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Welcome to *Being a Screenwriter, Part 2: Writing Your Screenplay*

Being A Screenwriter, Part 2 is the second in a three-course series designed to teach students what it takes to create their own scripts from start to finish, from developing an idea, to writing it out, to pitching it to a studio. Students will learn every step that professional screenwriters take to brainstorm, organize, and compose ideas, and play a few games along the way. This section of the course is devoted to writing the screenplay. It's divided into 10 exciting lessons that will lead students through the entire process of composing a movie script. When they're finished they will have their own professionally formatted screenplay ready to shoot a five-minute movie that they've dreamed up themselves.

To help illustrate the concepts we will learn in this class, students will view portions of the movie *Groundhog Day*. A DVD of the film is included in the kit for instructors to use during their classes. Instructors will need to obtain a DVD player and television.

In the first course of this series, *Being A Screenwriter, Part 1: Generating Ideas for a Screenplay*, students studied how the basic Hollywood movie script works. They learned how to successfully utilize the three-act-structure to tell a story and how each part of that structure works together to help the movie's protagonist (or hero) accomplish some sort of goal. They also learned about the importance of conflict, subplots, and complications, as well as the need to "show" rather than "tell." They brainstormed and organized their ideas, and when finished were able to walk away with both a logline (a succinct sentence that describes the overall story of a movie) and a treatment (a short summary of a movie).

This section of *Being A Screenwriter* will build on what was learned in *Part 1* as we turn now away from developing ideas to actual writing. While in *Part 1* a lot of time was spent brainstorming and throwing ideas around, this course will focus on refining those ideas. There will be less time spent deciding what to write about in *Part 2* than in *Part 1* as it is assumed that students at this point have either decided on an idea in *Part 1* or are well enough equipped to come up with one on their own based on what they learned in *Part 1*.

Important Notes on Student Journals, Loglines, and Treatments

Students who took *Being a Screenwriter, Part 1* left with three take-aways: Loglines, Treatments and Journals. The student journals were used throughout as a place where students gathered their thoughts however they worked best—jotting down notes, drawing pictures, pasting magazine clippings, etc. **Students are encouraged to bring the journals along to help them review the concepts they learned and ideas they came up with in *Part 1* and they are encouraged to continue working in them if new ideas strike them throughout the course of *Part 2*.** The loglines students developed will also be useful to them here in *Part 2*. Since most of the work in *Part 2* is focused on writing instead of developing, it will be helpful for students to come to class with a solid idea of where their screenplay is going. Their treatments will also be helpful on this front. They will be able to look back to the treatments as a blueprint of the movie they are going to write. Because so much was covered in *Part 1*, a student taking *Part 2* without having taken *Part 1* will be at a disadvantage. They will not only be without the same foundation as students who took *Part 1*, but they will not have the journal, loglines, and treatments that will be extremely helpful in *Part 2*. Students who have not taken *Part 1* are strongly encouraged to do the following at the beginning of the course:

- **Find a notebook to use as their screenwriting journal.**
- **Develop a logline.**
- **Write a treatment**.

Course Kit Components

Each course kit contains an Instructor Guide, Teacher Resource CD, and all of the materials and tools necessary to teach the course to a class of 30 students. Start by reviewing this guide, and tutorials on the Teacher Resource CD.

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Instructor's Guide

Every step is taken to provide an easy-to-follow format and fun-to-read instructions for each lesson. In addition to a brief listing of objectives, materials, and setup procedures, useful icons point the instructor to a number of key elements.

Notes for the Instructor

A brief introduction to the subject matter and challenges presented in each lesson, often with real-life examples from history, popular culture, and of course movies.

Notes for the Students (Including New Vocabulary)

Introductory material for the students to read, discuss, watch or listen to in order to "set the stage" for each lesson.

Activity Descriptions

Step-by-step procedures for the participants' immersion in the activity.

Wrap-up

Questions designed to summarize learning objectives, lead a discussion, and encourage journal entries.

Clean-up Notes

Wrap-up and storage instructions for the most cost-effective use and preservation of materials.

Other Directions, Discussions and Destinations

Helpful links to media, books, and Internet resources that extend lessons and help learners understand new concepts across disciplinary and cultural divides.

Student Books

Designed for students to record their discoveries class after class, the Student Books acquire a narrative quality that keeps the young "screenwriters" engaged in screenwriting over time. The books serve as companions to the Instructor's Guide and a full glossary of terms used in the course.

The complete *Being a Screenwriter, Part 2: Writing Your Screenplay* student book is provided in PDF on your Resource CD, with an unlimited license for reproduction for your school or organization's use.

Companion Resources

When you adopt *Being a Screenwriter, Part 2: Writing Your Screenplay*, you will have access to a number of companion resources. The Resource CD offers tips, lesson extensions, and other great ideas for the classroom. Word search and crossword puzzles help reinforce newly learned and used vocabulary. Links to screenwriting videos and other multimedia resources provide authentic lesson extensions. Immediate support is always available by phone, email, or webinar from the experts at Community Learning.

About Community Learning

Community Learning is a socially responsible company focused on impacting positive youth development through STEAM education. We create curriculum designed to expose students to careers and inspire their development into lifelong learners. Our products are developed in collaboration with subject area experts, providing complete support for program administrators desiring rich, engaging educational programs for their students.

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Lesson 1

Screenwriting 101: The Building Blocks of a Great Script

Objectives

Students will:

- Review the concepts behind genre, theme, setting, protagonist, and antagonist (introduced in *Generating Ideas for a Screenplay* or *Part 1*)
- Review the three-act structure (also introduced in *Part 1*)
- Outline the movie they want to write

Materials

- 20 student activity books
- 20 pencils
- 1 dry erase marker
- 1 dry erase eraser
- "Three-Act Structure" poster

Preparation

1. Arrange the students' desks or tables in groups of four.
2. At each group, place four pencils and four student activity books.
3. Put the "Three-Act Structure" poster on a wall where all of the students will be able to see it.

Notes for the Instructor

The ultimate goal of this course is twofold. First, students will develop a screenplay that is all their own. They will develop it from start to finish and leave the class with their own completed script. But, more importantly, students will understand how the entire process of writing a screenplay works and be able to write their own scripts for years to come.

Most of the students in your class have probably taken *Being a Screenwriter Part 1: Generating Ideas for a Screenplay*, but some may not have. We will spend today reviewing some of the concepts covered in *Part 1*, both to fill in the students who may not have taken it and to refresh the memories of the students who did. There was a lot of information in *Part 1* that will be very helpful to students in *Part 2*—far too much to cover in just one lesson. Today we'll just focus on three important concepts: genre, theme, and the three-act structure. With an understanding of these concepts, even students who didn't take *Part 1* will be able to go on to write a successful screenplay. Encourage students to refer back to their journals and their student activity books used in *Part 1*. New students may benefit from looking at a completed student activity book.

If you taught *Part 1* of *Being a Screenwriter*, you may remember that **genre** is one of the most basic elements of a screenplay. Genre is a broad classification of what a movie is about. You're probably familiar with this classification from your trips to the video store: action, drama, comedy, horror, family, etc. Within a genre are secondary categories, called **themes**. A theme refers to the underlying emotion of a movie and can be described in one or two words—faith, love, revenge, heartbreak, etc. Oftentimes it will be easy to come up with more than one theme for a movie. In this course, we'll be using the movie *Groundhog Day* as an example. If you went to the video store, you'd find *Groundhog Day* in the comedy section. Comedy is the movie's genre. We will spend some time discussing genre and theme today.

The last concept that you'll teach or review with your students today is the **three-act structure**. The three-act structure is a simple format that all movies follow. First there is a beginning (Act I), in which the story is set up. Here the screenwriter presents his or her movie's **setting** (where and when the movie will take place), **protagonist** (the movie's hero/heroine), **antagonist** (the hero/heroine's adversary), and **conflict** (the problem the protagonist seeks to resolve). In *Groundhog Day*, the setting is Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, the protagonist is Phil, the antagonist is the ceaseless Groundhog Days, and the conflict is that Phil wakes up every morning and relives Groundhog Day without any way to escape. The middle of a screenplay (Act II) consists of all of

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the action that takes place as the protagonist tries to solve the conflict and includes the low point (the point which the protagonist seems furthest from his or her goal). The last part of the screenplay (Act III) is where the movie has its **climax** (the point at which all of the action in a film culminates) and its **resolution** (the point at which the conflict is solved). In *Groundhog Day,* the climax is when Phil finally wakes up on February 3rd. The resolution is when Phil decides that Punxsutawney isn't such a bad place after all.

It may seem like a lot to think about, but don't worry. These concepts are easy to grasp once you begin to work with them. After all, they are inherent in every movie you've ever seen.

One last note before your students begin their journey: Throughout this course we will be using the movie *Groundhog Day* to illustrate the concepts you will teach in class. Though the students will never watch the movie in its entirety in this course, you will be better prepared to answer your students' questions and explain how the concepts of this course work if you do watch the entire movie. Be advised that there are some scenes in *Groundhog Day* that some parents may not find appropriate for children. In selecting scenes to use as examples in this course, we've skipped the parts of the movie that may be objectionable; you should be careful to limit your students' viewing of the movie to those scenes we've pointed out to you.

The activities in this lesson address the following Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Literacy: CCRA.R.2, CCRA.R.3, CCRA.SL.1, CCRA.L.6, CCRA.W.5, and CCRA.W.10. See the Standard Matrix included on pages 97-100 for more detailed information.

Notes for the Student

Welcome to *Being A Screenwriter, Part 2!* By the end of this course, you will not only know more about screenwriting than you ever thought possible, but you will walk away carrying a complete screenplay for a five-minute movie you've dreamed up all by yourself. This class will teach you everything you need to know to be a full-fledged screenwriter. If you can dream it, you'll be able to write it.

First things first, though. Before we can start writing, we need to discover just how a screenplay is put together. If you took *Being a Screenwriter, Part 1*, you came up with a **logline** and **treatment** for your very own screenplay. Everything you learned in that course will be very helpful here in *Part 2* but if you have forgotten some of the concepts we talked about in *Part 1*, or weren't able to take that course, don't worry. Today we're going to go back to basics and refresh our memories about the building blocks used in every screenplay ever written and every movie ever made. However, for those of you who did take *Part 1*, feel free to continue to bring your journals with you to this class. You might find it helpful to be able to go back to the ideas you came up with in *Part 1.* And for those of you who didn't take *Part 1*, feel free to begin journaling. You'll have space in your student activity books to jot down ideas in class, but if you have an old notebook lying around at home, feel free to use it to keep track of ideas you have outside of class.

Today we're going to discuss three very important concepts of screenwriting: **genre**, **theme**, and the **three-act structure**. These terms are very important to the screenwriting process and they apply to every single movie you've ever seen. Genre is a very broad classification for a movie. You can think of it as describing the kind of movie you're watching or want to write. Horror, action, science fiction, romance, and comedy are all genres. A theme is a more focused classification of a movie. Theme refers to the overall emotion that a movie represents, and each movie can have more than one theme. For example, a movie may be in the action genre, but maybe the emotion driving the action is revenge. Revenge would be the theme. Or perhaps a comedy movie has a story about love. In that case, love would be the movie's theme.

Let's use the movie *The Lion King* as an example. Take a moment to see if you can figure out what the genre and theme of *The Lion King* are. First think about where you would find *The Lion King* in the

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video store. This will be its genre. Then think about what emotions run through the movie. These will be the themes. *(Give the students about sixty seconds to think.)* Do you think you have it? The genre of *The Lion King* is animated or family. There are several themes running throughout the movie, including revenge, love and growing up.

Before we can begin the screenwriting process, we also need to refresh our memories on how the **three-act structure** works. The three-act structure is the format that every movie follows, and it lays out for us every movie's beginning, middle and end. The first act, or the beginning, introduces us to four major components of every screenplay: the **setting**, the **protagonist**, the **antagonist**, and the **conflict.** The setting is where a movie occurs. In *The Lion King*, the setting is the Pride Lands of Africa. The protagonist is the hero/heroine of a movie. In *The Lion King*, this is Simba. The antagonist is the hero or heroine's enemy. In *The Lion King,* this would be Simba's uncle, Scar. And the conflict is the problem that the protagonist is trying to solve. In *The Lion King*, the conflict is that Simba must return to the Pride Lands to overthrow Scar and become king.

The second act of a movie includes all of the action it takes for the protagonist to resolve the conflict. This could include many other smaller story lines and events, as the second act is the longest part of the movie. The second act ends at the **low point**—the point in the movie where the protagonist seems the farthest from his or her goal.

The third act is where you'll find the movie's **climax**. The climax is when all of the action in the movie reaches a breaking point and the conflict is solved. In *The Lion King*, this is when Simba finally triumphs over Scar and kicks him over the cliff. The climax is then followed by the **resolution**, where the protagonist returns to his or her everyday life—like when Simba and Nala become the new king and queen of the Pride Lands.

Okay. That was a lot of information, but now you have an understanding of all the tools you need to get started on your own screenplay. If you took *Being A Screenwriter*, *Part 1* you already have a logline (a one-sentence summary of an idea for a screenplay or movie) and treatment (a summary of a screenplay idea that includes the movie's genre, theme, main character and important scenes) for your screenplay. If you didn't take *Part 1*, perhaps you have a great idea that you can't wait to write down. You will want to spend time before the next class thinking about the concepts we discussed today—and writing in your screenwriter's journals—so you'll be ready to start developing your screenplay ideas the next time we meet. Remember that it's usually much easier and much more worthwhile to choose a topic of which you have firsthand knowledge. In *Being A Screenwriter*, *Part 1* we called this "writing from the heart." When choosing a storyline for your movie, try and choose a story that's close to you, perhaps something that happened to you or to a friend, so that your movie will have a special meaning to you and will be fun for you to write.

Let's get a little practice with the concepts of genre, theme and three-act structure. Soon enough you'll be on your way to writing a brand new movie all by yourself!

Vocabulary

antagonist: the enemy of the movie's hero/heroine.

climax: the emotional high point of the movie.

conflict: the problem the hero/heroine is trying to solve and/or tension in a story.

genre: the category of a movie, such as action, comedy, horror, science fiction, etc.

logline: a succinct sentence that describes the overall story of a movie.

low point: the point in the film in which the hero/heroine seems farthest from his or her goal.

protagonist: the hero/heroine of the movie.

resolution: the point in the film when the conflict is finally worked out.

setting: the place and time in which a story occurs.

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theme: a word or phrase that sums up the main emotion of a movie, such as love, revenge, greed, etc.

three-act structure: the structural system for most Hollywood films composed of the setting, conflict and resolution.

treatment: a summary of a screenplay idea that includes the movie's genre, theme, main character and important scenes.

Activity 1: Back to Basics
(30 minutes)

1. Have the students turn to lesson 1, activity 1 in their student activity books. Ask them to follow along as you read the treatment for *Groundhog Day* aloud to the class. Encourage them to be looking and listening for the separate parts of the overall screenplay within the treatment:

   Pittsburgh meteorologist Phil Connors is not happy when his boss sends him to Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, to cover the annual Groundhog Day festival. He's even more upset when a blizzard strands him and his crew in the small town. When he wakes up the next morning to find that, somehow, it is still Groundhog Day (February 2), he must try to figure out what is happening and how he can make it stop.

   When Phil tries to convince the people around him that, for some reason, every day has become Groundhog Day, they think he's crazy. He begins to take advantage of the situation, lying to the town's residents and even stealing from the truck that pulls up to the bank every day. Eventually, he grows tired and begins to lose hope that he'll ever escape from Groundhog Day. It's not until his coworker Rita, on whom Phil has a crush, suggests that Phil start using his situation to make Punxsutawney a better place that Phil finds hope again. When he begins to use the time loop for good by helping people and bettering himself, he finally escapes Groundhog Day. It's then that Rita and Phil find themselves in love and decide they should stay in Punxsutawney.

2. Now, let the students work together in their groups for fifteen minutes to fill in the three-act structure diagram in their activity books. Some of the blanks might be tough to fill in, but encourage them to do their best to figure it out.

3. When the fifteen minutes are up, go through the three-act structure diagram together on the "Three-Act Structure" poster. Ask every group what they came up with for each blank. If there is a group consensus, fill in the appropriate blank with the dry erase marker on the "Three-Act Structure" poster. If there are a variety of answers, take a vote as a class. If the students are still stumped, help them out using your answer sheet.

Activity 2: Getting Started!
(20 minutes)

1. Have students turn to lesson 1, activity 2 from their activity books. Ask them to jot down what they remember about their treatment in *Part 1* (lesson 10).

2. Give the students ten minutes to work independently to fill out a three-act structure diagram on a movie they'd like to write a screenplay for while participating in this class. They do not have to use the treatment they developed in Part 1. Tell them that it's important to write about things with which they have firsthand experience and to write from the heart, but also that their movies will be short and that, for now, simpler is better. Remind them that the screenplay they are writing will ultimately amount to a movie that's only five minutes long, so they can keep it simple.There is no need for them to get bogged down in creating all of the twists and turns that a full-length feature would contain.

3. Walk around the room and help students who are struggling with the three-act-structure for their screenplay. If students are having trouble coming up with ideas, be encouraging. If any students are drawing absolute blanks, let them know they can give it more thought between classes and may come to the next class with their ideas.

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4. After ten minutes, have each student pair up with another student in their group.
5. Have the students take turns sharing their ideas with their partners. They should share what they wrote on their diagrams. Let them help each other if they're stuck on something, and encourage them to think about their ideas before the next class.

Let them know that it will be very helpful for them to get their ideas set now. They will be building on these ideas for the rest of the course.

Wrap-Up
(5 minutes)

Have the students turn to the wrap-up page in their student activity books. Alternatively, students can use *Part 1* journals to complete the wrap-up activity. Remind students that they can bring their journals for the rest of the course if they want to continue working in them and that students who didn't take *Part 1* are welcome to bring a journal or notebook from home if they wish to jot down ideas outside of class.

Give students five minutes to jot down any ideas they may have for their screenplay, anything they thought of that they didn't have a spot for in today's activities, or any questions they may have. Also allow any students who haven't finished the three-act structure activity to use this time to finish up.

Clean-Up
(5 minutes)

1. Collect pencils.
2. Collect the student activity books.
3. Check the floor for any stray materials.
4. Return "Three-Act Structure" poster to kit for re-use.

Other Directions, Discussions and Destinations

The following activities and websites will enrich what has been learned in this lesson about the basics of screenwriting.

1. Students can use their screenwriting journals from *Part 1* or a notebook at home between classes just like they did in *Part 1* to record ideas they have about their screenplays. They can feel free to write down anything and everything that comes to them. The sky's the limit!
2. For a review on genre and theme visit **www.filmsite.org/filmgenres.html.**
3. For a review on how the three-act structure works in films, including a more in-depth analysis of what happens in all three acts, visit **www.filmscriptwriting.com/the-three-act-structure.**

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Lesson 1

Activity 1: Back To Basics

Groundhog Day Treatment

Pittsburgh meteorologist Phil Connors is not happy when his boss sends him to Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, to cover the annual Groundhog Day festival. He's even more upset when a blizzard strands him and his crew in the small town. When he wakes up the next morning to find that, somehow, it is still Groundhog Day (February 2), he must try to figure out what is happening and how he can make it stop.

When Phil tries to convince the people around him that, for some reason, every day has become Groundhog Day, they think he's crazy. He begins to take advantage of the situation, lying to the town's residents and even stealing from the truck that pulls up to the bank every day. Eventually, he grows tired and begins to lose hope that he'll ever escape from Groundhog Day. It's not until his coworker Rita, on whom Phil has a crush, suggests that Phil start using his situation to make Punxsutawney a better place that Phil finds hope again. When he begins to use the time loop for good by helping people and bettering himself, he finally escapes Groundhog Day. It's then that Rita and Phil find themselves in love and decide they should stay in Punxsutawney.

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Lesson 1

Activity 1

Three-Act Structure

Movie title:	Genre:
Theme:	

Act I

Setting:	
Antagonist:	Protagonist:
Conflict:	

Act II

Low point:

Act III

Climax:
Resolution:

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Activity 1

Being a Screenwriter 2

Three-Act Structure Answer Sheet

Movie title: *Groundhog Day*	Genre: Comedy
Theme: Love, Becoming a Better Person	
Act I	
Setting: Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania	
Antagonist: Groundhog Day	Protagonist: Phil Connors
Conflict: Phil must find a way to keep Groundhog Day from happening over and over again.	
Act II	
Low point: Phil gives up on trying to stop Groundhog Day.	
Act III	
Climax: By being a better person, Phil finally wakes up on February 3rd.	
Resolution: Together with Rita, Phil decides Punxsutawney isn't such a bad place after all.	

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Lesson 1

Activity 2: Getting Started

What I remember about the treatment I wrote in Part I (lesson 10)...

Three-Act Structure

Movie title:	Genre:
Theme:	
Act I	
Setting:	
Antagonist:	Protagonist:
Conflict:	
Act II	
Low point:	
Act III	
Climax:	
Resolution:	

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Lesson 1

Activity 1: Back To Basics

Groundhog Day Treatment

Pittsburgh meteorologist Phil Connors is not happy when his boss sends him to Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, to cover the annual Groundhog Day festival. He's even more upset when a blizzard strands him and his crew in the small town. When he wakes up the next morning to find that, somehow, it is still Groundhog Day (February 2), he must try to figure out what is happening and how he can make it stop.

When Phil tries to convince the people around him that, for some reason, every day has become Groundhog Day, they think he's crazy. He begins to take advantage of the situation, lying to the town's residents and even stealing from the truck that pulls up to the bank every day. Eventually, he grows tired and begins to lose hope that he'll ever escape from Groundhog Day. It's not until his coworker Rita, on whom Phil has a crush, suggests that Phil start using his situation to make Punxsutawney a better place that Phil finds hope again. When he begins to use the time loop for good by helping people and bettering himself, he finally escapes Groundhog Day. It's then that Rita and Phil find themselves in love and decide they should stay in Punxsutawney.

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Activity 1

Three-Act Structure

Movie title:	Genre:
Theme:	

Act I

Setting:	
Antagonist:	Protagonist:
Conflict:	

Act II

Low point:	

Act III

Climax:	
Resolution:	

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Lesson 1

Activity 2: Getting Started

What I remember about the treatment I wrote in Part I (lesson 10)...

Three-Act Structure

Movie title:	Genre:
Theme:	
Act I	
Setting:	
Antagonist:	Protagonist:
Conflict:	
Act II	
Low point:	
Act III	
Climax:	
Resolution:	

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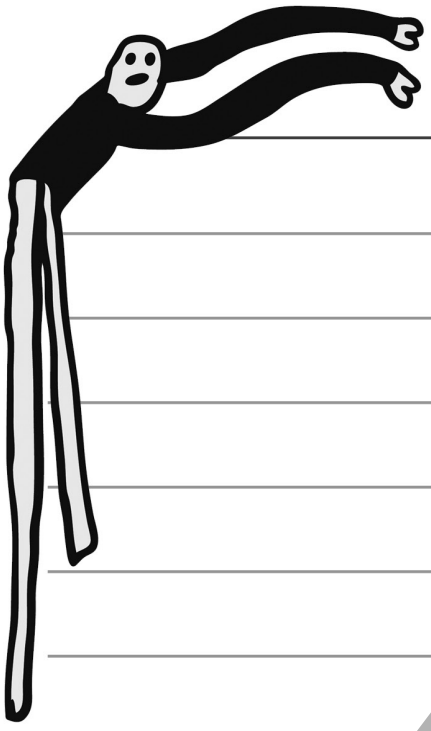
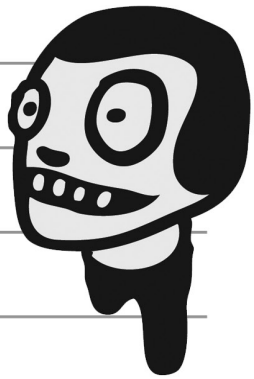


Another great idea I had today was...

I'm really wondering about...



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Glossary

action: what the characters are doing in a scene besides speaking.

antagonist: the enemy of the movie's hero/heroine.

climax: the emotional high point of the movie.

conflict: the problem the hero/heroine is trying to solve and/or tension in a story.

cut: transition between scenes in which one image comes right after another.

dialogue: conversation that takes place between characters in a screenplay or movie.

dissolve: transition between scenes in which one image gradually fades into another image.

dramatic language: the unrealistic way movie characters speak when they're talking about something important to the movie.

executive producer: person in charge of organizing the production of a movie.

exterior (EXT.): a scene that takes place outdoors.

fade: transition between scenes in which one image fades into black and then another fades up from black.

genre: the category of a movie, such as action, comedy, horror, science fiction, etc.

interior (INT.): a scene that takes place indoors.

logline: a succinct sentence that describes the overall story of a movie.

low point: the point in the film in which the hero/heroine seems farthest from his or her goal.

peer review: process in which writing is exchanged between partners who then critique one another's work.

protagonist: the hero/heroine of the movie.

resolution: the point in the film when the conflict is finally worked out.

scene: all of the continuous action that takes place in one specific time and place in a movie.

scene outline: a list of scenes that will appear in a movie or screenplay.

setting: the place and time in which a story occurs.

slug line: capitalized text at the beginning of each scene in a script that denotes where and when the scene takes place.

storyboard: a visual representation of the scenes of a movie.

studio: the company that makes a movie.

table reading: a part of the filmmaking process in which the actors of a film and others sit around a table and perform a reading of the movie's script.

theme: a word or phrase that sums up the main emotion of a movie, such as love, revenge, greed, etc.

three-act structure: the structural system for most Hollywood films composed of the setting, conflict and resolution.

transition: the means by which one scene ends and another starts.

treatment: a summary of a screenplay idea that includes the movie's genre, theme, main character and important scenes.

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Appendix

Being A Screenwriter meets the National Standards in English Language Arts

Being A Screenwriter (1 and 2) comprises a series of fun, interdisciplinary classroom activities that engage learners effectively, cognitively and behaviorally. As they participate in the development of ready-to-shoot screenplays, students exercise skill sets in language arts (new vocabulary, research skills), and occasionally, into discussions that help them understand concepts in other disciplines.

Primarily, however, ***Being A Screenwriter*** is focused on driving achievement toward meeting the National English Language Arts Standards (developed by the National Council of Teachers of English). In the table below, we illustrate how many of the activities and discussions in the ***Screenwriter*** courses support learner progress, understanding, and ongoing development of ELA literacy skills and creativity.

All of the ELA standards are interrelated. This table simplifies the correlation between and among activities in the ***Screenwriter*** courses and provides some examples, but many activities satisfy more than one standard.

Selected National ELA Standards	Activities in Being A Screenwriter 1 and 2
Standard 1 Students read a wide range of print and nonprint texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.	In both ***Screenwriter 1 and 2***, learners review scripts and screenplays, storyboards and film clips, in order to recognize and define the roles of screenwriters working in contemporary America.
Standard 3 Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).	Critical thinking—asking questions, exploring theories, hypothesizing, and testing ideas, all cornerstones of building ELA competency—are part of every ***Screenwriter*** lesson.
Standard 4 Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.	At the heart of every ***Screenwriter*** lesson is the task of writing with clarity, appropriateness, and creativity in order to communicate with specific audiences.
Standard 5 Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.	A unique feature of both ***Screenwriter*** courses is the emphasis on drafting, brainstorming, free writing, review, feedback and sharing a final product with peers. The Course Kits provide writing tools to encourage students to write often, personally, and without the demands of formal classroom instruction.

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Standard 6 Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and nonprint texts.	Screenwriting places particular demands on creative writers to master dialogue, create consistent characters, frame shots and give directions. Formatting conventions—as well as preparing the final manuscript editorially—are covered in these lessons. Students often critique and discuss print and nonprint texts.
Standard 7 Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and nonprint texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.	Learners in the screenwriting courses are encouraged to consult a wide range of sources, stories, memories, interviews, other films, and other sources to plan their screenplays. Through exercises, they become acquainted with plotting, conflict, and other genre elements. Their own works are subjected to a gentle peer review that helps them identify problems, generate new ideas, and explore questions of logic and filmmaking basics. Audience is an ever-present element of screenwriting production.
Standard 9 Students develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in language use, patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles.	Through role playing in one another's screenplays, learners "act" in the guise of fictional characters, enabling them to try on new ways of speaking. The development of colorful characters—critical in every screenplay product—encourages learners to explore new selves, new languages and dialects, and new roles, including ethnic, gender and age roles, among others.
Standard 11 Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.	Through the table reading and film review activities, as well as the many informal discussion activities in both ***Screenwriter 1 and 2***, learners share their expertise with their peers as it develops. They offer one another advice, constructive criticism, and promote the dialogues necessary for community-building.
Standard 12 Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).	Throughout the ***Screenwriter*** series, learners use their language skills, creativity, imagination, and ambition to explore how dialogue, narration, direction and visual imagery can combine to communicate and entertain. The purposes of different genres of video are discussed.

To learn more about the National English Language Arts Standards,
visit the web page at
http://www.ncte.org/standards

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Being a Screenwriter Standards Matrix

This unit meets Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English Language Arts and Literacy. The lessons and activities in this unit address the Common Core Anchor Standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language. The activities are designed for students in grades 6-8. Specific CCSS addressed include:

Reading

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2: Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3: Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5: Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7: Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words

Writing

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.5: Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.10: Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Speaking and Listening

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.1: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2: Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

Language

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.6: Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.

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Standards Matrix

Standard	Lesson									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Common Core Learning Standard										
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2: Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.	•									
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3: Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.	•			•						
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5: Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.				•						
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.7: Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words		•	•		•					
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.1: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.	•	•	•	•		•	•		•	•
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2: Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.				•			•	•		
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.6: Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.	•				•					
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details and well-structured event sequences.					•	•		•	•	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.					•	•		•	•	
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.5: Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	
CCCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.10: Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	

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