

HYSTERICAL HISTORY



**ENRICHMENT &
SUBMISSION GUIDE**

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Annual Theme: “Hysterical History”

Each year CWP has a different theme for writing submissions. The examples within this guide use last years theme “Around The World” You can easily apply these activities to any theme, example “Hysterical History”. Be sure to check ColumbusChildrensTheatre.org for more details about submitting and more.

History of CWP

The Child Writing Project (CWP) is a beloved tradition at Columbus Children’s Theatre. Each year, more than 1,000 stories are collected from students all over Ohio. From these, 15–20 are selected to be compiled into the annual Child Writing Project — a live theatrical performance. Always filled with creativity and laughs, the Child Writing Project has been described as “Saturday Night Live” written by kids.

Get Involved

The show you are seeing today is written completely by students. If you and your school do not already participate, please consider getting involved in this annual creative writing event! More details are available inside this packet!

General Theatre Etiquette:

Live theatre is very exciting and may be a new experience for many audience members. These are the general guidelines that we enforce for our performances:

- Arrive on time.
- For the safety of the actors and the audience, please stay seated for the performance.
- Visit the restroom before the performance begins.
- The use of electronic devices (including cameras and recording devices) is strictly prohibited.
- Please do not talk to your neighbor during the performance. If you like something that you see, you may clap or laugh- it shows them that you like what they’re doing!



TIP: The activities in this guide help you and your students through the process of writing and submitting an award-winning story.

The Child Writing Project is open to grades K-6. Younger grades may wish to consider submitting a story as an entire class!

Included in this guide:

- Mind Mapping
- Drafting
- Student Checklist
- Outlining
- Submission Guidelines
- Submission Cover Sheet

Activities will need to be adapted depending upon grade level.



Guidelines

The Child Writing Project (CWP) is open to any school age student in grades K through 6, in public, private and home schools. We encourage teachers to discuss with the students the elements of a story: beginning, middle and end; character development; and conflict/resolution. More advanced writing techniques should be evident in upper grades. Parents and teachers may help edit spelling and grammar, but we ask that the students be the ones to edit content. Please emphasize that our company is comprised of four actors. The actors can play multiple parts, but only 4 characters can be on stage at the same time.

Submissions may be a story, song, poem or play written by an individual or a group, either serious or comedic, true or fictional, and it must be original. Students should create their own title (not the theme) for each piece submitted. The length of the piece may be 30 seconds to 2 minutes in length, although entries kept between one to one and a half pages have a much better chance of selection (We suggest reading it aloud and timing it). Students may submit more than one entry. Submissions must be legible, either neatly handwritten or typed.

Work Must Be Original

Originality is very important for the Child Writing Project! Students may be tempted to write about characters that are made famous by other authors or companies—like Disney and Nickelodeon. Unfortunately, stories with copyrighted characters will automatically be disqualified. Be sure the stories and their characters are original!

Selection Process

Over the Summer of 2018, CCT's Education Staff and a panel of teachers from around the state of Ohio will read each submission and choose between 15 and 20 pieces to develop into the next CWP Play. The selection is based on originality, honesty of expression, dramatic interest, stage-ability and compatibility with the other pieces under consideration.

After the winning pieces are chosen, the Director and the Touring Company will develop a script and stage each piece by adding props, costumes and scenery in order to bring the story to life on stage. We strive to keep the script as the author wrote it. Winning authors will be invited to attend the premier performance in the Fall of 2018. The show will then tour to schools throughout Ohio and will be seen by over 10,000 students!



Look for this symbol! These are helpful tips you should remember when helping your students write for The Child Writing Project.



DIALOGUE: *Stories that include dialogue have a greater chance of being selected. This does not mean that they need to be written in script form—we will adapt it for you—however it helps us understand the characters when the author has them speak.*

FORMAT: *While script format is not required, we encourage older students to try it. They can even add things like entrances, exits, and other stage directions.*

ADJECTIVES: *Adjectives really help us imagine how we could stage and costume a story. Often times when students write, they have a picture in their mind of how a character looks. Encourage them to give as many details as possible to their story.*

CONFLICT AND RESOLUTION: *Chosen stories are often the ones with the clearest presentation of conflict and creative resolutions.*

NEATNESS: *It is sometimes too difficult to decipher student's handwriting. We encourage teachers and parents to help their students type their stories.*

STEP 1: Creating Characters

In plays, characters inform the action of the story. The more details you have about a character, the more freely inspiration will come when writing the story. Have students create **Mind Maps** of the characters about which they are going to write.



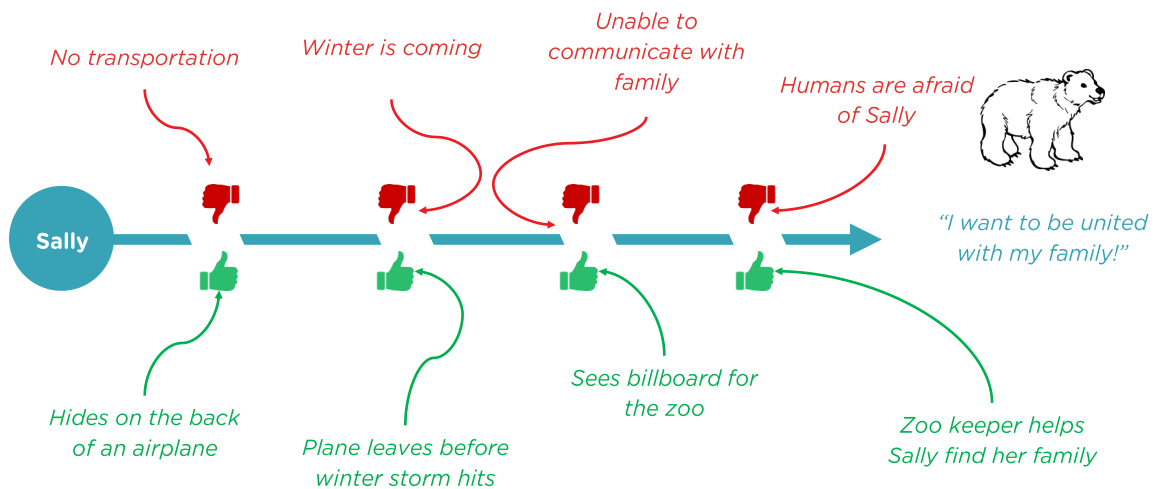
STEP 2: Developing Conflict

Have the students pick an objective for their main character. This is their goal—what they want more than anything. Using the **Mind Map**, ask the students to come up with an objective for each character. Try using a line activity like the one below. This will help the student to visualize the story while teaching sequence and critical thinking.



Next, have students brainstorm different things that could stop the character from getting what they want (conflict). Each thing they think of should go on the line (see below). There are no limits to this exercise. They can always add or subtract ideas later in the process.

Once the student has established all the possible conflicts, it is time to create all of the possible resolutions. If they have trouble thinking of a resolution for every one, that is okay. They are free to add or subtract in this process.



Inspire Today. Imagine Tomorrow.

Participating in the Child Writing Project is educational, entertaining, and empowering. CCT has heard from countless CWP participants, now in their 30's or 40's, who say they still remember when their story was performed by CCT's Touring Company! Their lives were changed, confidence was gained, and creativity supported.

STEP 3: Outlining the Story

Now that we have a list of possible conflicts and resolutions, it's time to decide which conflicts work the best and create an outline of our story. The outline should list the events of the story chronologically and give an opportunity to add more details such as exposition, setting, etc. This could be an opportunity to teach some basic outlining skills to your students, or you can create your own worksheet to generate the same information. Sentences in this pre-writing activity can be as elaborate or as brief as the author wants. Again—the focus is getting creative ideas flowing.

EXAMPLE:

I. EXPOSITION

- A. Sally lives with her family in the North pole.
- B. Sally is playful and enjoys playing hide and seek with her brother, Sammie.
- C. Gretta, Sally's mother, and Sammie are taken to a zoo.

II. OBJECTIVE

- A. Sally is desperate to find her family.

III. CONFLICTS

- A. There seems to be no way to travel to find her family.
 - a. Resolution: Sally enlists the help of her penguin friends to sneak onto the airplane. Sally hides in the storage compartment of the aircraft that previously took her family.
- B. A winter storm is on its way, potentially causing dangerous flying conditions.
 - a. Resolution: The plane leaves ahead of schedule.
- C. The humans Sally encounters are frightened of her.
 - a. Resolution: A zookeeper leads Sally to safety, and her family's habitat.

IV. CONCLUSION

- A. The family is united and they live together in their new home.



Review the student's outlines and ask specific questions to push their creativity. Often times, they can imagine everything in their head, but it is overwhelming to write it all out. Small prompts can go a long way. When you review their outline, ask them questions that will help them elaborate on their ideas.

EXAMPLE (from above outline)

"Sally lives with her family in the North pole."

You might ask: "*What type of home does Sally live in?*"



STEP 4: Writing A Draft

Now that the outline is done, it is time to try writing a first draft. Using the Character mind map and the outline, students can now create a draft of their story. Once a draft is complete, students should *have another student* and a teacher or parent read it. From there, revisions are ready to be made *before* completing a final draft.

A Polar Bear's Journey

Once upon a time, there was a polar bear named Sally who lived with her mother, Greta, and brother, Sammie, in a cave in the north pole.

One day, Sally decides it is time for her favorite game, hide and seek! "Close your eyes and count to ten!" exclaims Sally. Sammie buried his head in the snow and began to count. Sally giggled and ran to her favorite hiding spot, the bush by their cave. Sammie shouted "ready or not, here I c..." but his words were drowned out by the explosive hum of an aircraft landing close by.

Frightened of the new sounds, Sally continues to hide while her brother trots gleefully to investigate the newcomers. Mama Greta Bear follows closely on her son's heels, and they both proceed to investigate the aircraft.

Before Sally can catch up to the plane it begins to move again, with Mama and Sammie on board! "Wait for me" cried Sally, but the plane kept moving faster and faster, climbing up towards the sky.

Alone in the silence, Sally quickly becomes panicked and decides to find help from her penguin friends. She rushes to their favorite hideaway and calls out "Marty, Dot, help help!" Though reluctant at first, due to Sally's previous games of chase with the penguins, they decide to help Sally find the aircraft that took her family.

After a week of searching with no results, Sally begins to fear that she will never see her family again. Suddenly, the ground begins to shake, there is a hum in the air, and the mysterious flying airplane returns. "This is your chance," Marty says, "we will distract the humans with our cute penguin charm while you search for your mom." With help from her penguin friends, Sally is able to sneak aboard! As she is searching for her mother, a voice comes on the radio sending a warning of winter storms. The human crew packs up and before Sally can react, she is flying!

Upon landing, Sally finds herself in a new world. She begins to panic, and finds herself face to face with a human! As she gears up to make a mad dash, she smells a delectable scent coming from the human's basket. The human lures Sally to a clearing and tosses her a fish! She has lost all fight and is gleefully following the human when she hears her mother cry out "Sally!" She has made it! Sally, brother Sammie, and Mama Greta live happily ever after, and well fed, in their new zoo home.

The End



STEP 5: Submit Final Drafts

First, each story submission must include the following information at the top of the first page:

1. Title of story
2. Author's first and last name, grade and age (if multiple authors, please include this information for each of them)
3. School name, address, and phone number
4. Teacher's name and email address

Please note, submissions must be legible, either neatly handwritten or typed. Beginning Fall 2017 we are no longer requiring coversheets.

CCT asks that stories be submitted in bulk whenever possible. This ensures that stories do not get lost. There are two ways to submit stories:

1. Mail to Columbus Children's Theatre, Child Writing Project, 177 East Naghten Street Columbus, Ohio 43215
 2. PDF – stories may be emailed to CWP@ColumbusChildrensTheatre.org
- Please send all stories as one PDF document. No other file form will be accepted.



Questions? We are here to help!

Please contact CWP@ColumbusChildrensTheatre.org,
or call 614.224.6673 Ext 3221

NAME _____

Student Check List

- I did the **best writing** I could! ☒
- I did a **pre-writing activity**
(mind map or outline) ☐
- I wrote at least one **rough draft**. ☐
- I asked **at least one other person** to read my story
and I **made corrections**. ☐
- My story uses several **Adjectives**
(words that describe something). ☐
- My story has plenty of **Action**. ☐
- My story **never has more than 4 characters** in one scene. ☐
- My story has a clear **beginning**. ☐
- My story has a clear **middle**. ☐
- My story has a clear **end**. ☐
- My story is **longer than 30 seconds**, but **no more than 3 minutes**
(I read it out loud and timed it). ☐
- My story is written or typed **neatly**. ☐