

DIGITAL THEATRE+

MASTER CAST Extension Exercises and Questions



EPISODE ONE: Making Ideas Real: Simon Stephens with Willy Russell

GOAL: Kick-start your creative writing with this practical exercise.

TIME: 15 minutes.

SUPPLIES: Pen, paper and timer.

EXERCISE: Spending five minutes on each, write as many sentences as you can that start with:

- *I remember...*
- *I notice...*
- *I imagine...*

SIMON SAYS: Follow your intuition. Be spontaneous. Be specific. Be truthful. Do the exercise once a day.



EXTENSION QUESTIONS:

1. *"The idea isn't the play"*
Discuss what this statement by Willy Russell means.
 2. What role does 'having the idea' play in creating the text? Describe how a writer's imagination may be triggered and how they turn this into the text.
 3. Is there ever a useful balance between documentary and fiction? Discuss the range of experiences that are useful for a writer to draw upon when creating a play for the stage.
 4. *"In many ways, you are both the 'Master of' and 'Slave to' your writing. It can't be controlled."*
Describe what Willy Russell means by this statement.
 5. *Shirley Valentine, Educating Rita, Blood Brothers...* Discuss the commonality in these plays. Is it only ever one play in many guises? Why do writers return to certain themes?
 6. *"You should be able to describe it in a minute"* says Willy Russell. Try and describe an idea for a play in 60 seconds that you would like to develop.
 7. *"Never be frightened to get it wrong."*
Why does Willy Russell believe that this adds value to the creative process?
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