



*Each of these prompts is designed to put your story and characters into situations that allow elements of your unique Voice to emerge. Jot down a scene idea for each, and pick at least one to write a practice scene.*

### 1. Pressure Test

What is it that you (personally) know more about than most people? Whether it's tooth extraction, macrame, or small engine repair. Envision a scene where a character in your story must explain this topic to another character who has never even attempted it before. Spice it up by adding a terrible consequence if they fail.

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### 2. Trigger Warning

Make a list of your personal triggers. (i.e. rude people, bad drivers, bullies). Write a scene where a character in your story must get help from someone who triggers them in the same way. Let inner dialogue draw contrast between what they're saying and what they know they can never say if they want to achieve the goal.

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### 3. Remember Where You Came From

Explore a world you know through the eyes of someone who doesn't. Write an idea for a scene where a character in your story needs help from someone in a setting similar to where you grew up. How are the accents and dialects different? What unspoken rules do the locals know? What tips would they have for newcomers they like? How would they treat outsiders they dislike?

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### 4. Dig Deep

For what reasons were you made fun of as a child? Why did it hurt so much? Imagine a scene where a character in your story (adult or child) encounters someone else (adult or child) being ridiculed for a similar reason. How do they respond? What are the consequences? What happens next?

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### 5. Know Yourself

Take a personality test. What does it say about your driving motivations? Your key strengths? Your natural opposite? Envision a scene where a character with your same personality type has a driving force stripped away. Make it their own fault. What's the very next thing they do? How do they cope? Who do they blame? Think about the break-down moment and imagine what events it might set in motion.

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### 6. Let's Be Honest

Think of a wrong decision your character made, one that hurt someone else. Come up with a scene idea where they explain (even if only to themselves) WHY they did it. Uncover old pain and wounds. How does this revelation drive them to a decision point? Does their next choice make things better or worse?

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## 7. Get Vulnerable

What do you hate or strongly dislike about yourself? Is it a physical trait? A habit you can't kick? An inability? A bias? Imagine a scene where one character in your story tries to help another character overcome a similar self-loathing. Can your character be convinced to accept themselves? Does either character change as a result of the conversation?

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## 8. Unexpected Reunion

Consider a person from your past who had a deep emotional impact on you, whether positive or negative. Envision a low moment in your character's story where they encounter someone from their past who affects them the same way. What do they say? What do they think? How do they feel?

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## 9. Phobia

Think about a fear or phobia you have experienced. Create a scene in which a character in your story has to confront the same fear in order to achieve a minor (or major) story goal. Focus on the physical and emotional sensations they feel. Do they overcome the fear? Do they achieve the goal? What happens next?

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