

# Current Events

## Creating Plays from the World around Us



You will need...

- Pen/Pencil
- Worksheet found [here](#) or a piece of paper

- 1) Brainstorm a list of current events. Think of problems you would like to change in the world. You may browse the internet or a newspaper for ideas.
- 2) Choose one of these issues that speaks to you the most. Next, using the worksheet from the link above or drawing your own chart, make three columns: one for **Point of View 1 or Character 1**, one for **Point of View 2 or Character 2**, and one for **Character 3 or Complications**.
- 3) In columns 1 and 2, begin listing characters with very different points of view or experiences of the current events topic you have chosen. Use column 3 to imagine what complications might happen when these characters confront the topic together, or what third character might add to the issue. Below is an example chart using the Philadelphia School District Budget Crisis as a topic:

### **EVENT: Philadelphia School District Budget Crisis**

<u>POV/Char # 1</u>	<u>POV/Char # 2</u>	<u>POV/Char # 3 OR Complication</u>
Principal has to inform Coll. Counselor has been laid off	College Counselor at a School Just been laid off	Student coming in for college counseling overhears their conversation
Custodian at a Phila High School—divorced and unable to pay child support/ college \$ for son/daughter	Custodian's ex-spouse—works at a suburban school—is able to pay for college for son/daughter	Their son/daughter finds out that father makes a lot less than mother does and may be losing his job...
Grandparent who did not attend college, poss an immigrant or hopeful for grandchild's education	Grandchild coming home with college application incomplete—counselor not at school	Grandparent suggests tracking down the counselor at home in order to meet application deadline

If you have trouble thinking of characters who might conflict with each other over your topic, try considering opposite types of characters, for example: rich vs. poor, man vs. woman, hunter vs. prey, child vs. parent, and imagine how these opposing types of characters might react to your topic.

- 4) Choose the pair of characters you are most excited by to continue writing about. Make sure you create an immediate problem that these characters must solve or negotiate with each other.
- 5) Choose a setting for these two characters that will provide either physical or emotional complication (such as a non-accessible building for a handicapped character to have to visit or the office where a laid-off employee used to work).
- 6) Begin writing a scene between your two characters where they address the complications caused by the current events issue you have chosen. If you get stuck, try writing about a different pair of characters.

Interested in this style of playwriting? Check out *The Laramie Project* by Moisés Kaufman, *In the Continuum* by Danai Gurira and Nikkole Salte, *Fires in the Mirror*, *House Arrest*, *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992*, or *Let Me Down Easy* by Anna Deveare Smith, or the work of Mike Daisy.