

Middle School Playwriting Competition Formatting Guide

Here's a look at how your play should be formatted.

Include the page number in the upper right corner of the page to help from pages getting lost.

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The title should be on the first page only, centered

It's History

By Emily

Include your full name under the title

ELIZABETH: Coddling mother of LINCOLN, in her mid-fifties, married to DAVID
DAVID: Strict and arrogant father of LINCOLN, in his mid-fifties, married to ELIZABETH
PRINCIPAL STEELE: supposedly unbiased principal, in his thirties\
LINCOLN: Passionate son of ELIZABETH and DAVID, in his teens

List your characters at the top of the play.

(LINCOLN walks into Principal Steele's office to see PRINCIPAL STEELE sitting at the large desk, staring at LINCOLN. DAVID and ELIZABETH are sitting on opposite sides of the desk, and a seat in between them is saved for LINCOLN. The office is a cold grey, with a calendar on the wall that marks March 2101 and the picture on the calendar has a baby robot on it that says, "Look into the future.")

Put your character's names in ALL CAPS in the center of the line before their dialogue.

LINCOLN

Good morning, Principal-- Mom? Dad? What are you doing here?!

Stage Directions are in parenthesis.

ELIZABETH

Hi, Linky!

DAVID

Hello, son.

Make sure there is a space between the dialogue and the next character's name.

PRINCIPAL STEELE

I called them in today because I wanted to discuss something with all of you. Thank you, Mr. and Mrs. Swanson for joining us. Please, Lincoln, sit down.

(LINCOLN reluctantly sits down into the chair between ELIZABETH and DAVID and puts his backpack down).

Indent stage directions and put parentheses around them.

Formatting Resources

- <https://www.aate.com/assets/YPC/2019-20/YPC%202020%20Formatting%20Guide%202019-2020.pdf>
- <https://www.writopialab.org/programs/specialty-programs/worldwide-plays-festival/the-competition/standard-playwriting-format>

It's History by Emily C. was a finalist in New York City Children's Theater's 2016-17 Middle School Playwriting Competition.