



Are you interested in writing a script for Murder Mystery Night? Here are some guidelines that should help you create your script.

1. Murder Mystery Night is a three-act show.
 - a. Act 1- Introduces the characters, location, and conflict. (Dinner follows Act 1) You should also include something that tells the audience their role in the show (They are all detectives!).
 - b. Act 2- Continues to build the conflict. Act 2 ends with the murder. (Dessert follows Act 2. This is when the suspect characters give clues to the audience. Each character should have 3-5 clues)
 - c. Act 3- The murder is solved.
 - d. The entire length of the show should be about 1 hour. Once you include the dinner, dessert, and clues, it will be a two-hour evening.
2. Try to have as many characters as possible without making it too confusing.
 - a. The more characters you make, the more opportunities students have to be a part of the show. Try to give as many opportunities as possible but be careful of adding too many characters. Too many characters will make it difficult for the audience to follow.
3. Make sure the story line is clear. We should be able to figure out who the murderer was if we follow the play carefully. Foreshadowing is important. Think about lines, set pieces, props, and costumes that can help give clues to your audience without being obvious.
4. Remember, plays are written to be produced. Can your play be put up on stage without breaking the budget?
5. Each suspect needs to have a motive for why they could possibly be the murderer.

Here are some general playwriting tips:

- Playwriting is about telling stories. Think about all of the different stories you hear. There are stories in everything around us: the newspaper, the music we listen to, quotes, events, etc. You should be able to answer the question, “What is my story about?” in a sentence or two.
- Dialogue tries to capture the way people talk. We don’t always use proper grammar. Would your characters?

- What do your characters want? Everybody is driven by things that they want. We don't simply exist for other people. All of your characters should have objectives.
- Use subtext. People often don't say what they're thinking. They even lie at times. Try writing lines that practice this. For example, write a short scene about a car crash that doesn't ever use the words "car crash". Using subtext will make your audience listen more closely.
- Dialogue is a battle of wills. People often don't finish all of their sentences. Sometimes they are interrupted or change what their saying in the middle of a sentence.
- Your play doesn't have to be perfect the first time you write it. That's what editing and re-writes are for. Often, people don't complete scripts because they want it to be perfect the first time. Try not to fall into that trap.
- Have fun! Whether or not your play is selected, writing it should be an enjoyable experience.

Here are some good resources that will help you with your writing:

www.playwriting101.com

<http://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Play>

Thank you!