

## **CADETTE: SCREEN WRITER**

Hey Girl Scout! When it thrills, makes you laugh, or has a fantastic twist, a movie or TV show can seem like magic. And a great show starts with a great script. Screenwriters write scripts meant to be filmed. In this badge, put all your viewing experience to good use – let it inspire you as you try your hand at writing for the big or small screen. When you have earned this badge, you will know how you to create a screenplay for a show or movie.

### **Step 1: Decide what makes a good script good**

1. In this step, think about the movie or television shows you love most. Then examine them for clues as to what makes them work. Look beyond the actors, and focus instead on the characters' words, the scenery changes, and the situations the screenwriter puts the characters through – and how all three elements work together.
2. Brainstorm and write down your thoughts.

Supplies:

1. Paper
2. Pen/pencil

### **Step 2: Come up with an idea for a story**

1. Most tales have a beginning that introduces the situation, a middle that builds on the story until it reaches a climax, and an ending that shows how everything turns out. Before you can write any of these pieces, you need a basic idea to build your script around.
2. To do this, find 6 index cards or small pieces of paper. On three of them, write down an idea for a character. Examples could be a coffee barista, an undiscovered singing sensation, a grumpy older man, etc. On the other three, write down an idea for a situation or setting. Examples could be taking a driving test, playing in a basketball tournament, getting lost in a foreign country, etc.
3. Shuffle the cards or pieces of paper in their piles and turn over one from each pile. Once you turn them over, come up with a short story for the character in the situation that has been given.

Supplies:

1. Index cards or small pieces of paper
2. Pen/pencil

### **Step 3: Get to know your characters**

1. Whatever your story idea, you'll need a protagonist and an antagonist. A protagonist is the main character, good or bad. Their story moves the action along. The antagonist is the person or situation who gets in the way of the protagonist's dreams or schemes. Some protagonists, like Wonder Woman, have a new antagonist with each adventure. And some antagonists are nonhuman, such as diseases, bad habits, or natural disasters.
2. You will come up with 1 protagonist and 1 antagonist that could be used in a future story. These characters or things can be inspired by people you know, characters you see on a television show or movie, or something you create in your mind. Sketch what these protagonists and antagonists will look like, what the character wants to happen in the story, and at least 3 distinguishing details about them.

Supplies:

1. Blank paper

2. Pencils/Markers

#### **Step 4: Build the plot**

1. You have thought about story ideas and possible characters. Now you need a plot! A plot is an outline of the situations your protagonist will face. A protagonist's circumstances generally grow more dire as the story unfolds toward the climax, where the protagonist faces their most difficult challenge. Using a character you have created or one you know of from a show, movie, or book, create a plot. The plot can be a twist on one you already know, inspired by something in the news, or one you make up.

Supplies:

1. Blank paper
2. Pen or pencil

#### **Step 5: Write a script!**

1. It's time to put everything together! Screenplays include not only dialogue, but also descriptions of actions that clarify how the scene is intended to look on-screen. Your screenplay can use the characters and situations you have talked about and created today or can be completely new. The screenplay should be at least 6 pages long.
2. Once you are done with your screenplay, share it with the people in your home. Maybe even act it out!

Supplies:

1. Blank paper
2. Pens/pencils