FORMATTING YOUR PLAY

Stage directions. Stage directions should always be in italics. You can let them go all the way across the page like this.

> *Or you can tab over and let them read from the middle to the right side of the page. This is up to you. Just be consistent.*

CHARACTER 1

Dialogue should not be in italics. It can be in any readable font. You center the character name above the line of dialogue, and left justify the dialogue underneath.

CHARACTER 2

I know it's a pain to keep going back between centered and left justified text, but it's just what we do. You can type your first draft any way you want, and then go back and center all of your character names when you're done.

CHARACTER 1

Notice that the character names here are in all caps.

CHARACTER 2
(Parenthetical direction)

The parenthetical expression above gives the actor an idea of how the line is to be read. This is different from a stage direction, which gives the reader an idea of what is happening on stage visually. If, for example, our first character were now to fall off a chair, we would tell the audience that like this:

> *Character 1 falls off a chair.*

CHARACTER 1

Ow!

CHARACTER 2
(laughing)

Make sense?

> *Character 1 picks up the chair and hits Character 2 over the head with it.*

CHARACTER 2
(angry)

You bastard!

> *Lights.*