

The **Starting Point** of Your Scene

This is written from my very limited knowledge and experience on acting.

Please use it as a supplementary worksheet to assist your preparations for the scene, and be sure to **think critically** when using it.

Everyone has their **own approach** to work on a scene, so again, this is here to inspire you to ask yourself, "**now I have this, what else can I try to find out about/do with the text?**" **Think** about the questions below, and **try** some prompts. Although writing your thoughts down is recommended, you don't really have to.

Part I: Build Your World

Be specific, don't write "about" or "I might like..." or etc. You **should** know all that stuff about you.

Talk to your scene partner and answer some of the questions together, so that you could be on the same page.

Base everything on the script as long as you can, with room for **justifiable imagination**.

Name [first + last] //Please find your last name because you do have one :)

Age

Where do you live [country + place]?

What is your living space like? Is it a house or an apartment? Is it tastefully decorated, or is it barely livable?

When is it now [date (if possible) + month/season + year]?

What time does the scene happen? //Choose a **high-stake time period** if you can - for example, if you having been waiting for your boyfriend "the whole night" (as written in the script) to tell him that you want to marry him, the stake would be higher if it is 1:00 a.m. rather than 11:00 p.m.

Who are you talking to? //Referred as "that person" in the following questions.

How long have you known each other? //Again, choose a **high-stake situation** if you can, which, in many cases, means to choose that you've known each other for a long, long time, in order to have the strong emotional bonds between you two.

How has your relationship been, from your point of view?

Name **3 things** you are grateful for in your life.

Talk about **2 people** whom both you and that person know.

Recall **1 piece of the best memories** you have with that person.

//Ask more questions, as if you are knowing about a very close friend.

How do you make a living? What do you do with your money if you do have some?

What is your family background? Are you single or married?

Are you happy about your identity, your background and your financial situation?

What is a normal day of life like for you?

Who do you admire? Why?

...There are so many to ask.

Up till this point, please write **an introduction about yourself**, however long you desire, and introduce yourself to your scene partner as the character.

“Preparation is that device which permits you to start your scene or play in a condition of **emotional aliveness**. The purpose of preparation is so that you do not come in emotionally empty.”

– Sanford Meisner

This is quite self-explanatory. It means that you need to come on stage with **two kinds of context**: 1) **the short-term context** - what happened right before the scene, and what happened recently between you and that person? 2) **the long-term context** - 16 years of history, for example, or however long you have lived, how your personality developed, and how you lived through your joy and obstacles... Knowing about these two kinds of context will provide the base for you to develop this scene, and you know about them by doing all kinds of preparations.

Part II: Objectives & Tactics

Again, be specific. You have **one thing** you want in this scene, and one essential thing in your life.

You want this thing **at a level of 10 out of 10**. (If you want to break up with your boyfriend because you have been sick of him, but you only have a drive of 2 out of 10, you will be like, "oh, he is asleep now. I'll tell him later." And the scene will never happen.) You are willing to take different actions (i.e. tactics) to achieve your objective.

Write your objectives and tactics in **actions**, "to xxx," so that your scene will be **active and engaged** throughout the scene.

What is your **scene objective**? //e.g. to persuade my mother to allow me to become an engineer

What is stopping you from achieving it [internal + external]?

What is your **life objective** (super objective)? //Most people don't necessarily know their super objectives, but it would be helpful if you have this at the back of your mind for your character.

What ways have you tried to achieve your scene objective and your life objective?

Part III: Experiment with the Text

Be creative. Don't set everything down right from the beginning.

Explore different ways of saying the lines and doing the scenes; even if some of the ways are stupid or funny, they may actually help you to see the scene from an **unexpected** perspective, and can also allow you to practice **active listening** every time.

Do a few lines in the scene **in the style of**:

Tragedy	Farce	Murder Mystery	Musical
Melodrama	Period Drama	Abstract	Pantomime

Improvise under the circumstances of your relationship and your objective, but in your own words and with new tactics. Some examples of tactics are:

To Brainwash	To Beg	To Demonstrate	To Plan
To Abuse	To Persuade	To Shake	To Condemn
To Educate	To Resist	To Threat	To Trick

//Find more tactics on my website - resource list - Tactic List. However, they are just here for inspiration.

//Focus on one character at a time, for example, B practices with her/his objective first, and A's objective automatically becomes "to stop B" at this time, and then switch.

Reflection: What did you learn from the experiments? What did you enjoy? What new things did you discover?

I sincerely wish that you would enjoy your scene work right from the beginning.

I also wish that this worksheet has helped you in some way.

Please, please feel free to also work on the scene in the way you prefer.

See you in October 🍷
