



Art Sphere Inc.
Transforming Lives Through Art

STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITIES SINCE 1998

CREATIVE WRITING STYLES & METHODS

for grades: 6th-12th



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CREATING JOURNEYS THROUGH THE ARTS

Follow your creativity and go beyond where the path leads so you can leave a trail to inspire others to express themselves, too!

Preface

We are pleased to present the series *Creating Journeys Through the Arts* to take you on a path to transform everyday materials into art, to explore the intersections of art with nature, literacy, technology, theater, music, mindfulness and STEAM and to learn how to use the arts to express your core values. Throughout this journey, we invite you to reflect on the legacy that can be created through the arts.

How to Use Our Online Materials and This Book

Not everyone learns the same way. Some people are more visual, some more musical, some more mathematical¹. Our lessons include symbols at the top of each page that indicate the different learning styles to be found in each project. By pointing out the different ways that a project can be approached, parents and teachers can guide their children to their individual paths to artistic success and ways to express their unique creative voices. The different learning styles and the symbols used to represent them in this book include:



Literacy and Verbal-Linguistic
(using words effectively)



Recycling and Naturalistic
(responding to nature)



Technology and Logical-Mathematical
(reasoning, calculating)



Health and Intra-personal
(understanding one's own interests, goals)



Theatre and Bodily-Kinesthetic
(using the body effectively and creatively)



Musical-Rhythmic
(sensitivity to rhythm and sound)



Multicultural and Interpersonal
(understanding, interacting with others)

¹ These learning styles are based on Howard Gardner's discussion of types of intelligences. For more detail, see: Howard Gardner, *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (New York: Basic Books, 1983).



The lesson plans are more than just making art objects. They incorporate ideas such as compassion, mindfulness, respect for nature, healthy eating, cooperation, and other ideas for living in a way that contributes to a civil society. The pages are laid out as if you and the class are taking a journey:

- **Your Destination:** summarizes the outcome
- **Travel Kit:** list of materials you will need to make the object
- **On the Path:** ideas and directions for each child to make his/her own object, and ideas for exploring the meaning of each object
- **Group Tour:** how to transform the individual process into an interactive and collaborative group experience
- **Extend your Journey:** vocabulary, helpful references, and links to explore additional ideas

Find ways to express yourself - it's okay to think outside the box!

Knowing that links sometimes become inactive or are changed is beyond our control, and we apologize for the inconvenience. All the referenced links in this book have been checked for accuracy. Please check our blog: (<https://artsphere.org/free-resources/curriculum/>) and other social media channels for more suggestions on creative art projects.

The lessons in this book are written by instructor, **Anthony Mazzoca**. The design and illustrations are by **Blair Nakamoto**.



GLOSSARY

Act A large portion of a play.

Acrostic poem A type of poem where the first letter in every line spells out a word or message if read vertically.

Adapt Changing a work so that it fits into a new setting, genre, or medium.

Alphabet poem A type of poem where every word or line starts with a different letter of the alphabet. The letters of the alphabet do not need to appear in order.

Ballad A poem or song that tells a story in short stanzas.

Beat sheet A list of important events that occur within a story.

Blank verse A type of poem that is written with a precise meter—almost always iambic pentameter—that does not rhyme.

Caption A box of text in a comic or graphic novel that provides narration. It is separate from a speech or thought bubble of a character.

Character A person in a story with distinct personality traits and qualities.

Cinquain A type of poem that is five lines long. The first line only has two syllables, and each line thereafter increases by another two syllables until the final line, which goes back to two syllables.

Climax The highest or most intense point in a story that also serves as a major turning point in the plot.

Comic A medium that expresses ideas through images and other visual information. Typically, the entire story takes several complete comics to reach its conclusion.

Edit Changing or modifying a work in order to make it better in some aspect.

First person A point of view where the story is being told directly from the protagonist's perspective. This can be easily identified by the use of "I" throughout the work. For example, "I went to the mall today."

Free verse A type of poem that does not rhyme or have regular meter.

Graphic novel A stand-alone story told in a comic format.

Haiku A traditional Japanese style of poetry that is always seventeen syllables long, divided into 3 lines in a five-seven-five syllable pattern. They are typically about nature.

Iambic pentameter A line of verse that is ten syllables or five metrical feet long. Each metrical foot is made up of two syllables, one unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable, for example, "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?"

Improv (Improvisation) A form of theater that is entirely unplanned or unscripted and is instead created spontaneously by the performers.

Limerick A humorous five line poem with a rhyme scheme of a-a-b-b-a. The third and fourth lines are typically shorter in length than the others.

Lyrics Words of a song.

Medium The way the story is told. Example: plays, novels, comic books or movies.

Multi camera A type of television show that uses several cameras for filming. Teleplays for this type of show have their own special way of formatting.

Musical A type of play or film where the characters break out into song throughout the story.

GLOSSARY (CONTINUED)

Narrative An account of connected events; a story.

Narrative poetry A type of poetry that tells a story with characters, plot and setting using various poetic techniques.

Novella A prose narrative similar to that of a novel. It is shorter than a novel but longer than a short story.

Panel A section of a page in a comic usually surrounded by a border.

Play A story told on a stage where all of the characters are acted out by real people.

Plot The organized sequence of events that create a story.

Poetry A genre of literature where various writing techniques—such as alliteration, rhyme, and meter—are used to explore complex human thoughts and emotions.

Point of view The perspective from which a story is being told.

Prose Written or spoken language in its most basic form without any set structure associated with it.

Resolution The point in a story where the conflict is worked out.

Rhymed poetry In contrast to blank verse, rhymed poems rhyme by definition, although their scheme varies.

Scene A small story that is part of a much larger narrative.

Screenplay A script for a film.

Second person A point of view that revolves around the use of the pronoun “you” and implies that the reader is the protagonist or some character in the story. It is very rare for this point of view to be used in novels.

Short story A fully developed story that is unique and significantly shorter in length than a novel.

Single camera A type of television show that only uses one camera for filming. Teleplays for this type of show share the same format as screenplays.

Sonnet A type of poem fourteen lines long, ten syllables per line, that follows any formal rhyme scheme.

Splash An image that almost or completely takes up an entire page of a comic.

Spread A single image in a comic or graphic novel that takes up both the left and right pages.

Stanza A grouped set of lines that appear in a poem.

Story Telling an account of real or imaginary people’s events for entertainment purposes.

Syllable Part of a word that contains a singular vowel sound.

Teleplay A script for a television show.

Third person limited A point of view that is told in third person (using he/him, she/her, or they/them pronouns) but sticks closely to a single character, allowing the reader an in depth look into their thoughts and feelings.

Third person omniscient A point of view that is told in third person (using he/him, she/her, or they/them pronouns) and goes into detail about any character’s mind and seeing their thoughts and feelings. This type of narrator has knowledge of everything happening in the story. An example of this is, “She kissed her husband goodbye... not knowing it was for the last time.”

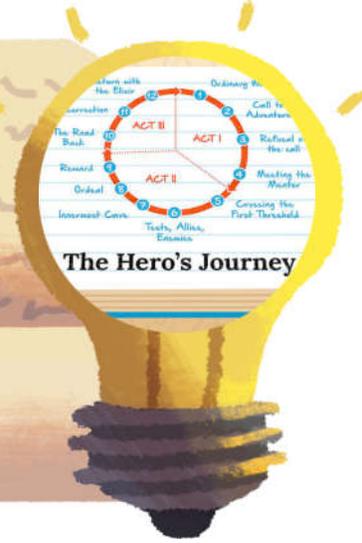
Tier A row of panels in a comic or graphic novel.

Worldbuilding Creating an imaginary world with an extensive and coherent history, geography, wildlife, etc.



CREATING FOR ANYTHING

1. PACING A STORY



Travel Kit:

paper, pencil, or computer

Your Destination:

Every story, regardless of its medium, must be properly paced so it flows naturally. Having the climax in the first act of the story is an example of poor pacing that will make the rest of the narrative long and dull. It is important to always have something going on, but never too much or too little to overwhelm or bore the audience.

On the Path:

Step 1 In order to properly pace a story we must understand all of the components that make up a story. Make a list all of the story elements that you believe need to happen in a story, also known as a beat sheet. One such example could be introducing the main character. Use the two links below on “The Hero’s Journey” and on outlining a story to get an idea of elements and events that you may want to include.

Step 2 Once you have every element listed, put them in order of when you think they should happen in the story.

Step 3 Now that you have a rough story outline, replace the broad descriptions you made in step 1 with more specific descriptions for your own original story. You now have a well-balanced plot outline for your story.

Group Tour:

As a group, closely examine the pacing of a story. It could be an episode of a television show, a film, play, or novel. Once everyone has seen or read it, discuss how the story was paced. What worked, and what did not? Was there something they should have done to improve the story?

Extend the Journey:

Compare your broad outline of story elements with Joseph Campbell's “The Hero’s Journey” and see if there are any major story beats you left out:

<https://blog.reedsy.com/guide/story-structure/heros-journey/>

Learn New Vocabulary: narrative, plot, story

Resources and Visual Aids: This Master Class link specifically mentions novels for tips and different methods on how to outline a story, but it can be applied to any kind of story:

<https://bit.ly/3t7bozd>



CREATING FOR ANYTHING

2. FLESHING OUT A CHARACTER



Travel Kit:

paper, pencil, or computer



Your Destination:

One of the most vital aspects of telling a story is having interesting characters that the audience will care about. You never want a character to be just one thing; you want them to be complex and interesting. This activity will help you develop a character with their own history, goals, and aesthetic.

On the Path:

Step 1 Think about what your character looks like, such as eye color, scars, body type, etc. List all of the character's visual traits until you have a clear image of what they look like.

Step 2 Next, think about why the character looks the way they do. Do they have a specific body type for a job? Did their face change in an accident somehow? Write out the events that happened to the character.

Step 3 Using the character's appearance and history; think about their personality traits and goals. Write down the character's traits, goals, flaws and anything else you deem necessary to your character. For inspiration on more ideas, use the link provided in the "Resources and Visual Aids" section.

Group Tour:

Have everyone in the class act as their created character and mingle with each other. Acting out and interacting with others will give you a better understanding of your own character.

Extend the Journey:

Over the course of the story, it is important for the characters to grow and change as people. The following Master Class article will give helpful and detailed hints on character development throughout a story: <https://bit.ly/34syExn>

Learn New Vocabulary: character

Resources and Visual Aids: More ideas to think about when creating your character: <https://www.well-storied.com/blog/write-stronger-characters>



CREATING FOR ANYTHING

3. MAKING EDITS



Travel Kit:

paper, pencil, highlighter, or computer



Your Destination:

The first draft of a story will never be perfect. It is very likely that you will change and rewrite your story countless times before you are finished. It is important to understand that this may require you to change large portions of your story, rather than making several miniscule changes. This exercise will help you get comfortable with making big changes.

On the Path:

Step 1 Set a timer for ten minutes, and start writing. Do not take time to brainstorm or fix typos, just write and get words down onto the page. Do not take any extended pauses between words or sentences. If you do, add another minute.

Step 2 Look over what you have written, and make grammatical edits. While you are doing so, look for portions that work together and tell a story. Highlight these important portions.

Step 3 Remove any piece of text that is not highlighted. Reflect on how much material you cut off from your first draft. Did removing it make your story worse or better?

Group Tour:

Form into groups of three or four. Have a person write for five minutes, and then pass it on to the next person. Repeat this until everyone has added on to the story. Read the first draft together, and edit it as a team to have a story you are all proud of.

Extend the Journey:

The goal of this lesson is to help you understand that editing is an important part of the creative process, and that everyone, even the most successful writers of all time, need to go back and make edits. The following article highlights many of the changes made to the *Back to the Future* script over the years: <https://bit.ly/3JTCHDd>

Learn New Vocabulary: edit

Resources and Visual Aids: Contemporary writers explain their revision process: <https://lithub.com/12-contemporary-writers-on-how-they-revise/>



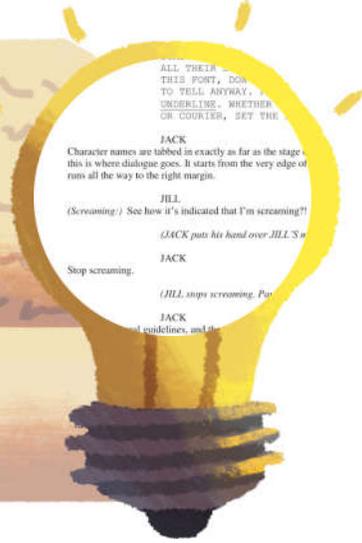
CREATING FOR THE STAGE

4. WRITING SCENES



Travel Kit:

paper, pencil, or computer



Your Destination:

Now that you have a simple understanding of storytelling fundamentals, it is time to write your own scene. Scenes are the building blocks of plays. Each contains a small story that is part of a much larger narrative. An example of playwriting format is provided in the “Resources and Visual Aids” section. As this is most likely your first time writing in this format, do not worry about it too much, and focus on your story.

On the Path:

Step 1 Come up with where the scene will take place. Describe it in enough detail so that readers can clearly see what will be on stage.

Step 2 Brainstorm the plot of the scene and how many characters are going to be in it. Note that this is a small, quick scene, so try to limit your characters to two or three people. A page of a script is equal to roughly a minute, so aim for a five page script.

Step 3 Before writing, know that plays focus mostly on dialogue as opposed to visual action, so try to have engaging character interactions as opposed to vivid visual action.

Step 4 Begin writing out your scene. As this may be your first time writing in this format, do not worry about it too much, and focus on your story. For now, as long as the formatting is consistent, that is perfectly fine.

Group Tour:

Plays are meant to be seen, not read, so cast your play, and have it performed in front of everyone. Reflect on how it was performed. Did the actors read the dialogue the way you had it planned in your head? Was the story clear and easy to understand?

Extend the Journey:

Examine iconic play scenes to figure out what makes them distinct and memorable. Conversely, look at terrible writing scenes, and learn what not to do. Some examples of both can be found in this article: <https://industrialscripts.com/bad-writing/>

Learn New Vocabulary: play, scene

Resources and Visual Aids: Play format:

<https://www.bamboo-nation.com/2009/12/how-to-format-play-or-organizing-your.html>



CREATING FOR THE STAGE

5. WRITING PLAYS



Travel Kit:

paper, pencil, or computer, scene you wrote from lesson #4

Your Destination:

Use your understanding of scenes as building blocks to help form your own play. Starting with the scene you wrote in the last lesson, we are going to expand upon it and turn it into a full length play.

On the Path:

Step 1 Examine the contents of the scene you wrote, and ask yourself questions about it. Can this be expanded upon? Are these characters interesting and engaging enough to keep the audience invested in the story?

Step 2 Based on your answers from step 1, decide if you are going to incorporate your scene into a play as it is, or edit it to make it fit into your play better. Maybe the scene you wrote has nothing to do with your plot but serves as a great way to introduce your characters. If you like, you can also take small moments from the scene and add those in the play.

Step 3 Regardless of how you incorporate your scene, you will need to come up with the major moments in your play, like the climax, and decide why and how they happen. Having reflected on your play, brainstorm these major moments, and write them down.

Step 4 Once the major plot points have happened, start writing in the smaller details, scenes, and moments that will give your play its own unique style and message.

Step 5 Edit the outline you have created until you have a play that you would love to see performed and shared with the world.

Group Tour:

Get into small groups, and share your outlines with each other by giving feedback and highlighting any potential flaws that are present. When giving feedback, try to be as objective and constructive as possible. Saying “your characters are bad” is not as helpful as, “the characters need to be fleshed out more.”

Extend the Journey:

Now that the play is outlined, the next logical step is to begin writing it out. It seems like a lot at first, but if you do it in smaller chunks, a couple pages in a sitting, it will not be as difficult as you may first think. The link to play formatting is, once again, found in the “Resources and Visual Aids” section.

Learn New Vocabulary: climax

Resources and Visual Aids: Play format:

<https://www.bamboo-nation.com/2009/12/how-to-format-play-or-organizing-your.html>



CREATING FOR THE STAGE

6. WRITING MUSICALS



Travel Kit:

paper, pencil, or computer, play outline you wrote from lesson #5

Your Destination:

A musical is a type of play or film that incorporates musical numbers into the narrative. In order for a musical to be successful, the story must still be captivating because if the only thing the audience cared for was the music, they would go to a concert. Putting songs at random points throughout a play will make it destined for disaster. This lesson will not cover how to create the music, but will focus more on the story.

On the Path:

Step 1 Look over the play outline you wrote from the last lesson. Highlight all emotional climaxes that occur, and describe the emotions in the scene.

Step 2 Write out what type of song you think would work best at each one of these emotional climaxes. You can be as descriptive or as vague as you like, as long as you have a clear idea in your head. Make sure to vary the tone of songs. If every song is sad and depressing, the audience will find it stale, and interest in the story will fade.

Step 3 Decide which moments would work better as an emotional climax and which would stay better as a scene. If a song does not develop a character or advance the plot and is just repeating something already said in the play, then it is unnecessary.

Step 4 Now that you have all of your songs selected, write more detail about what you think it would look like played out. This does not mean you need every single step choreographed, but just give an idea to help people see it. Some questions you could answer are: How many people are performing in the song? Are the actors doing a full-on dance routine or dancing out specific actions? Is it a happy song? A ballad?

Group Tour:

Share your revised outline with classmates, and give each other feedback.

Extend the Journey:

If the idea of writing a musical interests you, read more about what it takes to write a successful musical: <https://www.musicals101.com/write.htm>

Learn New Vocabulary: ballad, musical

Resources and Visual Aids: Tips on song type and song placement:
<https://www.musicals101.com/score.htm>



CREATING FOR THE STAGE

7. WRITING SONG LYRICS



Travel Kit:

paper, pencil, or computer, musical outline you wrote from lesson #6



Your Destination:

Modern musicals require songs to advance the plot or develop character. You need to be able to convey information to the audience effectively through the lyrics in the song. Writing lyrics without any accompanying music is too daunting of a task for a first exercise, so we are going to change the lyrics to an existing song instead.

On the Path:

Step 1 Select a song you enjoy from any musical. For the purposes of this activity, it MUST be from a musical.

Step 2 Write or print out all the lyrics, and examine them. The song has a flow that you need to understand so the lyrics come out right. How many syllables are in a line? What is the pacing of the line?

Step 3 Choose which song idea from your outline matches the tone of the song you selected. Brainstorm ideas you want the song to have or maybe a couple simple words or phrases you want included.

Step 4 Go through, and begin replacing the lyrics of the song. You do not have to create each line in chronological order. If you get stuck, try jumping to a different part of the song, and keep going.

Group Tour:

Give your friends the set of lyrics and play the song for them. Do your new lyrics work with the flow of the original? Do the lyrics and music work well together? Also, you could play an instrumental version of the song, and perform the lyrics yourself.

Extend the Journey:

If the idea of changing someone else's lyrics bothers you, or you simply want to create something all on your own, then try writing song lyrics without music. The following link will provide tips:

<https://www.gemtracks.com/guides/view.php?title=how-to-write-song-lyrics-without-music&id=175>

Learn New Vocabulary: lyrics

Resources and Visual Aids: An article about the best Broadway songs ever written and what makes them so special: <https://www.timeout.com/newyork/theater/best-broadway-songs-of-all-time>



CREATING FOR THE STAGE

8. IMPROVISATIONAL (IMPROV) STORYTELLING



Travel Kit:
a scarf (optional)



Your Destination:

Many of the previous lessons and activities involved extensive amounts of brainstorming. However, improv is different in that everything that happens is thought up on the spot. Since improv is so spontaneous, it is difficult to teach someone how to let go and do whatever comes to mind. Instead, each of the following steps is a different improv game you can play.

On the Path:

Step 1 Foreign Film Dub – Get into groups of four. Two people act out a scene speaking in complete gibberish, while the other two translate what they say. The actors should use exaggerated body movements to help the translators. When the scene is done, switch roles.

Step 2 Actor Switch – Get into groups of three, and come up with a situation and characters. At some point in the scene, the teacher, or someone previously selected to do so, calls out “Switch!” and the group has to swap characters and keep the scene going.

Step 3 Back to the Future – Get into groups of two or four, and spend a couple of minutes coming up with a scene. Then, the audience gets to decide if they want to see what comes after or before the scene that was described, and the group has to act out whichever they picked.

Group Tour:

Create your own improv game to play. It can be based on any of the previously mentioned games or something entirely new and original. Shout out any idea you have. You can use a scarf to represent climate, wardrobe and many other environments.

Extend the Journey:

Improv requires a person to be creative and brave, which are tools that are necessary for any writer. Use the provided link for more improv games to try:

<https://funattic.com/improv-games/>

Learn New Vocabulary: improv

Resources and Visual Aids: An article that has several improv acting tips:

<https://takelessons.com/blog/improv-acting-tips>



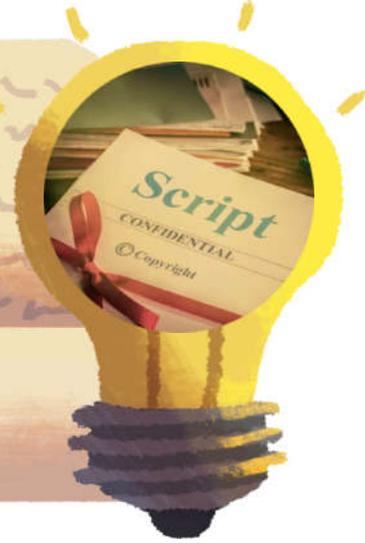
CREATING FOR THE SCREEN

9. WRITING SCREENPLAYS



Travel Kit:

paper, pencil, or computer



Your Destination:

A screenplay is the basis for what eventually becomes a movie. Like a play, it has its own unique structure and formatting. A screenplay is typically told in a three act structure where the first act introduces the characters and starts the plot, the second act goes into more depth and contains the climax, and the third act has the resolution and conclusion.

On the Path:

Step 1 List all of the characters you want to appear in the story and what they are like. This may help inspire actions later on.

Step 2 List the major story beats like the climax, resolution and the end of the first act. These moments are the most memorable in your play as they have the most drama within them. For more suggestions on important beats to include, refer to the link provided in the "Resources and Visual Aids" section.

Step 3 Add several smaller beats throughout to make the progression of the story clear and concise. Continue until you have a clear understanding of your characters' world, and you feel your story is complete.

Group Tour:

Share your work with someone else, and ask them to critique your work. What ideas do they have for you? What did they like best, and what did they like least?

Extend the Journey:

Now that you have your story planned out, you may want to write it out fully. Screenplay formatting is very specific and requires you to follow its rules precisely. Here is a link that goes into great detail on screenplay formatting as well as an example screenplay:

<https://www.studiobinder.com/blog/brilliant-script-screenplay-format/>

Learn New Vocabulary: act, beat sheet, screenplay, resolution

Resources and Visual Aids: Detailed explanation on how to write a beat sheet:

<https://industrialscripts.com/beat-sheet/>



CREATING FOR THE SCREEN

10. WRITING TELEPLAYS



Travel Kit:

paper, pencil, or computer



Your Destination:

Television shows are made in one of two styles, single-cam or multi-cam. When writing for a multi-camera show, it is important to list all the characters present in a scene at the beginning, so crew members know how many cameras they need for the scene. A visual example of multi-cam format, along with an article explaining its differences from single-cam, is provided in the “Resources and Visual Aids” section. Single-cam has the same formatting style as a screenplay. An example of this format is provided in the “Extend the Journey” section of the previous lesson.

On the Path:

Step 1 Think of your favorite television shows, then ask yourself if you understand the characters well in terms of their personality, wants, or needs.

Step 2 Select the show you want to write for, and create an original episode. Brainstorm, write a beat sheet, or simply start writing. Use whichever method works best for your creative process.

Step 3 Alternatively, if the idea of creating an original episode is not enjoyable, think about an episode of your show that you disliked for whatever reason. Rewrite it, and make it something better.

Group Tour:

Form a group, and compare the revised episode with the original. Ask the group if they thought your changes improved the script. Why or why not? If you wrote an original script, watch an episode of the show as a group, and see if your group could see your script being turned into an episode. Why or why not?

Extend the Journey:

When it comes to writing, it is important to read and see other people’s work to learn what works and what does not. The following link has tips for writing a teleplay as well as examples from various popular television shows that you can read for free:

<https://www.studiobinder.com/blog/what-is-a-teleplay/>

Learn New Vocabulary: multi-camera, single camera, teleplay

Resources and Visual Aids: Single camera versus multi camera:

<https://screencraft.org/2016/06/21/differences-single-camera-multi-camera-tv-pilot-scripts/>

Fifty TV scripts free to download: <https://www.scriptreaderpro.com/best-tv-scripts/>



CREATING FOR THE STAGE OR SCREEN

11. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PLAYS AND SCREENPLAYS



Travel Kit:

paper, pencil, or computer, a play, a film adaptation of that same play

Your Destination:

Stage plays and screenplays are similar storytelling mediums with fundamental differences at their core. For example, screenplays place a much higher emphasis on visual storytelling than a stage play does. There are many differences between the two mediums that may not seem obvious, unless you examine them closely. To develop a better understanding of the mediums, you will do just that. If you are not familiar with any stories with both film and play adaptations, then use the link provided in the "Resources and Visual Aids" section to see several options.

On the Path:

Step 1 Select a play that has a film adaptation, and read it closely. This does not mean you have to take notes while you read it, but you have to pay close attention to the details of the scenes and the narrative.

Step 2 After finishing the play, watch the film adaptation. This does not need to happen immediately after finishing the play but soon enough so that at least a majority of the details are still present in your mind. As you watch the film, write down all of the changes that you notice.

Step 3 Once you have finished watching the film, reflect on the alterations that were made to the original story. Ask yourself why these changes were made. How do they better serve the story?

Group Tour:

After your personal reflection, hold a discussion with a class or small group. This has multiple benefits, like allowing you to have different viewpoints on the changes that were made, as well as having other group members point out changes that you may not have noticed.

Extend the Journey:

Come up with a rough story idea for a scene. Then, write that scene in both playwriting and screenwriting format. Analyze your writing just like you did with the play and movie. By taking part in the process yourself, you will deepen your understanding of some of the fundamental differences between plays and screenplays.

Learn New Vocabulary: medium

Resources and Visual Aids: Free play scripts online: <http://ericcoble.com/free-scripts/>
<https://www.ranker.com/list/best-movies-based-on-plays/ranker-film>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_plays_adapted_into_feature_films
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Films_adapted_into_plays
<https://thedramateacher.com/100s-of-free-play-scripts-for-drama-students/>
<https://freedrama.net/short.html>

Movies based on plays:

<https://www.ranker.com/list/best-movies-based-on-plays/ranker-film>



CREATING FOR THE STAGE OR SCREEN

12. ADAPTING STORIES TO A DIFFERENT MEDIUM



Travel Kit:

paper, pencil, or computer, a piece of source material (play, book, film, etc.)



Your Destination:

Different storytelling mediums like plays, novels, or movies, all suit different formats or media. For example, certain novels contain a large amount of worldbuilding that would be difficult or impossible to convey in a play. It is important to know that not every story works for every medium. An article detailing the benefits of several media can be found in the "Resources and Visual Aids" section should you need it.

On the Path:

Step 1 Select a story that you believe would work better in a different medium. Since we are adapting a story, you are allowed to change it and turn it into something new, so do not feel tied down to the original material. However, try keeping the story's overall message the same.

Step 2 Look at the original story, and select what you believe would work in your adaptation and what needs to change. This can include scene location, dialogue, characters, or anything at all. There may be things you like about the source material that need to change because of the medium, so keep that in mind as well.

Step 3 Now that you have narrowed down all the things that need to be changed, work on how you will revise them. Do scenes and story beats need to be rewritten or cut entirely? Are there characters and situations that are too old-fashioned to be enjoyable? Does the dialogue in the story need to change? Does anything need to be added?

Step 4 Write out and describe all of your alterations in full detail.

Group Tour:

Share your changes with classmates and/or friends, and learn their opinion on your alterations, then have everyone give each other feedback on their respective changes.

Extend the Journey:

All of the changes have been included, and the rest of the original story serves as an outline, so now you are able to write your adapted story in its new medium. Make sure you are utilizing the medium you are working with to the best of your ability.

Learn New Vocabulary: adapt

Resources and Visual Aids: Article on the benefits of several mediums:
<https://www.jacquelynebanks.com/storytelling-medium-guest-post/>



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13. WRITING POETRY PART 1



Travel Kit:

paper, pencil, or computer



Your Destination:

Not all forms of writing revolve around telling a story. Poetry is a unique form of writing that has existed for centuries. There are countless types of poetry forms and structures for different purposes. Some are used to illustrate beauty, while others make us laugh. Poetry is a large and complex writing style that cannot be condensed into one lesson. First, look at shorter types of poetry and tips on how to write them if you are stuck. Clear definitions of the following poems can be found in the "Glossary" section.

On the Path:

Step 1 Alphabet poems start each line or word with a different letter of the alphabet and end once all letters are used. Write down all of the letters of the alphabet to keep track of which ones you have used.

Step 2 Cinquains require a set number of syllables present in each line with the shortest being only two syllables long. Try writing about a location that is important to you.

Step 3 Haikus are 3 line poems about nature. Think about your favorite place outdoors, and use it as inspiration for your haiku. Be sure to follow the 5/7/5 syllabic structure in the 3 line format.

Step 4 Limericks are short, 5 line poems that are intended to be humorous. If you are having difficulty coming up with an original joke, try reformatting one you already know into a limerick.

Step 5 Sonnets have strict syllable and rhyme structure that must be followed. If you are struggling with this type of poem, focus on the end of the line, figuring out which words you want to rhyme. Then, fill in the rest of the sentence before it.

Group Tour:

Have every person in your class or group write a poem about the same subject. For example, the subject could be space, a forest, a beach, or whatever the group decides. The type of poem does not have to be the same among all group members, but the subject does. After everyone has written their poem, create a collage and put them all together, so you have a group memento.

Extend the Journey:

Poetry is an interesting form of writing that is unlike anything else discussed in this book. To deepen your understanding of poetry and its unique traits, read the following article:
<https://penandthepad.com/poetry-different-other-literature-12271986.html>

Learn New Vocabulary: alphabet poem, cinquain, haiku, limerick, poetry, sonnet, syllable

Resources and Visual Aids: Limerick example:

<https://www.rd.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/limerick5.jpg?resize=696,464>



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14. WRITING POETRY PART 2



Travel Kit:

paper, pencil, or computer



Your Destination:

This is a continuation of the previous lesson with a focus on longer forms of poetry that go on for multiple stanzas (see “Glossary” for necessary definitions). If the poetry formats in these two lessons do not appeal to you, a link to more poetry styles can be found in the “Resources and Visual Aids” section.

On the Path:

Step 1 Acrostic poems spell out words using the first letter in each line. So, come up with a subject for a poem, try to make it a smaller word, and spell it out placing one letter at the beginning of each line. Then, write out your poem while incorporating those letters into the lines. If this description is confusing, a link to acrostic poem examples can be found in “Resources and Visual Aids” below.

Step 2 In rhymed poetry, the subject can be whatever you want, such as a story, a location, an emotion, or something entirely different. The important thing is that it rhymes, so think of words that rhyme to use in your poem.

Step 3 Blank verse is a poetry form that requires strict usage of iambic pentameter. If you are struggling, say your lines out loud to yourself, and pay attention to where you are stressing your syllables. Maintaining proper flow is the most important thing here.

Step 4 Free verse, unlike the other types of poetry listed, has no set structure or requirements, so use this type of poem to challenge your creativity and explore unique ways of crafting a poem.

Step 5 Narrative poetry tells a story using any poetic technique available to you. This includes rhyme, meter or alliteration to get your point across. If you are having trouble, divide your poem into stanzas, and think of each stanza as an act of your story.

Group Tour:

After everyone has written their poems, host a poetry slam, and have everyone read their poems out loud. Note how each poem is spoken aloud versus how you hear it in your head.

Extend the Journey:

To challenge yourself, try blending a type of poetry from this section and the previous one into a single poem. An example of this could be an acrostic sonnet.

Learn New Vocabulary: acrostic poem, blank verse, free verse, iambic pentameter, narrative poetry, rhymed poetry, stanza

Resources and Visual Aids: Poetry ideas:

<https://www.writersdigest.com/write-better-poetry/list-of-50-poetic-forms-for-poets>

Acrostic poem examples: <https://examples.yourdictionary.com/acrostic-poem-examples.html>



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15. WRITING SHORT STORIES



Travel Kit:

paper, pencil, or computer



Your Destination:

Short stories are a unique medium that differ from everything we have seen so far. The main difference is that a short story is written in prose and not in set formats like plays or screenplays. A trademark of short stories is a twist ending. For this activity, we are going to write a short story with a twist.

On the Path:

Step 1 Brainstorm an idea for your story. Do not worry about the twist yet; just think of a good story. It should be much shorter and simpler than your play and script ideas, since there is much less space to work with in this medium.

Step 2 After you have fully thought out your idea, completely scrap the ending, or your “third act,” of this story. Come up with something completely different that nobody would expect to happen.

Step 3 Look over the earlier parts of your story, and edit them to set up your new twist ending. Plant the seeds so the reader will be able to pick up on them during a second read-through.

Step 4 Read over your entire story, and check for any logical gaps. Since you mixed things together, you may see elements that are not relevant anymore. Remove these, and edit your story until you believe it is finished.

Group Tour:

Present your stories to each other, but have everyone stop reading it before the twist is revealed (make sure to mark where to stop in the story). Have all of the members of the group guess what the twist will be. You can also turn it into a game by giving each person who guesses correctly a point.

Extend the Journey:

Read more short stories here to develop a better understanding of how people craft them:
<https://examples.yourdictionary.com/examples-of-short-stories.html>

Learn New Vocabulary: prose, short story

Resources and Visual Aids: Article on how to write a short story:
<https://grammar.yourdictionary.com/grammar/writing/get-creative-how-to-write-a-short-story.html>



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16. WRITING NOVELS



Travel Kit:

paper, pencil, or computer



Your Destination:

Novels are the longest form of storytelling that will be discussed in this book. Novels are another form of prose that have a much longer length than a short story or novella. Novels can be about anything and written almost any way you want, which makes them very broad and, as such, very daunting to write. The next several lessons will help break down the novel creation process and highlight its strengths.

On the Path:

Step 1 Novels are typically made up of many side stories as well as an overarching narrative. To think about those storylines, select what genre your novel will be to help isolate your ideas to a specific theme and setting.

Step 2 A novel is very long and requires a lot of investment from the reader, so it is vital for your story to be able to hold their attention until you reach your conclusion. You need a story with big stakes and a lot on the line. Brainstorm a story idea that can take up an entire novel and will keep your readers interested.

Step 3 Even if the overarching narrative is well done, your characters need to be engaging. Reading a novel filled with characters you do not care for is not enjoyable, so brainstorm ideas for a lot of characters you can choose from.

Step 4 Character interaction throughout your story is great to have, and this is where your side stories can come into play. Come up with side stories where these characters have a reason for helping (or hurting) each other that makes sense and is engaging. Then, think how you will incorporate these smaller stories into the overarching narrative.

Group Tour:

Pitch your novel idea to your group or classmates who will be acting as members of a pretend publishing company. Have them ask questions about your story, and see how many people are interested in your novel. Remember, it is still in the early stages of development, so if people are not interested, it is okay. The real point of this activity is to get you thinking about things you may not have considered before.

Extend the Journey:

Read the following article by a bestselling author for further advice on how to craft an amazing novel: <https://jerryjenkins.com/how-to-write-a-novel/>

Learn New Vocabulary: novel, novella

Resources and Visual Aids: An article giving tips on how to find inspiration for your next story: <https://nybookeditors.com/2019/06/how-to-find-inspiration-and-motivation-to-write-your-next-book/>



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17. POINT OF VIEW



Travel Kit:

paper, pencil, or computer, your outline from lesson #16



Your Destination:

Choosing who is telling the story affects many different parts of the narrative that you may not realize at the beginning of writing a novel. That point of view can change the words you use, the pacing of the story, what information you make known to the reader, and more. This activity will have you write from several different points of view to get a feel for all of them and help you decide which one you want to use for your novel.

On the Path:

Step 1 For the following activity, select a scene you want to see written out from your novel outline (lesson #16). It does not matter what scene or moment you pick, but it may be easier if you select a portion that is well thought out. This way, you can focus more on how to present the information as opposed to what actually happens next in the story.

Step 2 Next, write out the scene using the different points of view (first person, second person, third person limited, or third person omniscient; see "Glossary" for definitions of these). Every point of view brings its own positives to the table, so try to lean into them while you are writing. The second person point of view is rarely used for novels and may be difficult to write in, so if it is giving you too much trouble, simply skip over it.

Step 3 After you have written all of the versions of your scene, read them all over, and reflect on which one you would like to use. Which one was the easiest for you to write in? Which is the most engaging to read? Does this point of view present too much or too little information? Ask yourself questions like these, and pick which point of view you think is best.

Group Tour:

Hold a group discussion about the pros and cons of each of the points of view. When is it better to use one over the other? After you discuss, give a brief description of your novel and the point of view you chose and why. Does your group think that is the best option? Why or why not?

Extend the Journey:

After finally deciding on your preferred point of view, try reading a variety of books written in your preferred point of view. It is best to see what published authors have done in different points of view to see what does and does not work, and keep these in mind for your own writing.

Learn New Vocabulary: first person, point of view, second person, third person limited, third person omniscient

Resources and Visual Aids: An article that goes into great detail on the various points of view that someone can write in: <https://bit.ly/31Gpa0B>



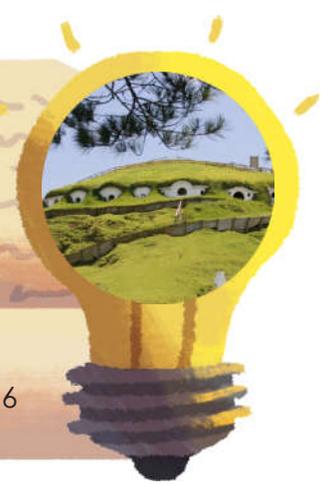
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18. WORLDBUILDING



Travel Kit:

paper, pencil, or computer, your outline from lesson #16



Your Destination:

Novels set in the real world have the advantage of having all of human history to set up their various locations, peoples, and animals. Novels in fictitious settings do not have this luxury. In this fantasy activity, creating your own world that feels lived in with exotic, imagined locales will give your story a unique flavor.

On the Path:

Step 1 Before you can start dreaming up shining cities, beasts, and magic towers, you will need geography. The actual landscape and geography of your world is important and will impact the people and creatures who live there. As you decide how your world looks, make sure it fits your story. It would be odd for a cobblestone castle to appear on an alien planet completely covered in water.

Step 2 Now that you have the geography worked out, think about the creatures and plant life that live there. How have they adapted to the environment you placed them in? Are they a major threat or on the verge of extinction?

Step 3 Add intelligent lifeforms that will appear in your story whether that be humans, elves, or aliens. Determine their relationship to one another and how they interacted before the story begins. Were they at war with each other? Did they unite against a common enemy? Do they know each other exists?

Step 4 Lastly, add life to your cities and towns by having them impacted by the events of the past. This could appear in support groups from a traumatic event or a holiday in celebration of an important occasion from that group's history. This will help your world feel real and lived in.

Group Tour:

Create a travel brochure or poster for you location, and convince members of your group or class to go there on a vacation. If your location is terrifying and dangerous, convince people to send their worst enemies there instead as an alternative.

Extend the Journey:

Read this article that goes into detail about worldbuilding, and deepen your understanding of how to build your world: <https://blog.reedsy.com/worldbuilding-guide/>

Learn New Vocabulary: worldbuilding

Resources and Visual Aids: Examples of great worldbuilding:
<https://literative.com/literary-analysis/5-best-examples-world-building/>



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19. IMAGERY



Travel Kit:

paper, pencil, or computer, one of your story outlines from a previous lesson



Your Destination:

One of the biggest rules in storytelling is “Show, don’t tell,” and we are about to break that rule. Being able to be descriptive and give detail to a scene is vital for writing comic books. Assuming you cannot draw, you need to be able to describe what is happening in the panels so that the artist can replicate that on the page. So, this activity is about being descriptive.

On the Path:

Step 1 For this activity, we are going to create a splash or spread (see “Glossary” for these definitions). These typically happen early on in a story or during a dramatic reveal. Think of a dramatic event or big revelation, such as discovering someone’s secret identity. This event can be from one of your story outlines or from something entirely new.

Step 2 Think about the dramatic revelation playing out in your head as a scene from a movie. Find the most striking image in your mind.

Step 3 Describe the image you see in detail. Who is in the panel, and what they are doing? Make sure to include what the background looks like so it is clear where the scene is taking place. You do not need to describe every person’s outfit or other small details. Describe enough so the artist understands what you want, and trust them to do it.

Step 4 Despite being a visual medium, comic books still have narration and dialogue in the form of captions and speech bubbles. Once your image is written out, write any necessary captions and dialogue seen in the splash. The captions do not need to be long or describe what is in the image. Let the image description (and image if drawn) speak for itself, and use captions if you need to get information across that cannot be found in the image.

Group Tour:

Give your directions to a partner, and see if they are able to draw your splash as accurately as you envisioned it. If something comes out wrong, ask them how you can make it clearer and more understandable. You may want to draw out your splash yourself, but make sure to still give your directions to a partner to get the most out of this exercise. After all, this is a writing exercise meant to improve our writing, and not necessarily artistic, abilities.

Extend the Journey:

If you want to learn how to describe a scene for a novel, rather than a comic, then read this article which details how to incorporate the scene description into the narrative:

<https://jerryjenkins.com/setting-of-a-story/>

Learn New Vocabulary: caption, comic, panel, splash, spread

Resources and Visual Aids: A link to a variety of comic book scripts to help you develop an idea of how to write your descriptions (click on the comic book cover to access that script):

<https://www.scriptsandscribes.com/sample-comic-scripts/>



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20. WRITING COMIC BOOKS AND GRAPHIC NOVELS



Travel Kit:

paper (two sheets), pencil, crayons, colored pencils



Your Destination:

In the previous activity, you worked on describing a striking image that was part of a larger story. Now, you are going to spend time telling a story, rather than creating a single page. You are going to create a short comic that tells a simple story to help adjust to this medium.

On the Path:

Step 1 Get a piece of paper, and fold it in half horizontally. This will become your comic. Open it up, and look at it closely to get an idea of how much space you have.

Step 2 On a separate sheet of paper, plan out your story. This story will only span two pages, so you will want it to be simple, with a quick plot, and not many characters.

Step 3 Once you have the rough idea of your story, begin writing it out in earnest. Think about how many panels will be on a page. How many tiers will you have? Do not forget to describe your cover page.

Step 4 On the back of the comic, add a bunch of horizontal lines a centimeter apart. This will be for others to write feedback on in the “Group Tour” section.

Step 5 Once you have everything written out and finalized, give it to someone to draw, or draw it out yourself. Once you or a partner have finished drawing the comic, you can color it or add small details until you feel it is complete.

Group Tour:

Pass your comic around the group or class. Have people leave comments on the back of the book. Try to keep comments to a single line so multiple people have a chance to provide feedback.

Extend the Journey:

This activity focused on telling a short story using images to help get you used to the idea of working in this format. Once you feel comfortable writing this way, read this article and learn how to plan out your own graphic novel:

<https://blog.reedsy.com/how-to-write-a-graphic-novel/>

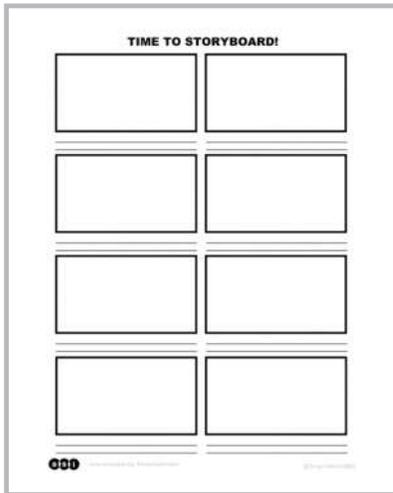
Learn New Vocabulary: graphic novel, panel, tier

Resources and Visual Aids: Comic strip examples:

<https://www.gocomics.com/peanuts/1950/10/03>

APPENDIX

Time to Storyboard Handout



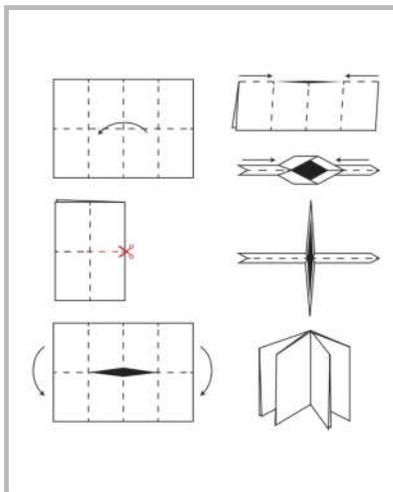
<https://artsphere.org/blog/time-to-storyboard/>

Draw Your Own Comic Handout



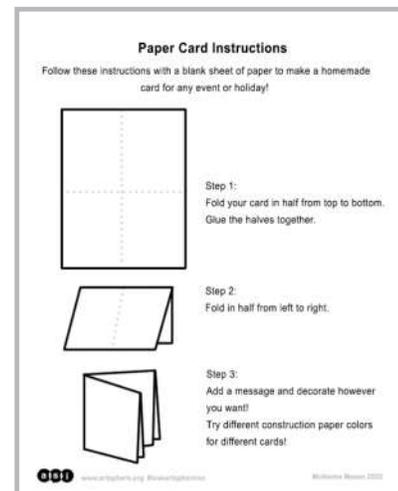
<https://artsphere.org/blog/free-comic-book-day/>

Origami Book Handout



<https://artsphere.org/blog/origami-book-handout/>

Blank Card Template Handout



<https://artsphere.org/blog/blank-card-template-handout/>

Learn more:

<https://artsphere.org/interactive-programs/classes/>

See more free literacy project handouts:

<https://artsphere.org/literacy-through-art-lesson-plans/>

ABOUT US



Art Sphere Inc. (ASI), founded in 1998, provides meaningful free arts programs for underserved populations in an effort to engage the creativity in communities, empower neighborhoods, explore the positives in peoples' lives, and heal the mind, body, and spirit through the arts.

Working with hundreds of volunteers every year and partnering with numerous civic, academic and governmental organizations, our grassroots events help support inner-city neighborhoods. ASI's in-school, after-school, in-person and online workshops lay the framework for the arts to nourish the character and development of youth, open up a new world of social engagement and reinforce the school curriculum.

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