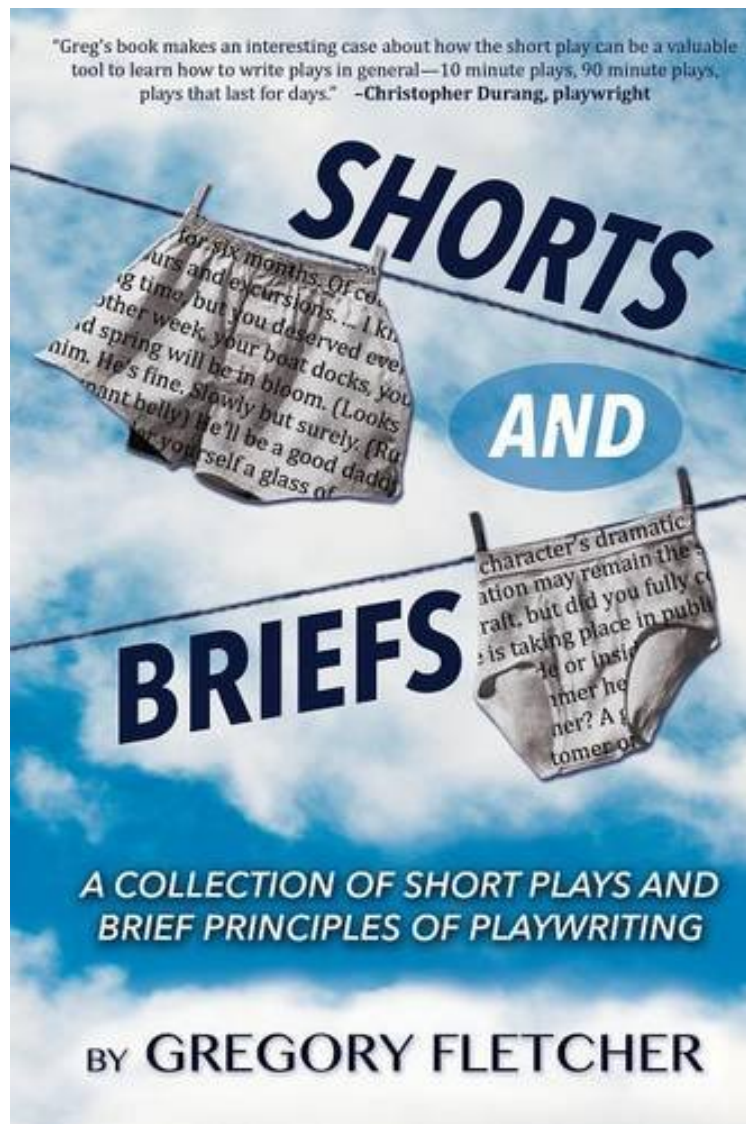


# SHORTS AND BRIEFS: A Collection of Short Plays and Brief Principles of Playwriting

Gregory Fletcher

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**Gregory Fletcher : SHORTS AND BRIEFS: A Collection of Short Plays and Brief Principles of Playwriting** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised SHORTS AND BRIEFS: A Collection of Short Plays and Brief Principles of Playwriting:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Every playwright needs to write with SHORTS AND BRIEFS.By cjdialogueI have no idea if men's underwear can be called "foundation" garments, but Gregory Fletcher's book--

SHORTS AND BRIEFS--succinctly provides "foundation" principles of playwriting and superbly demonstrates in nine short plays how many of those principles--dialogue, movement, turning points, shaping a character--work. With wit and wisdom, Fletcher not only discusses formatting, revisions, the rehearsal process, theater vocabulary and the business side of being a playwright but also advises a playwright what NOT to do. The book can be read in one or two sittings but should NOT be read in one or two sittings. It is the perfect book to be used either in a class setting or in the privacy of one's own office. Actors and directors can benefit just as much from SHORTS AND BRIEFS as playwrights. In the very first paragraph of the "Briefs" section, Fletcher points out that those who write plays are "playwrights," not "playwrites." Plays need to be crafted, not just written. Fletcher then opens up his own toolbox and generously shares the literary gadgets and gizmos he uses to shape his own award-winning plays. Newcomers to playwriting will benefit taking their time to explore and experiment with each tool. More experienced playwrights will benefit being reminded that perhaps some of their own tools are gathering dust. Fletcher practices what he preaches. I found myself re-reading more than one of his short plays just to discover where his deft hand craftily turned the play towards that ending that caught me by surprise. Fletcher's "shorts" are colorful and unique. His "briefs" are not flashy but they cover the essentials. But enough about Fletcher's underwear. SHORTS AND BRIEFS should be required for everyone involved in theater.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. An Indispensable Guide By Floyd Sklover  
An indispensable guide for anyone who has ever wanted to try their hand at playwriting. In sixteen short chapters, Fletcher provides all the tools necessary to write a well-crafted short play. A short is a ten-minute play divided into three "acts," each of which moves the journey forward to a climax that answers a dramatic question. Accomplishing this well requires a different skill-set (and mind-set) from crafting a sketch or scene and Fletcher succinctly explains how to get the most out of every line of dialogue. He provides practical tips on everything from increasing your chances of getting your short play produced (create characters in the age range of the students who usually perform in short plays) to properly formatting a manuscript to thinking about your next project (or what he calls filling up the trunk). In addition, the book begins with nine excellent examples of Fletcher's own short plays which offer proof of his abilities and a cross-reference to the invaluable tips to follow.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A wonderful companion By Henry Kimmel  
I did some traveling recently, and this book was a wonderful companion. Each of the plays was written in a heartfelt way, with human, intelligent and human characters, who often connected in unexpected ways. I was charmed and touched -- and as a fan of dramatic structure, I appreciated the way the plays were crafted. The Briefs section was well put together. A lot of important information in digestible pieces. A friend of mine has recently started teaching drama at a local college, and I am going to recommend this book to him and his students. The information will be useful to them -- and to those who have been doing this for a while, a reminder of what we should but don't always consider. Hank Kimmel Atlanta

Shorts and Briefs is a collection of short plays and brief principles of playwriting. The first part "Shorts" consists of a nine short plays, offering roles for actors from the teens to the fifties. Visit an agency that offers once in a lifetime placements (Eight Times Around), a family errand that turns downright embarrassing (Family of Flechner), a subway ride that changes lives forever (Hangman), a dog park for extended families (The Moon Alone), a breakfast nook that turns negative to positive (The Nine-Month Fix), an unexpected war zone where a soldier is unprepared for battle (Not Tonight), a double date where a surprise kiss almost topples everything (Roast Beef and the Rare Kiss), a date that hopes to regain a romantic spark (Robert Mapplethorpe's Flowers), and a staircase where two estranged siblings become reunited (Stairway to Heaven). The second part "Briefs" consists of brief principles of playwriting, intended for students of theater, new or established playwrights who would like to explore the short play genre. Topics include producible short plays, the short play versus a sketch or scene, the difference between playwriting and stenography, a character's vocabulary, why dialogue isn't talking, treating emotion like sweat, filling up the trunk, formatting the manuscript, revising, participating with the rehearsal process, things to avoid, play submissions, surviving showbiz, and knowing theater vocabulary. In addition to playwrights, the book is intended for actors, directors, and producers of the short play genre, both in and out of the classroom.

"Fletcher may not be a well-known name in the business, but highly respected writers Christopher Durang, Tina Howe, and Charles Busch offer corroborating blurbs on the back cover. It doesn't take long to see why such notables support his book." -stageandcinema.com  
"The playwriting elucidates that Fletcher puts his money where his mouth is. His shorts are a terrific tool for student actors and directors to hone their craft, which means his book isn't just for student writers." -stageandcinema.com  
From the Back Cover "Gregory Fletcher and I shared a wonderful teacher, the late Howard Stein, though we knew him in different decades. Greg's book makes an interesting case about how the short play can be a valuable tool to learn how to write plays in general-10 minute plays, 90 minute plays, plays that last for days. And he includes several effective short plays that he has written as well, which certainly enhance his premise." -Christopher Durang, playwright (Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike, Miss Witherspoon, The Marriage of Bette Boo) "A frisky show and tell about designing shorts and briefs. How to put them on, as well as take them off." -Tina Howe, playwright (Painting Churches, Coastal Disturbances, Pride's Crossing) Fletcher's Shorts are filled

with nice surprises and stamina. His Briefs are filled with insight and clarity. The bar is raised high in this enviable package." -Charles Busch, actor, playwright (The Tale of the Allergist's Wife, Psycho Beach Party, Die Mommie Die)  
"The plays evidence vitality, wit, and a theatrical mind at work. Used in class to introduce the process of writing plays, Shorts and Briefs is a labor of love and a vast wealth of wisdom, economy, and artistry." -Bruce Levitt, Professor of Theatre, Cornell University