

Free Association Writing

A Brainstormed Dialogue



You will need...

- Paper
- Pen/Pencil
- Timer

- 1) Set your timer for three minutes and begin writing whatever thoughts come to your mind in response to the sentence "Sometimes, I wish I could..."
It's important to keep moving your pencil the whole time and get as many thoughts on paper as you can. If you run low on ideas, just keep the pencil moving across the page until the words come back again. Don't worry about making complete sentences.
- 2) When the time is up, reset your timer. Do the same thing again, but instead use the sentence "But what I really want to say is..." Feel free to use what you wrote before if it helps you.
- 3) Now, read what you've written and circle all the phrases or words that seem interesting you.
- 4) Choose two phrases from the ones you've circled. Feel free to pick randomly by closing your eyes and pointing at the page or by writing all the circled phrases on slips of paper and choosing two.
- 5) Begin to write a conversation between two people that includes both of the phrases you've chosen. You don't need to name or describe the two characters yet, just try to write at least five sentences back and forth between two people.
- 6) Give your conversation a beginning, middle and end. Find a way for the two people to start the conversation and find a reason for one or both of your characters to leave at the end.
- 7) Begin to think about **what** your characters might want from each other in this conversation. When the conversation ends, has one of them gotten what they wanted? Has one of them given up? Why did they need to have this conversation? Change or add details to make this clear.
- 8) Begin to think about **where** this conversation might happen. Is it in a public or private place? How does the place affect what they say? Add in at least one line or a stage direction indicating the location.
- 9) **When** is this conversation happening? What time of day? What time of year? Add in a line to show this.
- 10) Now begin to think about **who** these characters are. Read over the lines you have so far and think about how each character speaks. Does one character prefer long words? Does the other use "um" or "like" a lot? What do these details say about these two people? Write down five facts about each character. Give each character a name.
Consider the relationship between these two characters. How long have they known each other? How did they meet? Is this the first time they are having a conversation about this topic?
- 11) Finally, decide **why** your characters must have this conversation **now**. Why is this moment their only chance to speak? What drew them to finally discuss this issue? If this issue isn't discussed now, what could go wrong?
- 12) Continue to develop this scene and begin to think about where it might fit in a larger play!