25.) By submitting a play, both the host organization and the playwright are giving AATE permission to produce or excerpt the student's play now or in the future and giving permission for the student's script to be made available online for free download for use. This includes its inclusion in any future print/electronic anthologies available for free or for sale to the public.

26.) The announcement date of the winning plays & student selected for the AATE National Playwrights for Change Festival will be made early to mid-May, 2027

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"Creating Community"

Creative Tips for Student Playwrights

Having trouble getting started on your script? Suffering from writer's block?
Read on for some quick tips and strategies to get inspired or to keep your creativity going.

❖ **Elements To Think About**

➢ **Theme -** Think about the theme of "**Creating Community**"

- Creating Community is the intentional process of bringing people together around shared interests, needs, values, or goals while fostering belonging, trust, inclusion, and mutual support. It turns a group of individuals into a connected community where members can participate, contribute, and take shared responsibility for one another and the group's purpose. It allows people with a common purpose to disagree respectfully and understand diverse viewpoints and experiences within that community.

❖ **Now think of the elements of your play**:

- What might the central character discover that changes what they understand about who they are, who they used to be, or who they may become? How might the character make that discovery? Is the journey of discovery enlightening, painful, or both?
- What might the central character discover about another person or group of people that helps the character understand them, help them, or work together with them? What could motivate the character to make that discovery, or avoid making that discovery?
- Is the character determined to make a difference in the world (big or small)? Does the character resist taking a stand? Does the character discover something totally unexpected about themselves or others?

➢ **Setting -** Where is your play set? At a school? In your community? In the future or the past? In outer space? Get creative—your play can be set anywhere!

➢ **Characters -** You can have up to six characters in your play. Who are the characters you're working with? What do they want? How do they feel about one another? What are they afraid of? How do they feel about themselves? Interesting characters have thoughts, feelings, reactions to situations, and sometimes are unpredictable. Do the characters change over the course of your play?

➢ **Plot -** What happens to your characters over the course of your play? Is there a beginning, a middle, and an end? What is the central conflict or event in your play? If the character doesn't end up "happily ever after," does the discovery the character makes change her/his life in a small but significant way? Does the discovery make a difference for anyone else?

❖ Brainstorming and Getting Started

- Create a "portrait" of your main character by making a list of words that describes him or her. Be as specific as possible.

- Try writing about a character's worst day, their favorite song, biggest fear, most treasured possession, person they most admire, or question they most want to ask another character.

- Outlining or mapping out your story or plot before you start writing your script is a great way to begin.

- Try telling the story of what happens in your play to a friend or family member and repeat this a couple of different times so you get the feel for the important events you're imagining.

- Create a storyboard with text and/or images, or even some kind of map. Use drawings, symbols, or doodles to represent events, characters, etc.

- Try putting key scenes on separate sheets of paper and lay them out in different orders to experiment with the sequence of events.

❖ What If I Get Stuck While Writing?

- Go back and read aloud what you have written so far. Sometimes reading out loud can give you fresh perspectives or new ideas!

- Stuck on a particular scene or detail? Skip ahead or go back! Sometimes the order of your plot or sequence of events in your play is not the order in which you write your script.

- Find a friend or family member to read your work and give you some feedback.

- Take a break! Get up from the computer, take a stretch break, eat a snack, take a walk, or just do something else for a little while. Then come back to your script with fresh eyes.

Playwrights for Change Formatting Guide

Please use the following guide to make sure your scripts are in Standard American Format before submitting them to Playwrights for Change competition.

Include the title of the play only on the first page,

Page numbers keep pages from getting lost or mixed up. Number pages in the upper right hand corner.

List all of your characters at the beginning of your script. This helps a producer know how to cast your play.

Mark the beginning of a new act or scene. Do this in the center of the line, not at the left margin.

List the full name of the speaker in ALL CAPITAL LETTERS in the center of the line.

Type your script with a space between the last line of one character's dialogue and the name of the next speaker.

Indent stage directions and put parentheses around them. Stage directions in the middle of a speech start on a new indented line. The speech continues on the next line.

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Title of Play

Characters

Josh, a shy 7th grader who has written a play
Alexandra, an outgoing 7th grader who likes to write
Ms. Stevens, their teacher, who is energetic and helpful

Scene 1

JOSH
I finished my play! But I feel kind of nervous about turning it in.

MS. STEVENS
Why? I thought the part about aliens from outer space visiting Earth was especially exciting.

(Ms. Stevens smiles, moves towards Josh.)

JOSH
Well...Maybe.

(He takes his script out of his backpack and flips through the pages.)
I wish someone would read it out loud to make sure it sounds okay.

ALEXANDRA
I could read your script! I've been working on mine, too.

JOSH
Thanks so much! After you read my script, we'll finish writing our plays and type them in Standard American Format. Then we'll send them to *Young Playwrights for Change* and see what they think!

Always type your script.
For paper copies, print on one side of the paper only.