

Turn your summer read experience into a Skit for the Stage. Is this the project you want to choose? Use the following FAQ to determine if this approach to reflecting and responding to your summer read experience will give you the best opportunity to share what you learned from the book and develop your skills.

What is a Skit for the Stage Project for the BFHS One Read? It's simple. You read *The Good Thief* by Hannah Tinti. Keep an informal journal as you read with an eye out for the scene in the book you want to translate into a script to be performed for the visiting author. You will have the option to perform *or not* so don't get hung up on that point. Some scenes in the book will translate to the stage better than others. You'll write a script using a standard script format with notes and asides about a stage set, number of actors needed, dialogue, actual run time, etc.

Do I actually need to rehearse and present my scripted scene? No. You need to write the skit for stage as if someone will perform it because the purpose of a piece of writing helps to shape the writing. You will, however, only be graded on the script you pass in to your Homeroom Teacher on the first day of school in September. Your grade is not impacted by whether or not your scene is actually performed.

Might someone else perform my script? Good question! The answer is that you never know. The scripts will be graded by the library staff, read by Hannah Tinti, author of *The Good Thief*, and read by Ms. Tropeano, Director of Fenwick Productions. You could recruit your friends to perform your script and direct it under Ms. Tropeano's guidance, you could star in your own production or you might be satisfied with just having had the experience of writing it.

Where did the idea of a project option for bringing a part of *The Good Thief* to the stage come from? Ms Tinti's third book, *The 12 Lives of Samuel Hawley* looks like it will be produced in an action format (Matt Reeves, lined up to direct the next Batman movie, has optioned the novel for television) but *The Good Thief* remains only in its print format. We thought it might be fun, because Hannah graduated from Fenwick, for her to see scenes from her first novel come to life. Dr. Tropeano jumped at the chance to help and the rest is something to look forward to.

Where can I get an idea of what the finished product should look like? The Skit to Stage Project Description Sheet provides the details you'll need. There is the beginning of a scene as an example on the back of this FAQ sheet. The formatting guidelines for this project were adapted from materials available on the open web like <http://www.writeratplay.com/2013/09/10/how-to-write-a-stage-play-12-tips-link/> & a sample script https://ptfaculty.gordonstate.edu/lking/CPF_play_formatting2.pdf These links take you to more than you need in the way of examples and detail but sometimes it just helps to consider the bigger picture and the possibilities.

How do I get started? Get a notebook that you can use as an informal journal and something to write with. Read *The Good Thief*. Think about the main ideas and messages the book conveys to you and how Ms. Tinti uses what she knows and what she imagines to build a world on the page. Make notes and capture events and sequences in your journal and label those occurrences and events that seem important. A journal is one of many playwright tools. No one will see it but you so scribble, doodle, create great sentences, capture favorite quotes or whatever. It's all yours.

How will I know if the scene I pick will translate well to the stage? If something causes a picture in your mind's eye while you're reading, jot it down and maybe even draw it out. Storyboards are great tools for translating text into visual scenes. Maybe what you are reading is the scene and the character snapshot that you want to bring to life but you won't know until you finish the book. Make it easy to come back to the scenes you like.

How do I find the scene I want to use? For example, clearly identify the *Beginning* of the book (work with the exposition to make the book more real to you), at least three events that happen during the *Rising Action* and that lead to the *Climax*. What does the falling action look like, the *Resolution* and how does the *Ending* scene relate to the story as a whole? Every story has a flow. Step into the original author's intentions to inform and entertain. Watch for scenes that seem like they'll translate well to the stage and you'll have the beginning of your project.

(See Other Side)

How do I know which events are important? Stick to the book. Think about your audience. Imagine that the person reading or watching your scene is hearing about *The Good Thief* for the first time. Leave your opinions behind while you focus on presenting the author's scene as it was originally meant to be told. Pick a scene that is self-contained. The example below is about Ms. Sands and the Mousetrap Factory workers. We only have the first few lines but, if you look at the scene in the book, you'll see that when the script is finished, it will present a moment of action that is complete in itself.

What should the finished script look like? Standard 8 1/2 by 11 paper works. The rule of thumb is that a skit is meant to be a short production with a clear beginning, middle and end. In this instance, you will be writing a skit for which the performance time is no less than three minutes and no more than five minutes. That usually means you will create a script that is no less than three pages and not more than six including stage directions.

Here's a look at how you might adapt a scene in the book (about & around pages 118 to 121)

Scene

Mrs. Sands house in North Umbrage near the MCGINTY MOUSETRAP FACTORY AND DISTRIBUTION COMPANY.

Time

Early 1800's New England, just before dawn on a winter morning.

SETTING: Ren has just woken up and we are outside a kitchen where Ren overhears Mrs. Sands and the giggling factory girls.

MRS. SANDS

(girls giggling)

GET YOUR FINGERS OUT OF THERE.

(Harelip is behind Ms. Sands
waving a greasy piece of bacon)

HARELIP/ FACTORY GIRL

I DIDN'T TOUCH ANYTHING.

MRS. SANDS

(swipes harelip on the ear)

YOU'RE THE WORST OF THEM ALL.

Continue in this format, creating the script for the scene you select

Need help or more information? Ask a librarian Ms. Smith is available via email at dms@fenwick.org so don't hesitate to reach out. The O'Rourke Library and Information Center is on the 3rd floor on the auditorium side of the school.

(See Other Side)