



## Family Theatre Activity Series #6, for ages 8+ Time to PLAYwright

The world around us is filled with potential stories. This series of activities will help your family choose a story that you'd like to tell together by exploring what you love and what matters to you. We encourage you to read this week's featured play, *Kindness is Like Soooo Two Hundred Years Ago*. In it, fifth grade playwright Katherine Foulke does a great job demonstrating how a playwright can teach an audience a lesson about a topic that matters to them.

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### 1: Warming Up Your Body - Me Too

#### WHY DO WE WARM UP?

When we want to be creative, it's always good to warm up our minds and bodies first! Physical warm-ups help us loosen our muscles, take bigger breaths, and focus our imagination. When we want to create a story about a topic that matters to us, it's good to do a warm up like *Me Too* to help us reflect on who we are and what we love.

#### DIRECTIONS:

Everyone stands in a circle. A volunteer steps into the middle of the circle and shares something that's true for them as they "shake" a body part of their choice to show their excitement. If anyone else in the circle has that same thing in common, they shout "Me too!" and shake the same body part. Here's an example:

Jin: <<As they shake their arms>> I love thunderstorms!

Dan and Hua: <<As they shake their arms>> Me too!

Or, if no one else in the circle has that in common, everyone shouts, "Go <<Name>>!" and shakes the same body part to celebrate that unique fact about the volunteer. It goes like this:

Hua: <<As they shake their hips>> I am great at drawing!

Jin, Dan, and Yuan: <<As they shake their hips>> Go Hua!

Repeat the game until everyone has shared three things about themselves. As you do, try shaking your feet, knees, hips, elbows, fingers...there are so many options so be creative!



## 2: Warming Up Your PLAYwright Mind - “Yes, And...” Storytelling

### WHY DO WE WARM UP?

Creating a story with others asks us to use some important skills. First, we must **listen to** and **respect** the ideas of our group members. Then, we must show we can **collaborate** by offering ideas that also fit the story our group is creating together. It’s good to do a warm up like “**Yes, And...**” **Storytelling** to help us practice these important skills.

### DIRECTIONS:

This is a round-robin game that asks a group of storytellers to create a story with a beginning, middle, and end. The trick is that each group member can only add one sentence at a time! The first person to contribute a sentence should use the phrase, “*Once upon a time...*” to begin. Every other sentence of the story should begin with the phrase, “*Yes, and...*”

When we write stories as a group, “Yes” is our way of demonstrating to our fellow group members that we **listened** to the sentence they contributed. Then, we say “and” so show that we are going to **collaborate** by adding an idea which fits the story. “*Yes, and...!*”

Here’s a sample “*Yes, and...*” story:

Mekell: “Once upon a time, a boy was walking home from school.”

Talisa: “Yes, and the boy’s little sister Mia was by his side.”

Deion: “Yes, and both of them were excited for the family barbeque that night.”

Mekell: “Yes, and it was for their grandfather who was turning 100-years-old.”

Now you try it! Write a story with a beginning, middle, and end by giving each member of the group four or five turns to add a sentence.

## 3: Read The Script - Host Your Own Play Reading

Now that you’re warmed up, download a play like *Kindness is Like Soooo Two Hundred Years Ago* and read it together. As you read, listen closely to how the playwright uses the characters, setting, and conflict to teach a lesson to the audience about a topic that matters to them as a writer. You can even make a list of these clues so you don’t forget!

## 4: PLAYwriting Time - Change Me, Change the World

It’s time to tell a story of your own, playwrights! Using the activity below, you can each create your own monologue, or you can work together to create a single monologue as a group.

**STEP ONE: Look** at the chart titled, “Change Me, Change the World”. It has four sections:

Something that recently changed me...

Something that recently changed the world...



Something that could change me...

Something that could change the world...

**STEP TWO: Brainstorm** how you might complete each sentence. There are no wrong answers. Playwriting is about BIG CHANGES. You may also brainstorm with someone in your home. This is a nice way to talk together.

**STEP THREE:** Look over your brainstorm. **Choose** the one that sticks with you the most.

**STEP FOUR: Imagine a character** that could also be affected by that change. For example, did meeting a new baby sibling recently change you? Who are the characters in that situation? You, the baby, your parents and family members...

**STEP FIVE: Pick ONE character. Start describing them** through details:

- What does my character want?
- What is an obstacle that stands in my character's way of getting what they want?

**STEP SIX: Write** a 3-5 line monologue\* for this character where this character is talking to someone about the topic of change. You can pull lines from your brainstorming if it matches the character's voice and wants, you can write completely new lines, or you can do a blend of both. This character's voice is now in your hands!

*\*A "MONOLOGUE" is our vocabulary word for "one character talking"!*

Amazing job, playwright! Now that you have created a story about a topic that matters to you, it's time to share it with the world. We also want to hear about your story! Please consider sharing it with Young Playwrights by tagging @PYPlaywrights on Instagram, Twitter, or Facebook and using the hashtag #PYPatHome.