

## Sample Pages from Self-Management in the Drama Classroom

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# **SELF-MANAGEMENT** in the Drama Classroom

*Includes*

**Self-Management Playwriting Unit!**



**Theatrefolk**<sup>®</sup>

Kerry Hishon and Lindsay Price

Self-Management in the Drama Classroom  
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# INTRODUCTION

Self-management is an excellent skill for students to develop. What they learn in the classroom will influence their choices and behaviours outside the classroom. Self-management encourages students to set goals and strategize to achieve them, take personal responsibility for tasks, maintain focus on tasks, be organized, and efficiently manage their time. Student success in and out of the classroom can be directly measured by their ability to self-manage.

This resource offers a variety of ways to frame self-management with drama-classroom-specific articles, exercises, and an entire **Self-Management Playwriting Unit** where the focus is not on the final product but the demonstration of self-management skills along the way.

Give students the opportunity to connect what happens in the drama classroom to an important set of skills they will use for the rest of their life.



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# ARTICLES



## SELF-MANAGEMENT IN THE DRAMA CLASSROOM: PLAN, EXECUTE, REFLECT

Self-management is the ability to manage one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviours effectively, and to achieve one's goals and aspirations. This includes taking responsibility for one's actions, developing coping strategies, prioritizing, managing one's time, demonstrating initiative, and setting goals. These skills will help students succeed both in and out of the drama classroom.

Here are some questions you can ask your drama students to get them thinking about self-management. You can use them as journal prompts, exit slips, or discussion starters:

1. How can you demonstrate responsibility in the drama classroom?
2. How do you keep track of your responsibilities on a daily/weekly/monthly basis?
3. You have a big soccer game the day before an important scene presentation in drama class. How will you prepare for both events?
4. On Monday, you are assigned a monologue to memorize and present on Friday. How will you use your time efficiently?
5. You have several big assignments due around the same time. How will you deal with the stress?

Then, try the **Plan, Exercise, Reflect** exercise with your students. If possible, start this exercise on a Monday:

1. Have students make a list of all their responsibilities for that week. Think about school assignments, tests, after-school activities, part-time jobs, chores, family events, etc.
2. Then, using the provided weekly template, have students write down all their responsibilities for that week along with their due dates.
3. Have students complete the Start of Week Plan questions:
  - What's my #1 priority this week?
  - How will I ensure that I complete my #1 priority?
  - What's one thing I can do to reduce stress this week?
4. Talk with students about how to break big tasks into smaller chunks. For example, if students have a scene presentation on Thursday, what do they need to do on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday to prepare?

5. On Friday, after students have executed their plan, have them respond to the End of Week Reflection questions:
  - a. What went well this week?
  - b. What didn't go well this week?
  - c. What can I do to prepare myself for success next week?

You can tie this into more questions about how the Plan, Execute, Reflect exercise can benefit people in various theatrical professions, or how they can adapt it for their use. How could a stage manager use the template? How could planning their week benefit a professional actor? Why is it important for a lighting designer to have good time management skills? Why is it important for drama students to develop these skills now?

The weekly template is available on the next page.



 **SELF-MANAGEMENT IN THE DRAMA CLASSROOM:  
PLAN, EXECUTE, REFLECT WEEKLY TEMPLATE**

Week of: \_\_\_\_\_

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

## START OF WEEK PLAN QUESTIONS

- What's my #1 priority this week?
  
- How will I ensure that I complete my #1 priority?
  
- What's one thing I can do to reduce stress this week?

## END OF WEEK REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What went well this week?
  
- What didn't go so well this week?
  
- What can I do to prepare myself for success next week?



# THEATRICAL TIME MANAGEMENT FOR STUDENTS

Self-management and time management go hand in hand. How can students keep track of their daily responsibilities?

---

Students are busy. Drama students are no exception. They're constantly juggling rehearsals, learning lines, working backstage, preparing for auditions, and performing in shows (often all at the same time) — on top of the rest of their daily responsibilities. It's pretty rare to see a theatre student working on one project at a time.

While multitasking can be great, it can also lead to stress, burnout, and schedule clashes. Read on for seven helpful tips to share with students to help them manage their lives:

## 1. Get a planner and use it.

Don't assume you will remember everything. Write down all your commitments (school, part-time jobs, lessons, rehearsals, show dates, appointments, etc.). Writing things down cements them in your mind. Colour-code each commitment if you have to. Don't forget to schedule time for homework, chores, and social events.

## 2. Keep a to-do list in your planner.

Check things off as you accomplish them. It's satisfying to see all those tasks accomplished.

## 3. Plan ahead.

If you have rehearsal the night before a big assignment is due, don't leave it until the last minute. Missing rehearsal to complete an assignment lets down the rest of the cast and crew. It can help to break large tasks into smaller chunks and assign yourself due dates for them. For example, for a large written assignment, you could break down your steps into research, outline, first draft, revise, and final draft. Spread the due dates out between now and the day the final assignment is due. Write those dates in your planner and stick to them — it'll help you reduce stress in the long run.

## 4. You will have to make sacrifices.

Which is more important: performing in a show or going to a school dance? Do you have enough hours in the day to be head of costumes AND sing in the choir? Will your part-time job allow you to take off all of show week to run lights? Only you can make these tough decisions. You can't do everything; there aren't enough hours in the day. Decide what is most important to you and focus on that. Further, know what is an acceptable reason and what is a bad reason to miss rehearsal:

**Acceptable** reasons to miss rehearsal: severe illness, family emergency, previously planned (and approved by the teacher/director) commitment or vacation

**Bad** reasons to miss rehearsal: last-minute tickets to an event, feeling tired from a previous night's social outing, getting stuck in traffic (leave earlier!), finishing an assignment you procrastinated on, you "just didn't feel like going"

The only acceptable reasons to miss a show are sickness or injury severe enough to go to the hospital or a family emergency. Almost any other reason is unacceptable.

**5. If conflicts occur, be upfront and honest.**

Tell your teacher/director about conflicts as soon as they occur — even before auditions happen, if possible. It might affect whether you are cast in the show and what role you get. It's not fair to the rest of the cast and crew if you get cast and then inform everyone that you have to miss every Monday rehearsal because of soccer practice.

**6. Whatever you do, don't lie or vanish.**

You don't want to be known as the person who is unreliable. Your present choices can affect future opportunities. For example, if you commit to running the spotlight for the production, but then drop out a week before tech rehearsal, not only are you letting down the rest of the cast and crew, but your teacher may think twice about letting you work on a future show. Your reputation is important — don't let it haunt you.

**7. Remember that you are not the only person in the show.**

You are part of a team. When you miss rehearsal, it affects everyone else. It's like the butterfly effect: one change creates a series of changes that alters life as we know it. In this case, "life" is the time spent in rehearsal. If you miss rehearsal, someone has to re-teach what you missed. You might miss out on important notes or big changes, or you might be removed from the scene altogether.



# THEATRICAL TIME MANAGEMENT FOR STUDENTS

## REFLECTION

1. Make a list of all your daily commitments.
2. Reflect on your list. How do you organize your daily schedule?
3. What is one way you can improve on organizing your schedule?

## SCENARIO QUESTION

Select one of the following

Length: half a page

- Looking ahead to your schedule, you notice you have a big midterm exam the day after opening night of your school production. What steps would you take to put yourself in the best position to succeed?

OR

- You are stage manager for the school musical. After rehearsal, one of the actors comes to you and says they're having a tough time keeping up with their assignments since starting rehearsals. What advice would you give them?

## EXIT SLIP QUESTIONS

1. Describe how you manage your time and priorities.
2. What are your strengths and weaknesses when it comes to time management?
3. Do you consider yourself a reliable person? Why or why not?
4. How do you handle conflicts in your schedule?
5. Have you ever given one of the "bad" reasons for missing rehearsal? What happened?

Self-management is an excellent skill for students to develop. It includes setting goals, strategizing, demonstrating initiative, personal responsibility, time management, coping strategies, organization and more. Student success in and out of the classroom can be directly measured by their ability to self-manage. Not only does this resource provide a complete **Self-Management Playwriting Unit**, it provides self-management articles and exercises specific to the drama classroom.



TheatreFolk®

Kerry Hishon and Lindsay Price

# Teaching Resources

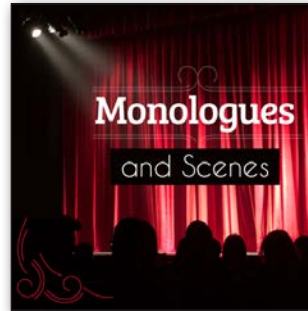
Quality resources to use in your drama classroom



## The Drama Classroom Companion

*The Drama Classroom Companion* is filled with articles and exercises to build the skills needed for theatrical performance as well as real world skills like creative thinking, critical thinking, collaboration, and communication.

[theatrefolk.com/companion](http://theatrefolk.com/companion)

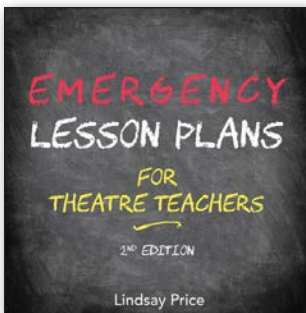


## Monologue and Scene Collections

Whether it's for classwork, competitions or auditions, these collections of student-appropriate monologues and scenes can help you find what you're looking for.

All monologues and scenes come from published plays and include running-times, descriptions, character notes and staging suggestions.

[theatrefolk.com/collections](http://theatrefolk.com/collections)



## Emergency Lesson Plans For Theatre Teachers

*Emergency Lesson Plans For Theatre Teachers, 2nd edition* gives you the tools and resources you need to confidently leave your class in the hands of a substitute teacher. Customize your lesson plans to suit the specific needs of your class when you can't be there.

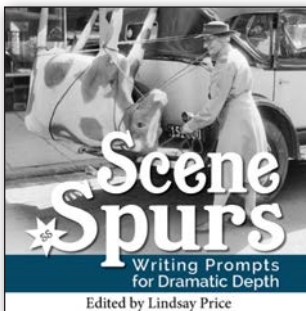
[theatrefolk.com/elp](http://theatrefolk.com/elp)



## The Student Director's Handbook

Help students take their show from first audition to opening night with *The Student Director's Handbook*. This easy-to-use ebook is full of guidelines, tips and templates designed to help students create a vision, circumvent problems and organize rehearsals on their way to a successful production.

[theatrefolk.com/student-director](http://theatrefolk.com/student-director)



## Scene-Spurs: Writing Prompts for Dramatic Depth

*Scene Spurs* is a collection of photo-based writing prompts developed by playwright Lindsay Price. The set includes 35 different Spurs along with an instruction guide to integrate them into your drama classroom.

[theatrefolk.com/spurs](http://theatrefolk.com/spurs)

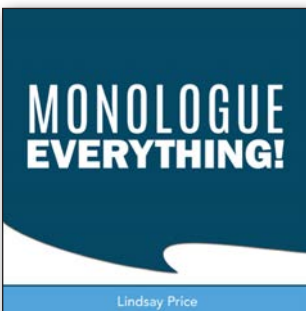


## Write Your Own Vignette Play

Your students want to write and perform an original play. You want to include a playwriting unit in your program. But where to start? What if your students have never written a play before? What if you've never written before?

*Write Your Own Vignette Play* will answer all your questions and more

[theatrefolk.com/write\\_vignette](http://theatrefolk.com/write_vignette)



## The Monologue Everything Program

Want your students to write their own monologues? Have you tried to incorporate monologue units into the classroom with less-than-satisfactory results?

[theatrefolk.com/monologue-everything](http://theatrefolk.com/monologue-everything)



## Competition Material

Plays, monologues, and scenes for drama competitions including royalty information and exemptions.

[theatrefolk.com/competition](http://theatrefolk.com/competition)



## Practical Technical Theater: The Complete Solution for Technical Theater Classrooms

This series of instructional DVDs is perfect for the teacher who feels more at home with a prompt book than a hammer, and would welcome a new, visually oriented teaching tool for their tech classes and production crews.

[theatrefolk.com/ptt](http://theatrefolk.com/ptt)



[www.theatrefolk.com/resources](http://www.theatrefolk.com/resources)