

These "best practices" have been identified while writing role plays for students in conflict analysis and resolution courses. Many would apply to role plays written for other disciplines.

- Identify specific learning goals and draft the roles, scenarios, and process accordingly
 - Learning goals might include Knowledge about the case and specific concepts, skills and abilities in analysis, interaction, observation, and reflection
- Start with a model or an actual situation and then innovate to achieve goals
 - Avoid "fake" or implausible scenarios when the goal is situation-sensitive knowledge
 - Note: imaginary settings or groups can work if the focus is on dynamics
- Assess what you need to write the roles, scenario, and instructions
 - holistic knowledge of a situation, imagination, personal participation, a model
- Minimize the distance between students and roles
 - Let students conduct research on the roles, alter the roles, use their names; write gender-neutral roles or assign by gender; choose a scenario familiar to students
- Provide detailed information about the roles and scenarios and keep it simple
 - Students will always ask for more information, but too much detail reduces spontaneity
- Keep the scenario open enough for dialogue to be emergent rather than scripted
- Pay special attention to writing beginnings, transition points, and endings
 - Role-players need to know how and why they are in the scenario, where to head, and what counts as being finished
- Anticipate the potential for stereotyping or caricatures
 - Students may have difficulty imagining themselves in certain roles; guard against scenarios that lead them to act out unreflective cultural or personal scripts
- Include media when appropriate
 - Photos of the context, a video message from a potential participant, audio
- "Back pocket" several complicating factors to be used if the action stalls
 - A message from an outside source, a participant who walks out, an unanticipated event
- Envision how the role play will unfold; anticipate students' questions
 - Sharing the role play with others before running, it helps!
- Capture the role play for assessment, reflection, and re-writing

Teach.ConflictResolution.gmu.edu

Creative Commons Copyright: Attribution-Noncommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0)

You are free to share and adapt this resource under the following terms. You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use. You may not use the material for commercial purposes. You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits