

"Indie in DC" Deconstructing Storytelling



What's a Script Look Like?

Not what you learned in English class:

- Simple present tense. As few words as possible.
- Enter scenes as late as possible and leave as early as possible.
- Very few adjectives
- Very few adverbs and easy on the parenthetical directions
- Incomplete sentences are okay.
- Let YOUR VOICE come through.
- Action: No more than 5 lines together
- Start and end every scene with action (or brief description, if first time there), not dialogue.
- Do not both show and reveal thru dialogue. One or the other.

How's a Movie Script Different than a Book? A Play? A TV Show?

- Book can be in characters' minds. No constraints re: length, style, omniscience, 1st/3rd person
- Play emphasizes dialogue, limited space
- TV is "Radio with pictures," lots of dialogue, different act structure, character arc over weeks
- Movies use sparse dialogue ("Pictures with Sound"), Constraints re: structure/length

3 Film "Lenses"

Literary: characters, plot, theme (in a book, play, or film)

Dramatic: scene settings, costumes, props, acting (in play or film)

Cinematic: emotion via scores, camera shots, montages (only in film)

Story Structure

The Hero's Journey via Joseph Campbell's work

The Writer's Journey via Chris Vogler

The LCL! 3x3 Story Path via MCPS

Audience Involvement

- Symbols, metaphors, inferences (hypothesis and support), reversals
- Do not tell us how a character is feeling!!!! Tell us what he does so we must INFER his feelings.
- Use subtext (vs on-the-nose) and A/B dialogue as much as possible.
- Reversals let your audience know they are in good hands.

Arla's Recommended Resources

Formatting Your Screenplay by Rick Reichman

Making a Good Script Great by Linda Seeger

Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting by Syd Field

The Writer's Journey by Chris Vogler