

ALEX BROUN PLAYWRITING COURSE
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What is a ten minute play ?

- Action for ten minutes on stage
- A play in ten minutes
- A story that takes ten minutes to tell
- Anything
- Everything

What is not a ten minute play ?

- A play that takes longer than ten minutes
- A story that takes longer than ten minutes to tell

What story can't you tell in ten minutes ?

Hamlet
War and Peace
The entire Bible

What story can you tell in ten minutes ?

Hamlet's bathtime (although I wouldn't recommend it – highly derivative and done before)

A moment in war or a moment of peace

An episode of the Bible

What can you make your ten minute play stand out ?

An interesting setting or situation – think of a setting or situation that is highly original and you haven't seen before. An interesting setting or situation and you are often halfway to a good play. How about on top of an atomic bomb minutes before its about to go off, inside a human heart, in a balloon floating over the northpole. There are no limits, the only limit is your imagination which is limitless.

Interesting and unusual characters – similarly try to think of characters we haven't seen before who have unusual quirks or traits. It also helps if you make these characters admirable or likeable in some way, so the audience can enjoy spending time with them. How about a doctor who secretly wants to open a pastry shop, a journalist trying to get sober, a traffic cop is a actually a composer of rock musicals

Sparkling comedy lines or mesmerising dialogue – this is the hardest to do and in many ways is unteachable. Oscar Wilde's plays rely a little on plot and character but take away his incredibly witty word play and funny dialogue and it's unlikely they would be performed as often. Similarly the plays of Mamet and Pinter often have little to no story and unlikeable obscure characters but just rely on the dramatic tension and hypnotic rhythms built up through their extraordinary crisp and concise dialogue.

Surprise – Keep a crucial piece of information about a character or event hidden from the audience and reveal it later with stunning effect. Add to this by leading your audience in another direction before suddenly revealing what is really going on.