

Writing Workshop

Script

You have seen how giants of English literature such as Shakespeare, Jonson, Donne, and Milton used their imagination to inspire readers to think about the world in a new way. In this workshop, you will use your imagination to write a script that expresses your own ideas and that suggests a theme about the human experience.



Complete the workshop activities in your **Reader/Writer Notebook**.

WRITE WITH A PURPOSE

WRITING PROMPT

Write a **script** in which you use a variety of literary techniques to share your ideas and feelings with a specific audience. The script should state or suggest a theme, or big idea, about life or the human condition.

Idea Starters

- themes expressed by writers in the unit
- a favorite scene from a story that you can adapt as a script
- a discussion of historical and modern ideas by figures from history or literature

THE ESSENTIALS

Here are some common purposes, audiences, and formats for writing a script.

PURPOSES	AUDIENCES	GENRES/FORMATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to use characters and dialogue to provide insight into a big idea about the world • to express your ideas in a creative way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • classmates and teacher • parents • drama club members • community members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • script for class • performance for classmates or younger students • online video or podcast



TEXAS KEY TRAITS

1. FOCUS AND COHERENCE

- introduces **characters** and a **conflict** or **issue** that drives the **action** and **dialogue**
- states or suggests a **theme**

2. ORGANIZATION

- uses **chronological order** to move the plot and ideas forward
- uses **transitions** to show connections between ideas

3. DEVELOPMENT OF IDEAS

- uses **stage directions** to establish the setting and characters
- uses **dialogue** to move **action** forward, express **characters'** ideas, and suggest a **theme**

4. VOICE

- shows the writer's commitment to the expressed **theme**
- expresses the writer's unique **perspective**
- uses an appropriate **tone**

5. CONVENTIONS

- uses effective **sentence structures**
- employs correct **grammar, mechanics, spelling, and punctuation**

Writing Online



Go to thinkcentral.com.
KEYWORD: HML12-538

Planning/Prewriting



WRITING 14C Write a script with an explicit or implicit theme, using a variety of literary techniques.

Getting Started

CHOOSE A CENTRAL IDEA

For your script, think of big ideas that interest you. List a few of them. Make sure that you choose an idea that will engage your readers and that you can explore in a short script.

ASK YOURSELF:

- What big ideas interest me?
- What ideas do I often think about when I decide what books to read or what movies or shows to watch?
- Why are those ideas interesting?

CONSIDER LITERARY ELEMENTS

Before you write your script, you need to imagine its basic **literary elements**—its **characters**, its **setting**, its **plot** and **conflict**, and its **theme**. In this assignment you are limited only by your imagination, so deciding what to write about may require some time and thought.

TIPS:

Start with the following questions. Answer them all before you move on to consider the elements in detail.

- Who are the characters?
- Are they real or imagined people?
- When and where is the script set?
- What conflict do the characters face?
- What happens to the characters?
- What big idea do I want to explore?

THINK ABOUT AUDIENCE AND PURPOSE

As you begin to flesh out the elements of your script, keep in mind that your **purpose** is to write a script that states or suggests a theme. Your script should both entertain your **audience** and challenge them to think about the ideas you raise.

ASK YOURSELF:

- Who is my audience?
- What information will my audience need to know?
- What themes or messages will interest my audience?
- What might my audience think about the ideas I raise?

ANALYZE THE SCRIPT FORMAT

A **script** looks different on the page than other forms of literature. There is often no narrator in a script. The characters speak directly through **dialogue**. Information about the setting and how the characters appear, move, or speak on stage is provided in the form of **stage directions**. Stage directions are set off in brackets or parentheses and are usually in italics.

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

[From stage right enter three of the four characters—poet John Donne, carrying a small bell; poet and playwright Ben Jonson, carrying a rose; and poet John Milton, carrying an apple.]

***Milton.** My fellow poets, thank you for coming to our weekly discussion group. (DONNE clears his throat and MILTON looks at him inquisitively.)*

Planning/Prewriting *continued*

Getting Started

RESEARCH YOUR CHARACTERS

If the script includes **characters** who are based on people from history or literature, you may need to do some research. Research the people on whom your characters are based to learn about how they spoke, wrote, and behaved. Use the characters' own words to support your theme.

▶ ASK YOURSELF:

- How did these people speak?
- When did these people live?
- Where did these people live?
- What was popular at the time these people were alive?

ORGANIZE YOUR SCRIPT

Use **chronological** order to present events in the script. Before you begin writing the script, jot down a plan for a plot. Remember that the conflict and the characters' dialogue will help move your plot forward.

▶ ASK YOURSELF:

- What happens first?
- What is the main conflict or problem the characters must deal with?
- What happens at the end of the script?

CONSIDER A THEME

A **theme** is a big idea or message about life or human existence. Your theme should be implied through your characters' dialogue—or you may have one of the characters state the theme outright. Your theme may develop and change as you write and revise your script.

▶ ASK YOURSELF:

- What big idea is suggested by my characters' dialogue?
- What big idea is suggested by the resolution of the characters' conflict?
- What message about life do I want readers to get from reading my script?

USE LITERARY DEVICES

Use literary devices such as **symbols** and **figurative language** (**metaphors**, **similes**, and **personification**) to express your ideas creatively. Playwrights often use symbols—people, places, things, or ideas that stand both for themselves and for something else—to underscore their big ideas.

▶ WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

One way to introduce symbolism is to use props as symbols.

[From stage right enter three of the four characters—poet John Donne, carrying a small bell; poet and playwright Ben Jonson, carrying a rose; and poet John Milton, carrying an apple.]

PEER REVIEW

Share your ideas with a peer. Ask: What would make my script more interesting or entertaining? Is my theme relevant?



In your *Reader/Writer Notebook*, develop your writing plan and a working theme. Consider these tips as you choose your characters' actions and words:

- Review your notes about character, setting, dialogue, plot, and theme.
- Write down bits of dialogue that sum up your characters' key ideas.
- Think about the significance of the ideas expressed by characters.

Drafting

The following chart shows a structure for organizing an effective script.



WRITING 13A-B Plan a first draft; structure ideas in a sustained and persuasive way and develop drafts in open-ended situations that include transitions and rhetorical devices to convey meaning.

Organizing Your Script

BEGINNING

- Provide background information about **setting** and **characters** in the stage directions.
- Introduce your **characters** and the **conflict** they face.

MIDDLE

- Develop characters through dialogue and action.
- Use **dialogue** to state or imply a theme, or big idea, about life.
- Use literary devices such as **figurative language** and **symbolism** to support the theme.

END

- Build suspense or plot intensity to the climax.
- Resolve the conflict and reveal the final outcome.
- Make the theme clear to readers.

GRAMMAR IN CONTEXT: SENTENCE STRUCTURE

A complete sentence must contain at least one **clause**, or groups of words that contains both a subject and a verb. The kind and number of clauses in a sentence determine the **sentence structure**. There are four types of sentence structure: **simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex**.

Structure	Contains	Example
Simple	one independent clause and no subordinate clauses	<i>Jonson points to the rose in his hand.</i>
Compound	more than one independent clause and no subordinate clauses	<i>He tosses his head, and his earring gleams in the light.</i>
Complex	one independent clause and at least one subordinate clause	<i>After Shakespeare stands, he begins to speak.</i>
Compound-complex	more than one independent clause and at least one subordinate clause	<i>Shakespeare suggests that life would be dull without love, and Donne and Jonson agree.</i>



Develop a first draft of your script, following the structure outlined in the chart above. As you write, be sure to include stage directions and dialogue to move the events and ideas along. Try to include a variety of sentence structures in your draft.

Revising

When you revise, you evaluate the content, organization, and style of your script. Your goal is to determine if you have achieved your purpose and effectively communicated your ideas to the intended audience. The questions, tips, and strategies in the following chart can help you revise and improve your draft.

SCRIPT		
Ask Yourself	Tips	Revision Strategies
1. Do the initial stage directions and opening scene establish the setting, characters, and conflict?	▶ Double-underline details about the setting. Circle facts about characters. Bracket information about the conflict.	▶ If needed, add descriptions of characters and setting. Add information that hints at the conflict.
2. Does the script fully explore the ideas it introduces?	▶ Bracket the key ideas raised by characters in the script.	▶ Add dialogue that discusses key ideas in the script.
3. Do all the events move the script forward?	▶ Number each event. Write a corresponding marginal note explaining how each event relates to the plot.	▶ Cut events that are not essential to the plot or the message.
4. Is dialogue used appropriately to advance the script's plot and to develop characters and theme?	▶ Underline the sections of dialogue that advance the plot or develop characters or their ideas.	▶ Add dialogue that develops characters or theme and that advances the plot. Cut or rewrite unnecessary dialogue.
5. Does the script suggest an explicit or implicit theme?	▶ Highlight dialogue that suggests or states the theme. In the margin, paraphrase the theme.	▶ Add dialogue that suggests or states a theme that is consistent with the rest of the script.
6. Does the script end with a resolution of the conflict and a clear indication of the theme?	▶ Circle dialogue that shows a resolution of the conflict. Place an asterisk next to the theme.	▶ If needed, add dialogue that explains how the conflict is resolved. Add dialogue to flesh out the theme.



PEER REVIEW Exchange your script with a classmate. As you read and comment on your classmate's script, make sure that you focus on its use of dialogue and literary devices. Be sure to discuss whether your classmate has explicitly stated or implicitly suggested a theme, especially at the end of the script. If not, give concrete suggestions for improvement using the revision strategies in the chart.



WRITING 13C Revise drafts to clarify meaning and achieve specific rhetorical purposes.

ANALYZE A STUDENT DRAFT

As you read this student draft, notice the comments on its strengths as well as the suggestions for improvement.

To Be or Not to Be: A Literary Debate on Love and Loss

by Tina Lafayette, Rigby High School

- 1 *[From stage right enter three of the four characters—poet John Donne, carrying a small bell; poet and playwright Ben Jonson, carrying a rose; and poet John Milton, carrying an apple. The three men seat themselves, facing the audience. One empty chair remains.]*
- 2 **Milton.** My fellow poets, thank you for coming to our weekly discussion group. (DONNE *clears his throat* and MILTON *looks at him inquisitively*.)
Donne. Will Shakespeare's not yet here.
Milton. Hmmph. The world's greatest playwright is late as usual. We'll start without him.
Donne. I beg your pardon, Mr. Milton, but no man is an island. To begin without him will diminish us—and our conversation.
- 3 **Milton.** Hmmph. Well, where is he? (*All three men look to stage right. After a moment, SHAKESPEARE enters from stage left, carrying a globe. He seats himself in the empty chair without the others noticing.*)
Shakespeare. Well, let's get started shall we? Some of us have places to go and people to see! (*He spins his globe and tosses his head.*)
Jonson. (*scoffing*) Actors! For them, all the world's a stage.
Shakespeare. Hey nonny, nonny that's my line! I can't remember from where though . . . Still, it's wrong to plagiarize right in front of a fellow.
Milton. If I may introduce our topic—the meaning of love and loss. Any thoughts?

Although Tina's **stage directions** identify the characters, they do not clearly establish the **setting**.

Tina uses the opening **dialogue** to provide **exposition** and establish **conflict**. Milton explains that the characters are gathered for a weekly discussion and that Shakespeare is late.

Tina also uses **dialogue** and **action** to suggest the characters' personalities. Shakespeare seems playful. In comparison, Milton lacks a sense of humor.

LEARN HOW Use **Stage Directions to Establish Setting** Stage directions can provide details about the setting. It is especially important to establish the setting in the opening stage directions to help readers understand where and when the action is taking place. Tina revised her opening stage directions to include setting.

TINA'S REVISION TO THE OPENING STAGE DIRECTIONS

Downstage are four empty chairs lit by a spotlight. The chairs are plain and wooden—timeless. The play takes place in no particular time or place in history.
[From stage right enter three of the four characters . . .]

ANALYZE A STUDENT DRAFT *continued*

4 **Jonson.** (*holding up his rose*) Love is a rose—beautiful but short-lived and often painful (*pointing to the thorns*). The worst pain of my life was the death of Ben Junior. The bloom of my life faded forever.

Donne. Ahh, but in your poem “On My First Son,” you suggest that by dying, young Ben escaped the miseries of life.

Jonson. I was trying to be strong, Jack, but I miss him a great deal.

Donne. I understand, but remember that when your son died we all lost something. “Any man’s death diminishes me because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.” (*He rings his little bell and pats Jonson on the shoulder.*)

5 **Milton.** I disagree, Jack. Pain and sorrow are gifts. Without them, what would humans struggle against every day? They force us to make smart choices or (*pointing to his apple*) pay the consequences if we choose badly. (*He taps his forehead.*) “The mind is its own place”; it is our job to make the best of our situation.

6 **Shakespeare.** (*He stands and looks down at Milton.*) Oh, John, you forget how powerful love is! They keep men like us young inside! (*He presses one hand over his heart.*) “For thy sweet love rememb’red such wealth brings / That then I scorn to change my state with kings.” Not bad, eh? (*He sighs and spins the globe.*)

Tina uses a **literary device** in her script. Jonson’s rose is a **symbol** of his belief that love and life pass quickly.

Tina uses “I disagree, Jack” as a **transition** from Donne’s comment to Milton’s. When staged, the transition would be obvious, but the phrase helps readers see the contrasting ideas.

Tina ends the script abruptly with Shakespeare quoting from one of his own sonnets. She has not resolved the conflict or **clearly suggested a theme**.

LEARN HOW Clarify the Theme It is not clear at the end of Tina’s script how the characters resolve their discussion and which theme she means to present. By adding to Shakespeare’s dialogue, she suggests that his view is the theme.

TINA’S REVISION TO PARAGRAPH 6

Not bad, eh? (*He sighs and spins the globe.*)

My friends, we are lucky to have experienced both love and sorrow in this world. There’s no reason to be sad; love and sorrow are essential to life and to literature. We would not have become great writers without them both. Come on! Admit it! (DONNE and JONSON—and even MILTON—nod in agreement. The spotlights dim.)



Use the feedback from your peers and teacher as well as the two “Learn How” lessons to revise your script. Evaluate your use of sentence structure in the dialogue. Also, consider how well you described setting and action in the stage directions, resolved the conflict, and revealed a clear theme.

Editing and Publishing



WRITING 13D–E Edit drafts for grammar, mechanics, and spelling; revise final draft in response to feedback from peers and teacher and publish written work for appropriate audiences. **ORAL AND WRITTEN CONVENTIONS 18–19** Use appropriate capitalization and punctuation conventions; spell correctly.

In the editing stage, you proofread your script to make sure that it is free of grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors. You don't want mistakes to distract your audience from focusing on your ideas.

GRAMMAR IN CONTEXT: PRONOUN-ANTECEDENT AGREEMENT

A **pronoun** usually takes the place of a noun or another pronoun. **Antecedents** are the words to which the pronouns refer. Pronouns should agree with, or match, their antecedents in number and gender.

After a moment, SHAKESPEARE enters from stage left, carrying a globe. **He** seats himself in the empty chair without the others noticing.

[The pronoun *He* refers to the antecedent *Shakespeare*. Because Shakespeare is male and singular, the pronoun is *he*, not *she* or *they*.]

Pain and sorrow are gifts. Without **them**, what would humans struggle against every day? **They** force **us** to make smart choices.

[The pronoun *them* in the second sentence refers to the antecedents *pain and sorrow*, as does the pronoun *they* in the third sentence. *Us* refers to *humans* in the second sentence. Plural pronouns are used with plural antecedents.]

As Tina edits her script, she notices an error in pronoun-antecedent agreement. The pronoun refers to *love* in the previous sentence, so it should be singular.

Oh, John, you forget how powerful love is! ~~They keep~~ men like us young inside!
It keeps

PUBLISH YOUR WRITING

Share your script with an audience.

- Host a reading of your script at which you and your peers can read the work out loud to an audience.
- Use desktop publishing software to improve your script's presentation. Then, print and bind it in a folder and give it to a friend or family member.
- Use your script as the basis for a docudrama about a literary or historical figure.



Correct any errors in your script. Edit carefully and make sure your pronouns and antecedents agree in number and gender. Then, publish your final script where your audience is likely to see it.



Scoring Rubric

Use the rubric below to evaluate your response to the on-demand prompt on the next page.

SCRIPT	
SCORE	TEXAS KEY TRAITS
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus and Coherence Focuses consistently on a single incident or unified sequence of events and a clear theme• Organization Shows effective organization throughout with smooth transitions• Development of Ideas Supports a theme thoroughly• Voice Uses a formal tone throughout• Conventions Exhibits a mature control of written language
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus and Coherence Focuses on a single incident or sequence of events and theme, with minor distractions• Organization Shows effective organization throughout, with minor lapses• Development of Ideas Supports a theme adequately• Voice Uses a formal tone, with minor lapses• Conventions Exhibits general control of grammar, mechanics, and spelling
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus and Coherence Includes some loosely related ideas that distract from the writer's theme• Organization Shows some organization, with noticeable gaps in the flow of events or ideas• Development of Ideas Develops ideas with little support or elaboration• Voice Displays a formal tone in some parts of the paper• Conventions Exhibits a limited control of grammar, mechanics, and spelling
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus and Coherence Shows little awareness of the topic and purpose for writing• Organization Lacks organization• Development of Ideas Develops ideas with minimal support and elaboration, if any• Voice Uses an informal tone• Conventions Exhibits major problems with grammar, mechanics, and spelling



Expository Essay Preparing for Timed Writing



WRITING 13B Develop
drafts in timed situations.

1. ANALYZE THE PROMPT

5 MIN



Read the prompt carefully. Then, read it again, noting the topic, the audience, and the purpose.

PROMPT

Think about a time when you made a dramatic change in your life. The change may have been prompted by others, but it had a direct effect on you. Write a cause-and-effect essay explaining to classmates what caused the change and how it has affected your life.

← Purpose ← Audience

2. PLAN YOUR RESPONSE

10 MIN



Consider some times of great change in your life. Then, choose one that you don't mind sharing with classmates, and answer the following questions:

- What happened? What caused the change? Who caused it—me or someone else?
- Who else was involved in or affected by the change?
- How did the event affect me or change me?
- What illustration or elaboration can I use to demonstrate the change?

3. RESPOND TO THE PROMPT

20 MIN



Prepare your answer by following the plan below.

Introduction	Body	Conclusion
Tell what happened, explain who was involved, and describe where and how the event happened. Begin with an interesting anecdote.	Explain how you were affected by the change. Use transitions such as <i>consequently</i> , <i>because</i> , <i>therefore</i> , and <i>as a result</i> to make connections clear.	Explain how the change may affect you in the future.

4. IMPROVE YOUR RESPONSE

5–10 MIN



Revising Check your draft against the prompt. Does your draft clearly state a thesis about the cause(s) and effect(s) of the change? Does it provide sufficient evidence? Do you end with an explanation of how your life has changed?

Proofreading Find and correct any errors in grammar, usage, or mechanics. Make sure that your paper and any edits are neat and legible.

Checking Your Final Copy Before you submit your paper, examine it once more to make sure that you are presenting your best work.

Technology Workshop

Producing a Docudrama

Most scriptwriters hope to see their works acted out and viewed by an audience. You can reach a new audience for your script by adapting it as a docudrama. A docudrama is a filmed narrative based on real events and real people's lives. As in a fictional narrative, actors re-enact scenes using dialogue, costumes, and props.



Complete the workshop activities in your **Reader/Writer Notebook**.

PRODUCE WITH A PURPOSE

PROMPT

Write a script for a **docudrama** that focuses on an interesting historical event or the life of a real person or historical figure.

TEXAS KEY TRAITS

A STRONG DOCUDRAMA . . .

- uses scripted scenes to depict a historical event or the life of a historical figure
- suggests a clear theme about the person's life or work
- requires actors to speak and act the lines in a convincing manner
- includes sound and visual effects as well as props to enhance the portrayal



WRITING 15D Produce a multimedia presentation with graphics, images, and sound that appeals to a specific audience and synthesizes information from multiple points of view. **LISTENING AND SPEAKING 26** Participate productively in teams, offering ideas or judgments that are purposeful in moving the team towards goals and evaluating the work of the group based on agreed-upon criteria.

Plan Your Docudrama

The basis of a docudrama is a script. You will need to focus on a particular event that you want to dramatize and film. Then, you can begin to shape the script in a way that presents a clear theme and keeps your viewing audience interested.

- 1. Prepare a Script** A docudrama may cover the entire life of a historical figure or may focus on one particular event. When considering the scope of your docudrama, think about the most important aspect of your subject and the point you want to make about it. Use what you learned about writing scripts in the Writing Workshop to write a script for a scene or scenes that illustrate your ideas. Be prepared to do some research. Draw on your research to make your script realistic. Also, make sure that your stage directions are clear. They should indicate the setting as well as how your actors move and speak.
- 2. Choose the Actors** Decide who will act in your docudrama. Give your actors copies of the script, and ask them to practice delivering the lines in a convincing way. Offer your actors advice on how to move or speak, and listen to their feedback about lines or directions.
- 3. Select Location and Props** Your stage directions will need to include information about setting and what props and sound effects you will use. Does your action take place inside or outside? What costumes or props will be needed? Work with your actors and assistants to check out various locations and get permission to use them, if necessary.



Media
Tools

Go to thinkcentral.com.
KEYWORD: HML12-548

Produce Your Docudrama

REHEARSE AND FILM THE SCENE

Rehearse the script for your docudrama several times before you turn on the camera. Here are a few things to consider before you start filming.

- **Blocking Your Scene** Make sure your actors know where to stand and how and when to move. Put markers on the floor of the set to help them. Rehearse the scene while holding the camera. Think about how you are going to frame the actors in each shot. Do you want close-ups? Do you want to film actors from different angles? Make notes or sketch out a storyboard to help you remember how you want to frame the shots as you film.
- **Lighting and Sound** Think about ambient sound. If your scene is set in the distant past and you are filming outside, you will need a location free of traffic noise. Alternatively, you could have your actors record a separate sound track that you can edit in later. Also consider lighting. If you want to film a night scene, think about how you will provide light for the actors. Again, you may need to adapt your scene to match your resources.

EDIT YOUR DOCUDRAMA

After you finish filming your docudrama, you can focus on adding audio or graphics. Review your footage. Then, use video-editing software to make any necessary changes or additions.

- **Audio** If you plan to have an introduction, you can present it in different ways. You can film yourself or another actor to provide context and information about your docudrama. (You will need to write a short script for that, too.) Another approach is to begin your film with written text. You can use graphics or a close-up of a document or poster that tells viewers what they need to know about the subject and the scene you have filmed.
- **Graphics** Create a title screen and opening or closing credits. Be sure to identify and thank all the people who acted in your docudrama or helped create it.



As a Docudrama Producer Show your docudrama to family and friends. Ask for feedback about your use of visuals and sound. Use the feedback to make final adjustments to your docudrama.

As a Viewer Evaluate a classmate's docudrama. Watch and listen carefully. Identify any moments in the scene that seem confusing. Think about whether the docudrama's content suits the topic, audience, and purpose.

