

Storytelling Writing

2024

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Writing with purpose

After you have formed your idea and completed research, it's time to focus on the narrative and structure of your story. Before you start writing, identify and write down a sentence or two that identifies exactly what you're trying to say in your story. This will be your focus statement. Everything that follows should support this statement.

It's different for television!

- Be concise!
- Use conversational language.
- Include factual information.
- Check for proper grammar.
- Read out loud to hear how it sounds. Revise as many times as needed.

Watch out for...

- Avoid jargon, clichés and slang. Your audience may not be aware of these.
- Excessive statistics as too many of these can confuse and water down the impact of your story.
- Careless use of personal pronouns can come across as being impersonal and create a disingenuous experience for the audience.
- Backwards attribution requires careful planning and pacing to ensure clarity for your audience.
- Avoid gender or race-specific language.
- Use of abbreviations.
- Avoid "Poison" words. These are generally words or phrases that can negatively impact the clarity and impact of the narrative.

Styles of scripts

Screenplay.

The basics of a screenplay script format are as follows¹:

- 12-point Courier font size.
- 1.5 inch margin on the left of the page.
- 1 inch margin on the right of the page.

¹ <https://www.studiobinder.com/blog/how-to-write-a-screenplay/>

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EXT. PARK - DAY

Theodore sits on a bench in a park on a rooftop wedged
between tall buildings. There's not really any view besides
the trees in the immediate foreground. People sunbathe and
exercise. He sits, eating a sandwich, his device next to him.
He looks at the device, then out at what she's looking at.

      THEODORE
    What are you doing?

      SAMANTHA
    I'm just sitting here, looking at
    the world and writing a new piece
    of music.

He looks at the world with her for a minute.

      THEODORE
    Can I hear it?
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- 1 inch on the top and bottom of the page.
- Each page should have approximately 55 lines.
- The dialogue block starts 2.5 inches from the left side of the page.
- Character names must have uppercase letters and be positioned starting 3.7 inches from the left side of the page.
- Page numbers are positioned in the top right corner with a 0.5-inch margin from the top of the page. The first page shall not be numbered, and each number is followed by a period.

Two-column audio/video script.

The basics of a screenplay script format are as follows:

- 12-point Courier font size.
- One column for all details related to video/visuals such as:
 - Shot composition (Wide shot, Medium shot, Close up, etc)
 - Description of each shot
 - Lower third font
 - Identifies pictures that will be used
- One column for all details related to audio components such as:
 - Music. Including song title or genre
 - Background sounds
 - Sound effects
 - Voiceover
 - Spoken words from interview clips

Visuals	Audio
WS of setting MS of things happening CU of subject	(BG Sound: Sound Effect) (Music: Genre or Song title)
Sequence of character looking at something	VOICE OVER IS USUALLY WRITTEN IN ALL CAPS WHICH IS EASIER TO READ FOR THE NARRATOR IN THE BOOTH.
CHARACTER NAME	“Interview clips are in sentence case in quotation marks.” (BG Sound: “Hey look over there!”)