

NYSTEA Student Playwriting Contest

Guidelines

● Procedures

- A school may submit as many plays as they would like.
- The plays will be chosen by our Panel of Readers and the Playwriting Committee.
- No more than TWO plays will be chosen from a single school.
- Five plays will be chosen as finalists. Each playwright will be partnered with a playwriting mentor from NYSTEA who will assist them in bringing their script to its fullest potential. Once any necessary revisions have been completed, the play will then be officially selected for performance at the 2025 NYSTEA Student Conference.

● Guidelines

- Plays must not be longer than 5 minutes in length.
- Plays must be written for 2-4 characters.
- Plays must be set in one location, call for reasonable props/costumes, and include minimal use of lighting and sound cues (4-6 max).
- Plays must not contain any disqualifying content (Language, Violence, Sexual Content, etc).
- Think carefully about the content of your play. Remember that the play will be produced in a short period of time with actors selected from your peers at the Student Conference. An otherwise excellent play may be rejected by the Playwriting Committee if it feels that it would be too difficult to produce.

● Formatting

- Scripts must begin with a title page that ONLY includes the title of the play. To ensure impartiality in the evaluation process, the playwright's name and school should NOT appear anywhere in the submitted script (this information will be recorded on the submission form).
- Scripts must include a description of setting in paragraph form. Include all important details.
- Scripts must include a list of characters with a short description: name, age, personality, additional important information.
- Scripts should follow these standard, visual formatting guidelines:
 - Use a size 12 font, single spaced. The font choice should not interfere with the legibility of the play.
 - Character names appear in all capital letters.
 - Lines of dialogue should be separated by a line space.
 - Stage directions should be clearly differentiated from dialogue. It is standard for them to be italicized and contained within parentheses or brackets.
 - The first stage direction often includes an "at rise," which describes the action on stage as the curtain opens before any of the characters speak.
- Scripts must be free of mechanical errors (Spelling, Capitalization, Punctuation, Grammar).

Take a look at the NYSTEA Playwriting Script Example below.

STEADFAST LOYALTY

Cast of Characters

DARLENE O'TOOLE: 16 years old, a former child star

ANNETTE FUSILLI: 17 years old, class president

MRS. MARMALADE: 48 years old, a math teacher

Place

Skeffington High School Cafeteria, Willowton, Vermont

Time

Early Spring, 2006

[Setting:

Off to the side in the school cafeteria, near two vending machines. There are three tables with several chairs and a doorway that leads to the cashier and the food. There are trays on one table and a group, not involved in the action, diagonally across.

At Rise:

DARLENE and ANNETTE are coming from the lunch line after purchasing a healthy lunch. It is in the middle of the second lunch period at a busy public high school.]

ANNETTE

[Laughing and obviously very upbeat]

I can't wait till Friday! The bowling party will be so much fun. I have a fabulous red and yellow top that will go with my new bowling shoes. *[A sudden change of subject.]* Is Bobby going to be there?

[ANNETTE crosses to DARLENE. Carefully observing her reaction.]

DARLENE

[Yawning, as she reaches for the doughnuts]

I've had it with him. He just thinks he is all that and that I will always be there for him. Well, you know what... I probably...