



Ten-Minute Play Contest

The Ten-Minute Play Contest is a highlight of the *Stages Theatre Festival*. To inspire and encourage young people to write original works for the stage, the Ten-Minute Play Contest is open to high school students in the province of Nova Scotia (grades 10-12). Four winning playwrights will have their plays rehearsed and given a staged reading by professional actors at the festival. The contest provides high school playwrights the opportunity to work with professional theatre artists and explore the many aspects of live theatre.

Prizes

- The first place playwright will receive an award of **\$300** courtesy of **Theatre Nova Scotia**.
- The three runners-up will receive awards of **\$150** courtesy of **Eastern Front Theatre**.
- All selected playwrights will receive **2 tickets** to a **Stages Theatre Festival** show of their choice.
- All winning playwrights will receive complimentary memberships to **Theatre Nova Scotia**.
- All winning playwrights will receive complimentary memberships to **PARC - Playwrights Atlantic Resource Centre**.
- All four winners receive the benefit of working with Eastern Front Theatre's professional theatre artists and get a chance to see their work performed in front of a live audience in the context of a professional theatre festival. All contestants will receive honorable mention in the Stages Theatre Festival program.

Contest Rules

1. Playwrights must be senior high school students (grades 10-12) in the province of Nova Scotia.
2. Plays must run a maximum of ten minutes.
3. Plays must have a minimum of **2** characters and a maximum of **4** characters. Set requirements must be minimal.
4. Plays must be typed. Pages must be numbered, and stapled together. Please include title, playwright's name, and contact information on the cover page.
5. Scripts must be written on letter-sized (8.5 X 11) paper. Scripts should have no more than **ten pages** of actual script, not including the title page or cast list page.
6. Submissions should follow one of the formats outlined later in this document.
7. Submit **two** copies of each play, along with the completed application form.
8. Plays must be unpublished, unproduced, and completely original.
9. Each playwright may submit only one ten-minute play to the contest. Co-written ten-minute plays are acceptable, although there is a maximum of two co-writers per script. Cash prizes in the event that a co-written script is a winner, will be divided equally between the co-writers.
10. Writers who want their scripts returned should include a self-addressed stamped envelope with their submission. Scripts submitted without a S.A.S.E. will be recycled after the contest.
11. We cannot accept e-mail or fax submissions.
12. Arrangements for travel and accommodation are the responsibility of the winners.
13. Winning playwrights must arrange for a parent or guardian to accompany them to Halifax during the workshop and the staged reading.
14. Eastern Front Theatre is not liable for any accidents that may occur as a result of the contest, or travel to the event. Eastern Front Theatre is unable to provide funds for travel, meals, or accommodations to the winning playwrights or their guardians.
15. The jury's decision will be made and winners notified by June 1st.

The Jury

A jury consisting of professional theatre artists will choose the winning plays. The decisions of the jury will be final.

Deadline

Plays submitted by mail must be postmarked no later than May 15, 2014. Plays may be dropped off at the Eastern Front office until 5 p.m. on May 15, 2014. Deliver or mail your ten-minute play to:

EFT Ten-Minute Play Contest

Eastern Front Theatre
1580 Barrington Street
Halifax, NS B3J 1Z6

Writer's Tips

- Keep the stage in mind. Write in the present tense. Dramatic writing is all about what's happening in the here and now, not somewhere else at some other time.
- Try to avoid writing short TV scripts with numerous little scenes or sequences.
- Consider setting the play in one location. Focus on the conflict early in the action, develop it, complicate it, and resolve it by the end (perhaps even surprisingly).
- Give your characters goals, needs, and action lines. Push them into taking action that will influence the outcome of the story.
- Rewrite your play. Many playwrights have often said, "We don't write plays, we rewrite them." Keep at it until you think that your play will move the audience in the way you want it to move them.
- There is no restriction in terms of the style of the play. It could be a comedy, a satire, a farce, or a hard-hitting emotional drama. We do suggest, however, that you write about what you know, what you believe, what excites you, or what you feel deeply interested in.

Formats

- Include a **Title Page**, including the name of your play, your name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address. Please also provide the name of your school and your grade.
- Include a **Cast List** page, which names and describes each of the characters.
- The Title Page and the Cast List page don't count as one of your ten pages of script.
- We suggest you use one of the following formats for your ten-minute play:

Format 1

Set the scene in a paragraph formatted this way. Two or three sentences should suffice to give us the idea. It could also contain brief character descriptions or describe an action of one of your characters.

(Dialogue flush left for character name.)

PERSON 1: Says something in dialogue formatted like this, which could carry over in the form of a hanging indent.

PERSON 2: *(Off)* Sounds great!

(Notice the personal stage direction in the above line is bracketed inside the speech and italics are used.)

PERSON 1: *(looks around)* Perfect.

She looks at the ocean and begins to hum a song.

(Notice the Stage direction just above. It carries broader, non-personal directions and is indented 2" and italicized but doesn't need to be bracketed)

(Leave a blank space between lines of dialogue from different characters, and a blank space between indented stage directions and lines of dialogue)

Format 2

It is also acceptable to use screenplay format for your ten-minute play. Following is an example of a play script using the basic screenplay format:

The action takes place in a renovated barn on the Nova Scotia seacoast. The place has been turned into a loft-like living area, with a kitchen and bathroom off to one side.

LENNY appears at the front door and knocks...

JAMES walks slowly out of the bathroom and notices LENNY with a "hey you're here, all right!" sort of gesture, then crosses to the front door and opens it.

LENNY
Hi Dad.

JAMES
Hey! How ya' doin'?

LENNY
Fine. How're you?

JAMES
Finest kind. Finest, finest kind. (Pause) That
your suitcase?

LENNY
Yeah.

JAMES takes LENNY'S suitcase.

JAMES
It's great to have ya' here!

JAMES and LENNY look at each other for a second, not sure what to say next... ETC...



Ten Minute Play Contest – Application Form

Please include this completed form with your submission. Submissions will not be accepted without this completed form.

Title of Play: _____

Number of Characters: _____

Playwright's Name: _____

Playwright's E-mail: _____

Playwright's Phone Number: _____

Playwright's Address: _____

Playwright's Grade Level: _____

Playwright's High School, including address and phone number:

