Institutional Learning Management System

for

Vidyasagar University

e-Text Content Writer

Mr. Shubhendu Shekhar Naskar

Department of English

Vidyasagar University

Course Coordinator

Mr. Shubhendu Shekhar Naskar

Department of English

Vidyasagar University

Course 304

**Writing as Career: Skill Development 50 marks**

Module No. 1

**Unit 3: Creative Writing: Scriptwriting**

* 1. **Introduction:**

Writing stories for the screenplay medium is referred to as script writing or screenwriting. Writing a script entails capturing the facial expressions, actions, and language of the characters in a screenplay in screenplay format. Writing a script is entirely different from writing a novel, a poem, or an essay. Specific formatting techniques are necessary in order to communicate successfully on the screen. The plot is visually expressed using the screenplay format. Screenwriters usually create scripts for theatres, movies, TV shows, video games, and increasingly even web series.

* 1. **Objectives:**

After going through this unit, the students will learn to:

* know the importance of learning scriptwriting
* use imaginative skills to produce good film/theatre scripts
* use the skill of scriptwriting as a profession
	1. **Future Scopes of learning scriptwriting:**

A screenwriter must possess a certain level of knowledge, do in-depth background research, and develop storylines and characters that engage viewers and have a genuine impact. One needs a lot of experience in this field, either by viewing a lot of previous films and taking note of the specific approaches that can be employed, or by coming up with their own techniques. Scriptwriting as a profession has greater possibilities. People who choose the profession of a screenwriter have flexible working hours. Except when employed full-time in a production house, he or she is not constrained by time or specific shifts. Contractual and long-term work are both possibilities for those who pursue a career as a screenwriter. People that pursue careers as screenwriters do so contractually from the convenience of their own homes. People who choose a career as screenwriters have their screenplays pitched, and they are paid accordingly.

* 1. **Format of a Script:**

A script, sometimes referred to as a screenplay, should have character dialogue, scene settings, and actions that occur throughout a movie, theatre, television programme, or other visual stories. Because it serves as a template for the storyline and character development before the movie is brought to life on screen, a script should accurately explain the movie or the theatre's full tale from beginning to end. One must be familiar with the scriptwriting format if he/she is interested in generating material professionally for the theatrical and cinema industries. Although one can experiment with many forms and techniques, a scriptwriter must eventually follow the traditional rules and structure of drama. Here is the format-

* + 1. **Title Page:** The script opens with the title page. The title page includes both the title of the work and some basic information about the playwright. The entire title page should be in ALL CAPS.
		2. **Character Roster:** The character roster, also known as the "dramatis personae" page, which follows the play's title page, contains a list of all the people who appear in the narrative. There should not be a page number on the character roster. The writer should include a brief character description after listing the names of the characters, or ambiguous names for unidentified characters like "man" or "girl." In order to make things succinct, a writer should only include the most crucial information. The character roster should be in ALL CAPS.
		3. **Main Script:** After the title page and character roster comes the body of the script where the entire story takes place.
	1. **Components of a Script:**

Some components are to be taken care of while writing a script. These essential ingredients are-

1. **Appropriate Title:** The title of a script should be catchy and attractive to attract the audience. The title of the script contains the essence of the content. So, in order to strike the minds of the spectators the scriptwriters should wisely choose a fitting title.
2. **Dramatis Personae:** Every action or statement a character makes should have a motivation that is consistent with their personality, needs, and objectives. The writer needs to edit or rewrite them if the characters’ words or deeds are not driven by their requirements or objectives.
3. **Stage Direction:** A scriptwriter should always include stage direction keeping in parity with the action of the script. A clear stage direction will help in producing the script on screen or on stage.
4. **Act and/or Scenes:** A good script always comprises of several Acts or Scenes. So a screenwriter is required to mark the Acts or Scenes prominently in order to produce an effective script.
5. **Setting Descriptions:** The storyline of a script is based on a particular locale or setting. Before writing the plot a screenwriter must keep in mind the setting and narrate it in the description.
6. **Dialogue:** Creating dialogue is one of the hardest and most time-consuming parts of the entire screenwriting process. It is certainly a unique art form, and even some of the best writers in the world find it difficult to maintain a continuous degree of authenticity. Try not to impersonate your character while creating dialogue by using your own voice or thinking. Concentrate on who they are as people and make an effort to comprehend who they are at their core in daily life. The more familiar you become with somebody, the more naturally you can create their distinctive and convincing voice.
7. **Appropriate Length:** The length of a script varies depending on the genre and visual storytelling endeavour for which it is intended. In general, one minute of screen time is equal to one page of a properly structured script. The average length estimates for a range of visual storytelling projects and genres are as follows:

Feature film, drama: Around 100 to 120 pages

Feature film, comedy: Around 90 to 100 pages

Animated films: Around 90 to 100 pages

Television, comedy: Around 25 to 35 pages

Television, drama: Around 45 to 55 pages

Short film: Depends on the story, up to 60 pages

* 1. **Skills and Qualities of a Screenwriter:**

People who choose a career as screenwriters produce original content and scripts with a tale that is either based on real-world events or their own imagination. In order for readers to visualise the setting, the tone, and the characters' on-screen behaviour, screenwriters carefully create their scripts. People who pursue a profession as a screenwriter can also adapt previously published material from a book, play, or movie. A screenwriter's job description on adaptation-related topics includes revising and modifying previously published works with authorization. Screenwriters must conduct research before writing a script when it is based on real-world occurrences.

There are several essential qualities required to flourish as a screenwriter. These are-

1. **Writing Skills:** One must be exceptionally skilled at crafting stories in a form that can be visually established on screen in order to become a successful screenwriter. Writing for the screen requires describing the setting, the surrounds, and the characters' appearances, attitudes, and body positions.
2. **Observational Skills:** People who choose a career as screenwriters need to be excellent observers. Based on their observations the screenwriters construct their speech, characters, and setting on actual events and experiences.
3. **Creativity:** One of the most important elements of screenwriting is creativity. Effective planning while writing and filming the scenes requires the development of fresh concepts and the ability to visualise the finished product before it is created.
4. **Interpersonal Skills:** Working as a screenwriter requires collaboration with a wide range of creative professionals from the business, including producers, directors, and other team members. It is vital to modify the plot in accordance with the needs of the screenplay. The ability to properly pitch screenplays is a must for anyone pursuing a profession as a screenwriter.
	1. **Conclusion:**

For an artistic concept to come to life, a script is written on paper. Being able to traverse the written word for performance will help one become a better director, actor, producer, dramaturg, choreographer, or cinematographer in addition to improving the writer’s storytelling abilities. The collaborative arts of theatre and film go well beyond the writer's original vision and thoughts. Directors use the length of each page to determine how long a scene should be on stage, while actors use each snippet of stage directions to interpret the characters' unspoken actions. Scriptwriting is an ever-evolving art and it is the invisible way a story that is meant to be seen and heard and not read.

* 1. **Self-Assessment:**
1. What is the function of scriptwriting?
2. What are the essential features of scriptwriting?
3. Write a sample script on your own.
4. What is the importance of setting in scriptwriting?
5. How is character important in scriptwriting?
6. Write a script from an image.
7. Write a script from a prose narrative.
	1. **Learning Extensions:**
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* Fernando, Stany. *Screenwriting: A Beginners Guide*.
* Muszynski, Michael. *Scriptwriting Format*. San José State University Writing Center. <https://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/docs/handouts/Scriptwriting%20Format.pdf> . Web. Accessed on 21 June 2023.
* Velikovsky, J.T. *A Guide to Feature Film Writing: A Screenwriter’s Workbook*. [http://www.tlu.ee/~rajaleid/montaazh/x\*Screenwriting%20-%20J%20T%20Velikovsky.pdf](http://www.tlu.ee/~rajaleid/montaazh/x%2AScreenwriting%20-%20J%20T%20Velikovsky.pdf) . Web. Accessed on 21 June 2023.