

## WEEK 2: PLAYWRITING 2

- Welcome to the second of our videos on theatre-making
  - Last time, we looked at the world of the play
  - This time, we're going to look at the characters

### The Family

- The first people we meet are really important
- They establish the beginning of the story
- The characters present will impact the situation
- In a play, we want this to be something dramatic
- The first people we meet, are the family of ducks...

### Reading: The Family

**Mother Duck:** Quack Quack! Sitting is such a dull business. No one ever comes to see me down at the water's edge. Look at the other ducks, swimming in the lake. Will these eggs ever hatch? Quack Quack!

**First Duckling:** Crack!

**Mother Duck:** What was that?

**Second Duckling:** Crack!

**Mother Duck:** Break out, my little ones. Come look at the big green world.

**First Duckling:** Quack Quack! How wide the world is!

**Second Duckling:** Quack Quack! I was so cramped in my egg.

**Mother Duck:** My beautiful ducklings, do you think this nest is the whole world? Why, it extends on and on, clear across the other side of the lake.

**First Duckling:** Then what are we waiting for?

**Second Duckling:** I want to waddle...

**First Duckling:** Waddling is for weaklings. I want to swim...

**Second Duckling:** Swimming is for fish. I want to fly!

**First Duckling:** You'll never keep up with me. My wings are bigger than yours.

**Second Duckling:** Your belly's bigger, that's for sure.

*The ducklings squabble.*

**First Duckling:** Quack Quack!

**Second Duckling:** Quack Quack!-

**Ugly Duckling:** Crack.

**First Duckling:** Did you hear that?

**Ugly Duckling:** Honk Honk!

**First Duckling:** What is that, mother?

**Mother Duck:** That's your brother, my dears.

**Second Duckling:** But he's so big...

**First Duckling:** And ugly.

**Second Duckling:** Do you think he can swim?

**First Duckling:** We'll soon find out.

*First Duckling pushes The Ugly Duckling.*

**All:** Splash!

**Ugly Duckling:** Honk Honk! Help me!

**Second Duckling:** Let's show him how it's done.

*First Duckling and Second Duckling show off with their swimming.*

**Ugly Duckling:** Actually, this is quite easy. Watch me go!

*The Ugly Duckling swims. To his delight, he's faster than the others.*

**Mother Duck:** Look at your brother, he's a natural.

**First Duckling:** It's only because he's got those disgusting flippers for feet.

**Mother Duck:** He swims well and I suppose he could be quite the beauty, if you look at him right.

**First Duckling:** You really have to squint.

**Mother Duck:** Quack Quack. Come with me and I'll introduce you to the duck yard.

- Writing dialogue for animals is a fun challenge
- You could:

- Play up their quacking sound
- Give them a Donald duck style voice
- Compare them to specific people and groups
- In this reading, we decided not to do too much
- We focussed on the difference in age between the ducklings and their mother
- The ducklings are more cartoonish
- The mother is much more natural and mature

### The Problem

- All drama needs a central problem, something to solve
- In this case, the problem comes from the family
- The Ugly Duckling feels like he doesn't fit in
- From a visual point of view, he doesn't.
  - He looks different
  - This is very striking
- How else do we know the Ugly Duckling doesn't fit in?
  - Because he doesn't quack. He honks...
- In the full version of the play, this will be important later

### Mother Hen

- To write good characters, you need to understand them
  - Know who they are
- When adapting you can take a lot of this from the original
- Let's look at Mother Duck...
- She looks forward to her eggs hatching
- We expect mother's to be caring and patient
- And she tries to see the good in the Ugly Duckling
- This means that when she rejects the duckling, it feels even worse
- If she hadn't cared, it wouldn't mean anything

### Over to you...

- Your second home exercise is to create a character profile
  - What do they look like?
  - What's their history?
  - What do they think about?
- Download the sheet from our website
- Share them with us and we'll get back to you.

- We might also share your work online
- Thanks for joining me. See you in Video 3

