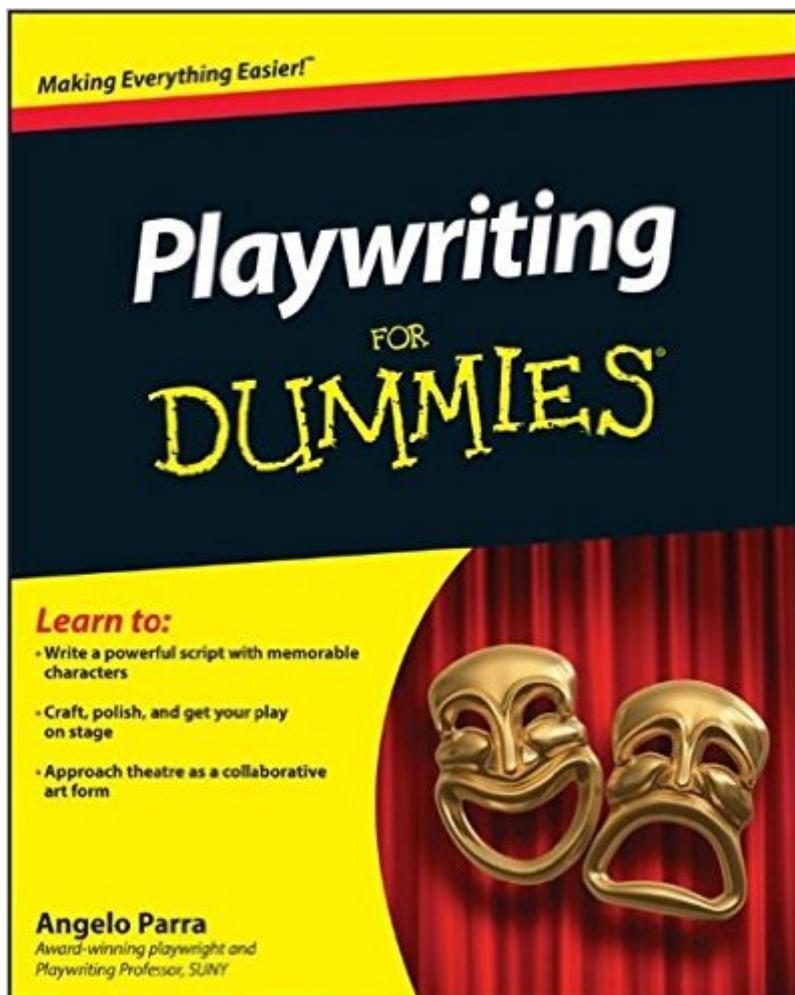


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# Playwriting For Dummies



## **Synopsis**

The easy way to craft, polish, and get your play on stage Getting a play written and produced is a daunting process. From crystallizing story ideas, formatting the script, understanding the roles of the director stagecraft people, to marketing and financing your project, and incorporating professional insights on writing, there are plenty of ins and outs that every aspiring playwright needs to know. But where can you turn for guidance? *Playwriting For Dummies* helps any writer at any stage of the process hone their craft and create the most dramatic and effective pieces. Guides you through every process of playwriting?from soliloquies, church skits, and one act plays to big Broadway musicals Advice on moving your script to the public stage Guidance on navigating loopholes If you're an aspiring playwright looking to begin the process, or have already penned a masterpiece and need trusted advice to bring it into the spotlight, *Playwriting For Dummies* has you covered.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

As a retired teacher, I only wish that this book had been available years ago. It is an amusing, informative guide for the creative writer who has little or no experience with the format or process of writing a play. As Moose of Many Waters has suggested, this is not a book for serious, experienced writers. It is a book for the writer who has a story in mind, but does not yet know how to bring that story to fruition, or who has limited theater experience. It is also a book for the more experienced writer who simply does not know where to go once the script is finished. I taught Creative Writing for many years and have never found a book as clear and comprehensive as this one (and trust me, I

have viewed many, many books on writing in my 27 year career). My most recent Dummies purchase was Nikon D90 for Dummies. I am sure any professional photographer would consider this book to be incredibly simple, written for the rank amateur, but I am taking better photos than I ever did before. That is the role of Playwriting for Dummies. It takes the amateur writer and guides them to better writing and the process of taking those words into the real world of theater.

Reading this book felt like attending an entry level course in playwriting or theater; author Angelo Parra delivers a comprehensive summary of the craft without talking over readers' heads or straying into a series of tedious essays. The conversational tone makes for an enjoyable--and fast--read. Readers with extensive writing and/or theater experience are not the intended audience. Under the "For Dummies" structure, the book provides the basics with enough detail to launch a reader toward other resources. My one complaint is that this book cries out for an attached DVD. While it may not have been financially feasible to include clips from major productions, the absence of any video or audio clips is a missed opportunity I wouldn't expect in a university course. (Dummies.com offers a cheat sheet for the book online. However, the cheat sheet doesn't provide a lot of added value to the book.) Playwriting for Dummies is a good value with 20 chapters of material packed into more than 350 pages. Don't let the size dissuade you from a purchase; this reference book has a user-friendly design and a comfortable writing style. I enjoyed this book and recommend it for anyone who is considering an entry level course in playwriting or theater. Rating: Four stars (one star deducted for the absence of clips)

As a person who has always had fleeting thoughts of what it must be like to be a Playwright, this was extremely informative. As the book mentions, it seems like playwriting would be fun, and this book provides the necessary insight to give those fleeting thoughts some legs. The writing style is not intimidating, but instead comforting. If the author was able to get past his fears and go on to do this, I believe that I could move past any anxieties that I might have. The bottom line is that this is an enjoyable read even if you are just curious to learn what playwriting is about. But, for those that are intimidated by the process, this could provide the motivation for someone with the potential of being an award-winning Playwright - like the author.

So, I admit it: I've wanted to be a playwright for years. Lots of ideas, some outlines, but where to actually start? How is it done? And, crass though it is, how do I sell it? It's a craft after all, not solely an inspiration. This book was made for me. I won't summarize the index, that is online. What it does

do is start from why you want to write, how to begin your ideas, how to get them on paper in a coherent and professional way, how to develop characters and plot, everything, right down to how to take a bow when your first play closes its doors (hopefully after years on Broadway). This book will make you feel like you have been in the business for years, know the ropes, how to get things done and by whom. And best of all, the author communicates in a thoughtful, pleasing manner that is enjoyable to read, even though you are getting real, substantial information. I give this book my highest recommendations. Frankly, even if you never intend to write a play, but like to watch them, this book will make you think like part of the "cognoscenti": you will know who is doing what, why, when, and the reasons that it was done that way. Absolutely essential to all those who love plays.

While I have skill in scriptwriting for screen and TV, making the transition of a story from a screen format to play format proved quite the challenge for me. I learned (with great difficulty) that these two dramatic forms are completely different in practically every way. Thanks to this book, I was able to look at the material in a completely different framework and rework the basic story into a first draft of a play. It still needs quite a bit of work/rewriting but I think I had the aha moment somewhere in the middle of the book that got me through the initial draft of my play. This book takes you through format, characterization, staging - basically all of the components of a stage production a writer must consider for the form - as well as information and helpful tips on navigating the business of the theatre (that's a whole other challenge). There's some interesting theatre history and tips for finding industry information. A great first book for any aspiring playwright. Very helpful.

ANGELO PARRA has covered all the bases in this well-organized PLAYWRITING FOR DUMMIES. It covers not only the 'how to' concerning the craft and artistry of successful playwriting - it also deals with the 'how to' navigate through the business side of the industry. This book is a gem!

It's easy to dismiss this series of books because of their titles, but this one is actually VERY good. Down-to-earth and practical knowledge is offered throughout, and there is no shortage of useful tips. I admire what this book accomplishes - it reminds pros and encourages beginners of the things that make playwriting worthwhile.

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