

TV Script terms

- **The Treatment**
- **Synopsis**
- **Loglines**
- **A screenplay**
- **Shooting script**
- **Transcript**

SCRIPTING

Session 9

25th Nov

TV Script terms 1

The Treatment: A treatment condenses the story into a few paragraphs. More dramatic. Create curiosity and enthusiasm Describing the basic elements: leading characters, key scenes, overall storyline, mood, tone and / or genre of the piece, and any themes to be developed or explored.

TV Script terms 2

Synopsis: Much shorter than the average treatment, a page at the most. The main thread, the story that takes audiences through a movie. The main characters and the intended theme.

Loglines: A couple of well-chosen lines to "pitch" a script to prospective buyers.

Script Types

A screenplay is about action "what we see happening" and dialogue, what we hear"

The characters, when first introduced in the screenplay, are described visually.

Keep away from emotion-related descriptions these have to be visual within the end-product.

Shooting script: Once a script has been approved for production, camera directions and notes may be inserted by the Director.

Transcript: A copy of what dialogue finally appeared onscreen.

Screenplay: The Slug Layout

The slug line describes the setting for the scene's action; this consists of the setting (INT or EXT), geographic location (if applicable), general location, and the time of day or night. Usually (read: always) capitalized.

For example:

INT. SERVER ROOM -- CORPORATION -- NIGHT

Light from the monitor bathes our hero's face as the tension in the room grows, his face is expectant, knowing that he is very near the solution. Strewn about the room are cables of every description. Patch panels and antiquated equipment line the ill-lit walls like eerie eggshell-coloured monoliths.

Shooting script

FADE IN

EXT. RUNDOWN ARIZONA NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

The afternoon of a day in late spring. The one-story frame houses have mostly dirt yards. Dogs bark. Somewhere o.c. a mother's voice calls: "Bobby! Time for supper! Wash up!"

Now the **CAMERA TRAVELS UP** a weeded walk, to a set of broken steps, and stops before a torn screen door.

INT. DEXTER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

MRS. DEXTER is a dowdy Caucasian in her 40's with the look of a self-sacrificing missionary about her. A do-gooder worn thin by the years. Beside her, a stone-faced Black lad of 9. His name's Simon, his mood defiant.

Social Worker **MISS HICKS**, standing in front of them, is professional and aloof.

MRS. DEXTER

He's a saint, Miss Hicks. Even if we didn't receive a cent of State's money toward his upkeep, he'd be welcome. He's a joy. A real joy.

She smiles benevolently.

MRS. DEXTER (CONT'D)

(to Miss Hicks)

He's a shy thing, he is.

(to Simon)

Aren't you shy, darlin'? Sure you are.

Syd Field's Paradigm 1

- Field noticed that in a 120-page screenplay, **Act Two was notoriously boring**, and was also twice the length of **Acts One and Three**.
- He also noticed that an important dramatic event usually occurred at the **middle of the picture**, which implied to him that the middle act was actually two acts in one.
- **Plot Points are important structural functions**
- **Opening Image:** The first image in the screenplay should summarise the entire film, especially its tone.
- **Inciting Incident:** Also called the catalyst, this is the point in the story when the Protagonist encounters the problem that will change their life. This is when the detective is assigned the case, where Boy meets Girl, and where the Comic Hero gets fired from his cushy job, forcing him into comic circumstances

Syd Field's Paradigm 2

- **Turning Point 1:** The last scene in Act One, Turning Point One is a surprising development that radically changes the Protagonist's life, and forces him to confront the Opponent.
- **Pinch 1:** A reminder scene at about 3/8 the way through the script that brings up the central conflict of the drama, reminding us of the overall conflict. For example, in Star Wars, Pinch 1 is the Stormtroopers attacking the Millennium Falcon in Mos Eisley, reminding us that the Empire is after the stolen plans to the Death Star that R2-D2 is carrying and that Luke and Ben Kenobi are trying to get to the Rebel Alliance (the main conflict).
- **Midpoint:** An important scene in the middle of the script, often a reversal of fortune or revelation that changes the direction of the story. Field suggests that driving the story towards the Midpoint keeps the second act from sagging.

Syd Field's Paradigm 3

- **Pinch 2:** Another reminder about the central **conflict. I**
- **Turning Point 2:** A dramatic reversal that ends Act 2 and begins Act 3, which is about confrontation and resolution.
- **Showdown:** About midway through Act 3, the Protagonist will confront the Main Problem of the story and either overcome it, or come to a tragic end.
- **Resolution:** The issues of the story are resolved.
- **Tag:** An epilogue, tying up the loose ends of the story, giving the audience closure. This is also known as denouement. In general, films in recent decades have had longer denouements than films made in the 1970s or earlier.

Resources

- The Times Film School <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/filmschool>
- The Guardian Guide to Making Video (supplement)
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/guides>
- On Camera : Essential Know-how for Programme-makers
(Paperback) by Harris Watts (Author), Bryan Reading (Illustrator)
- Writer's blog <http://rillysuper.blogspot.com/>
- Screenwriter magazine www.scriptwritermagazine.com
- Slug Line <http://www.storiesense.com/format/slugs.htm>