

ENGLISH 158 SECTION 01

Fall 2002

Course Outline

TEXT:

Hamill, Tony, ed. *Six Canadian Plays*
Toronto: Playwrights Canada Press, 1992.

ACTIVITIES:

Weight

First Play	
First Draft	5%
Second Draft	10%
Second Play	
First Draft	15%
Second Draft	30%
Exercises, Quiz	25%
<u>Class Participation</u>	<u>15%</u>
Total	100%

All drafts of all plays must be handed in, in proper manuscript form as outlined on pages nine and ten.

80% attendance is required to pass this course.

Absences should be phoned in, and when appropriate be followed by a doctor's note.

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Course Timetable

Period

Marks

Sep **Introduction:** Answer, in writing, 3 questions: What am I thinking? Feeling? Doing?

3 Basic Concept: **WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?**

7 **Workshop:** 5 ideas: for plays, for settings, for characters

10 So what makes a play? a setting? a character?

12 **Workshop:** Pick a play from the text to use for discussion. Marks for class participation.

- 17 Getting inside the play. Forget structure. Ask questions. (21 of them)
The **FORMULA** : *conflict → choice → action*
- 19 **Workshop:** *Using the questions, write the first draft of a 15 minute play, due next period.* **Value:**
5%
- 24 History of the drama. Review the 7 tools of playwriting. Read text play for next time.
- 26 **Workshop:** Take text play and do a plot summary using the seven tools, then fill in playwright's comment sheet. Turn in for class participation marks.
- Oct Discuss the monologue as an initiating tool for a new play.
- 1 (review principles of monologue).
- 3 **Workshop:** *Write before and after monologues for first play.* **Value:**
5%
- Homework:** *Write monologue for major character in your next play.* **Value:**
5%
- 8 Review development techniques, format, assignment for draft two of first play.
Expand on Q/A and monologue in preparation for second draft of play.
- 10 **Workshop:** *Produce scene sequence for second play, due next period.* **Value:**
5%
- 15 Structuring the play: an art in time -- the complexities of **WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?**
Alternative approaches: knit the scenes together from within or be guided externally by intended effect on audience.
- 17 **Workshop:** *Second draft of first play to be turned in next period.* **Value:**
10%
- 22 **Quiz reviewing basics.** **Value:**
10%
Starting over from the beginning to get ready for the second play.
Faster pace for the rest of the course. Strategies for the first draft.
- 24 **Workshop:** Develop first draft.
- 29 Strategies for writing a second draft.
- 31 **Workshop:** *Work on first draft of second play, due next time.* **Value:**
15%
- Nov Preparing formal drafts. Using good dialogue format. Keeping the focus on action.
- 5 Set up groups for workshop.
- 7 **Workshop:** Bring initial working copies (enough for members of group) of second draft (i.e.. final version of first draft).
Read each other's drafts, that is, work as team to help each other.

Use playwright's comment sheet.

- 12 Blocks to writing. Discuss results of first draft. Prepare for second draft.
- 14 **Workshop:** Come with copies of revised first draft to work on in groups.
Each person has a say about his or her own draft.
Homework: Read everyone's play in group and use playwright's comment sheet to
[for Nov 19] develop 5 or 6 opinions on each play. Use this time to stay focused,
but stay away from one's own play.
- 19 Finalising the process for the second draft: Objective research and Subjective probing.
- 21 **Workshop:** a. groups review drafts using playwright's vocabulary;
b. use rest of period to do research.
- 26 Final thoughts on the second draft. Use time to finalise second draft.

Dec

3 Use groups to read plays to class.

5 Turn in second draft of second play next time.

Value:

30%

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ASSIGNMENT 1

FIRST PLAY: First Draft

DUE DATE: Sep. 19

LENGTH: 5 - 7 pages

VALUE: 5%

Purpose: To explore the basic process of drawing an action out of a character, as a way of creating a play.

Process: Using the 21 questions, write first draft of a 15 minute play.

Requirements:

The following attempts to provide a basic breakdown of how the assignment will be marked.

Some variations may apply to allow flexibility.

1. A short (½ page max.) introduction in which the conflict, choice, action and change are identified.

5%

CONFLICT --> CHOICE --> ACTION --> CHANGE

2. Attach the list of 21 questions as answered for the major character of the play.

5%

3. Attach other preparatory work that has been done, such as the

100 word exercise.

5%

4. The play itself:

Success will be determined by the presence of a strong conflict
50%

which presents the major character with a choice. That is the essential part of the play. Remember this is considered a first draft so this is the part that REALLY needs the work. If a conflict isn't working in a first draft, it is time to start over

A single choice can lead to a number of different actions.
20%

A first draft usually tries to work out the best possibility. Some notations as to alternatives would be appropriate.

Some attempt to show how the major character has changed as
15%

a result of the choice and action. Again, some notation such as a person might write out on a rough draft would be appropriate.

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ASSIGNMENT 2

FIRST PLAY: Second Draft

DUE DATE: Oct. 22

LENGTH: 5 - 7 pages

VALUE: 10%

Purpose: To produce a piece that is well on its way to being finished.

Process: Using previous work, and playwright's comment sheet, develop a completed piece.

Requirements:

The following attempts to provide a basic breakdown of how the assignment will be marked.

Some variations may apply to allow flexibility.

1. Write out these elements that compose the basic form for your play as it now stands, in four sentences maximum:

CONFLICT --> CHOICE --> ACTION --> CHANGE

5%

2. Attach all the work that was handed in for the first draft so the teacher
5%

can get some idea of what changes and developments have gone on.
This work will not be evaluated. It will simply be used as a guide.

3. **Playwright's comment sheet.** Use the sheet to evaluate your
10% play. Include any comments or thoughts you want taken into consid-
consideration when the play is assigned a mark.

4. The play itself:

a: As with the first draft, success will be determined by the presence
50% of a strong conflict which presents the major character with a
choice. The conflict should be clear and definite.

b: The choice should come tightly out of the conflict. The connec-
20% tion with the conflict should be obvious. Other choices should
be quite unlikely, given the nature of the character and the situa-
tion he or she is in.

c: A definite change in the central character should be noticeable.
10%

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ASSIGNMENT 3

SECOND PLAY: First Draft

DUE DATE: Oct. 31

LENGTH: 10-15 pages

VALUE: 15%

Purpose: To produce a working draft set up for further development.

Process: Develop the unit sequence (exercise 4) into a set of scenes
each with its own title and idea statement.

Requirements:

The following attempts to provide a basic breakdown of how the assignment will be
marked.

Some variations may apply to allow flexibility.

1. Write out these elements that compose the basic form for your play as

it 5%

now stands, in four sentences maximum:

CONFLICT --> CHOICE --> ACTION --> CHANGE

Add a note about any ideas, problems, possible developments that are relevant to the current draft.

2. Attach a revised version of the unit sequence (scenario) with a title
10% and idea statement for each unit.

3. The draft itself:

a. Put the title and idea statements from the unit sequence at the head
5% of each unit. Start each unit on a new page.

b: As with the first play, success will be determined by the presence
50% of a strong conflict which presents the major character with a choice. The conflict should be clear and definite.

c: The choice should come tightly out of the conflict. The connec-
20% tion with the conflict should be obvious. Other choices by the major character may be possible at this stage and so should be noted if they exist.

d: A definite change or definite decision not to change in the central .
10% character should be noticeable.

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ASSIGNMENT 4 **SECOND PLAY: Second Draft**
DUE DATE: Dec. 5 **LENGTH: 15 pages** **VALUE: 30%**

Purpose: To produce a piece that is well on its way to being finished.
Process: Using previous work, and the playwright's comment sheet, develop a piece ready to send to a publisher.

Requirements:

The following attempts to provide a basic breakdown of how the assignment will be

marked.

Some variations may apply to allow flexibility.

1. A special focus of this assignment is care over manuscript. The script
10% should look professional. Follow the format list on page nine and the Playwright's Union style sheet on page ten of the course outline.
2. Attach all the work that was handed in for the first draft so the teacher
5% can get some idea of what changes and developments have gone on. This work will not be evaluated. It will simply be used as a guide.
3. **Playwright's comment sheet.** Use the sheet to evaluate your
10% play. Include any comments or thoughts you want taken into consid-
consideration when the play is assigned a mark.
4. The play itself:
 - a: As with previous work, success will be determined by the
50% presence of a strong conflict which presents the major character with a choice. The conflict should be clear and definite.
 - b: The choice should come tightly out of the conflict. The connec-
15% tion with the conflict should be obvious. Other choices should be quite unlikely, given the nature of the character and the situation he or she is in.
 - c: A definite change or definite decision not to change in the central .
10% character should be noticeable.

EVALUATION OF MARKS AND EXERCISES

The mark you receive on each exercise and draft will be a number anywhere from 0 to 9.

The conversion scale used to translate numbers into grades at the end of the course is as follows:

9 A+	7 A-	5 B	3 C+	1 D
8 A	6 B+	4 B-	2 C	0 F

The list below is primarily designed for marking essays, but it will serve as a guide for achieving the equivalent skills in playwriting. Obviously creativity, originality and control will be highly rewarded, while carelessness and weakness with language, as well as lack of understanding of the course concepts will weaken the mark. Remember: this is a first year university level English course, so all the standards of such a course apply.

- 9** Used only for very exceptional work. Perhaps some special insight that deserves extra recognition.
- 8** As for 7 but with fullest possible development or tighter over-all unity.
- 7** The kind of work that might be expected at the next level up. Complete and clear under-standing and presentation with a high degree of originality.
- 6** As for 5 but with virtually no errors in expression, editing, or proof-reading.
- 5** As for 4 but with strong evidence that everything is under control. No significant errors.
- 4** All is very clear. Subject is thoroughly studied and understood. Some degree of originality is involved. Errors in expression and mechanics are few and far between.
- 3** Varies. May mean virtually no errors in expression are present; things are clear, but there is little sign of creativity. May mean a very good paper but weak spelling and/or grammar.
- 2** Some weaknesses in expression, but nothing major. The basic material is obviously under-stood well, but not much attempt to put it into a new light or point of view.
- 1** Several errors in spelling, punctuation, or difficult language expressions. Subject not thoroughly discussed and/or not thoroughly understood.
- 0** Lack of clear expression makes failure automatic. Subject being discussed is obviously not understood or is obviously inaccurately presented.

R Paper returned without mark because proper conventions of format such as margins, title page, double spacing, page numbering, were not observed. Alter and resubmit as soon as possible. No marks are lost

RULES OF FORMAT

NB: PAPERS WHICH NEGLECT THE STANDARD RULES OF FORMAT ON THIS AND THE FOLLOWING PAGE WILL BE RETURNED UNMARKED.

1. Use white, unruled, unlined paper of standard size (8 1/2 x 11 inches).
2. Plays that are too hard to read because of ink colour, faintness, or type size, and essays that are hand-written, will be returned unmarked.
3. Print on one side of the page only. Only 12 point print size should be used. Smaller sizes will not be accepted; larger sizes will affect word count.
4. Follow pagination, spacing and arrangement as required by **PLAYWRIGHTS' UNION OF CANADA** shown on page six.
5. Pages should be clipped or stapled together. Essays that lack such, or use other devices will not be accepted.
6. **USE A TITLE PAGE.**
Include a title, your name, course and course number, the due date, the assignment number, and the name of the instructor. Use neat, clear spacing.
7. **TITLES:**
YOUR OWN TITLES SHOULD NOT BE UNDERLINED OR PUT IN QUOTATION MARKS.
Titles of short stories, poems, magazine articles, chapters of books, and generally any title that is within a larger work, should be put in quotation marks.
Titles of plays, novels, and collections of short stories and poems -- in fact, the title of

any

piece that stands by itself, independent of other works -- should be underlined.
If your title contains the title of another work, then the borrowed title should be either underlined or put in quotes according to the rules just mentioned.

8. Plays should look neat and tidy. Plays should be prepared and submitted with the same care that would be used for submission to a publisher or agent.

Standard Script Format /1

Act One, Scene One

—
Scene introductions are aligned with the Act and Scene heading and are written in complete sentences and full punctuation without parentheses. CHARACTER NAMES are in upper case and the paragraph is in italics.

- PLAYWRIGHT But what about the dialogue?
- PUC Notice that the character names continue to be in upper case, but that the dialogue is in lower case. The dialogue is written as the character speaks.
- PLAYWRIGHT What if I want to write personal directions for a character?
- PUC (*realizing that personal directions are italicized*) Put the personal directions in parentheses, all lower case with no end punctuation and as terse as possible, using the present participle (words ending in "ing"), not the active verb.
- PLAYWRIGHT This is becoming much clearer. Are stage directions in the middle of the scene formatted the same way as the scene introductions?
- PUC puts a large gold star on the forehead of the playwright
- PUC Yes! And leave a line between each dialogue line and each stage direction. This way every script will be readable.

PLAYWRIGHT You will photocopy and bind this to make a copyscript.
What measurements should I use for the document?

PUC Use a left margin of 1.5 inches, a right margin of 1 inch, a
top margin of 1 inch and a bottom margin of 1 inch. Stage
directions are indented 3 inches and dialogue is indented 1.5
inches from the left margin.

PLAYWRIGHT All you have to tell me now is how to end it. Sometimes I
use "blackout" and sometimes nothing but "end of scene."

PUC Format it as a stage direction, and use whatever you like.

End of scene.

!!!!!! THIS IS YOUR INVITATION !!!!!!

Come to see me ANYTIME.
Ask for a free book.
I will be available just for YOU
between
4:30 and 5:20 p.m.
on
Tuesdays and Thursdays
in the my office, or the cafeteria,
or at other times by appointment.
Peter Montgomery
Paul 326 Phone: 370-3342

montgomery@camosun.bc.ca <http://www.camosun.bc.ca/~peterm>