

**Annual Young  
Playwrights Festival**

all for One productions, inc



young playwrights  
FESTIVAL

CONTEST & FORMATTING  
GUIDELINES

# young playwrights FESTIVAL

## Official Guidelines



### Eligibility:

Any Northeast Indiana public, private or home-school kindergartner to high school senior enrolled by September 15 of the current school year.

Single playwright plays only (Plays written in collaboration with another writer will not be accepted).

### Length of plays:

No less than one page, no more than 15 single-sided pages.

### Formatting:

See attached Style Sheet for **required** page format

Submit all files in .doc or .docx format

Plays not in .doc or .docx format will not be read

### Cover Page: (See attached Cover Page)

Submit a completely filled in Official Cover Page with play. Plays without the properly filled out cover page will not be read.

### Play theme:

Use your imagination.

For additional ideas to pique your imagination refer to the "Seeds of a Play" included in this packet.

### Content guidelines:

Plays should not include foul or gang-oriented language or gratuitous violence. Remember that afO is a family-friendly organization and there will be small children present for the performances. Please choose your topics accordingly.

### Parental involvement:

Parents are encouraged to type plays for young children, but parents are **not** to influence the grammar, context or writing of any play.

Plays will be treated with respect and the script will be followed to the best of the director's ability.

*Words and grammar will not be altered extensively for production.*

### Submission:

Email your cover page and play as .doc or .docx files to [megan@allforonefw.org](mailto:megan@allforonefw.org) by 11:59 PM, December 31. Plays submitted after this time will not be read.

#### CRITICAL ELEMENTS FOR PLAYS:

Avoid using too many characters; we suggest 6 maximum.

Do not use a narrator. Plays are told through speech and action rather than description.

Limit your settings. Unlike television or movies, live theatre does not easily accommodate multiple switches of settings.

**Questions? Need help? Don't have access to referenced forms? Call 260.450.6540**

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## Judging Criteria



Professionals from the fields of education and theatre will read each play. Readers will judge play submissions based on the following criteria.

### **Plot:**

How is the story structured? Is it well developed? Does the action build?

### **Dialogue:**

Are the characters distinct? Do they come to life? Is the dialogue consistent with the characters?

### **Characters:**

Are they engaging? Have depth? Do they grow or change? Do they have a strong want/need that propels the action of the play?

### **Conflict:**

Does it drive the play? Does it challenge the characters? Does the playwright keep the tension building?

### **Dramatic Premise:**

What is at the core of this play? Does it motivate the characters? What is the playwright trying to say?

### **Originality:**

Does the play deviate from television/movie structure? Is the story fresh? Is the style different?

### **Ability to be Staged:**

Are the scenery and props feasible to use on stage? Are there any scene or costume changes that are impossible for actors and crew to accomplish?

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## Style Sheet Standard American Format

Please use the following guide to be sure your scripts are in Standard American Format before submitting them. Thank you. Questions? call 260.450-6540 (Megan Arnold)

Give your play a title, centered and in all caps	<p>THE FORMAT</p>	Number the pages in the right hand corner, to make certain that your pages don't get mixed up or lost.
List ALL your characters at the beginning of your script. Center and underline the word "Characters." Offer some description of each character. The character's names should be in <b>bold</b> face type.	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Characters</u></p> <p><b>John</b>, a friendly 8th grade budding playwright.  <b>Laura</b>, John's friend, who also likes to write plays, but doesn't know Standard American Format.  <b>Mrs. Davis</b>, their teacher, who got them involved in the Young Playwrights school workshops and wants them to enter the contest.</p>	
Under the character list, describe the setting of the play in as much detail as possible.	<p>Setting: The play takes place in a classroom. Upstage is the door. Through it we can see into the hall. Desks are arranged in neat rows.</p>	
Center and underline the beginning of each Act and Scene. Use Roman numerals for the Act and Arabic numerals for the Scene.	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Act I, Scene 1</u></p> <p>It is after school. Laura is alone. She sits at a desk, working intently on her play. John runs in from the hall.</p>	Give a brief description of anything a reader needs to know, as your scene begins. This will help picture the scene in his mind.
Make it easy for your reader to read. Make sure to double-space between one character's dialogue and the next, and after the character list and the Act/scene headings (or the scene description that follows the Act/scene heading).	<p style="text-align: center;">JOHN</p> <p>(Hopping on the desk beside Laura's.)          It was a great idea to work on our plays together after school. The deadline for the Young Playwrights Contest is coming up soon.          (He takes out his play from his backpack.)</p>	
Dialogue should be aligned with the left margin and single spaced.	<p style="text-align: center;">LAURA</p> <p>(Frowning, perplexed by her work.)          John, do you know how to format a play in Standard American Format?</p>	Always list the name of the speaker above his/her dialogue. Center on the page and type in all caps.
Stage directions should be indented with parentheses. If stage directions continue for more than one line, indent the entire stage direction.	<p style="text-align: center;">JOHN</p> <p>Mrs. Davis gave me a style sheet we can follow.          (Takes out the style sheet from his backpack.)          It's a guide on how to set up your script before you send it to <i>all for One</i>.</p>	
	<p style="text-align: center;">LAURA</p> <p>(Her mood brightens)          Great! I really want to enter my play in the contest. Imagine how exciting</p>	

**NOTES:** Use 8.5 x 11 paper. Leave margins of 1 inch around all sides. Type on one side of the paper only, using Times or Times New Roman, 12 point type