

Playwriting Course notes

with James McDermott

Session One – Finding Your Voice

In this session, we discuss how finding your voice as a writer is about finding what you want to write about and how you want to write about it.

Exercises

- Write for 5 minutes about yourself.
- Write for 5 minutes about Luton.
- Write for 5 minutes about what you'd like to change about the world.

Session Two – Character

In this session we created characters.

Exercises

- What would strangers take away from meeting your character for the first time?
- What does your character's best friends know about them?
- What does your character's closest family know about them?
- What does only your character know about themselves?

Session Three – Wants and Obstacles

In this session we discussed how all drama is about a character overcoming obstacles that stops them getting what they want.

Exercises

- What does your character want?
- Why do they want it now?
- How do they stop themselves from getting it?
- Who else stops them getting it?
- How can your character overcome those obstacles to get what they want?

Session Four – Structure

In this session we looked at five-act structure in drama:

- Act One – A character wants something
- Act Two – Things go well as they try and get it
- Act Three- Things go badly
- Act Four – Things get worse and it looks like the character won't get what they want
- Act Five – The character does or doesn't overcome obstacles to get what they want