

SCRIPTING SHORT FILMS

“To be a person is to have a story to tell.”
— Isak Dinesen

Stories are Powerful

They...

- Make it memorable
- Make it meaningful
- Build connections



Batman (War Child)



Audience



- Who are you telling your story to?
- What is the best medium for your audience?
- What is the best tone and approach?

Goal

- What do you want to persuade your audience to do or believe?
- What problem do you want to address?
- What change do you hope to see?





Point of View

Through whose eyes are we experiencing
the event or story?

Theme

- What is the meaning of your story?
- What is your message?



Characters



Main Character

- External Goal and Internal Flaw
- Character Arc

Secondary Characters

- Create conflict (Antagonists)
- Push the action forward (Catalyst Characters)
- Explore your theme

Conflict

Person vs. Person

Person vs. Self

Person vs. Society

Person vs. Nature

Person vs. Technology



Story Structure

Beginning

Middle

End

Introduce characters
& setting

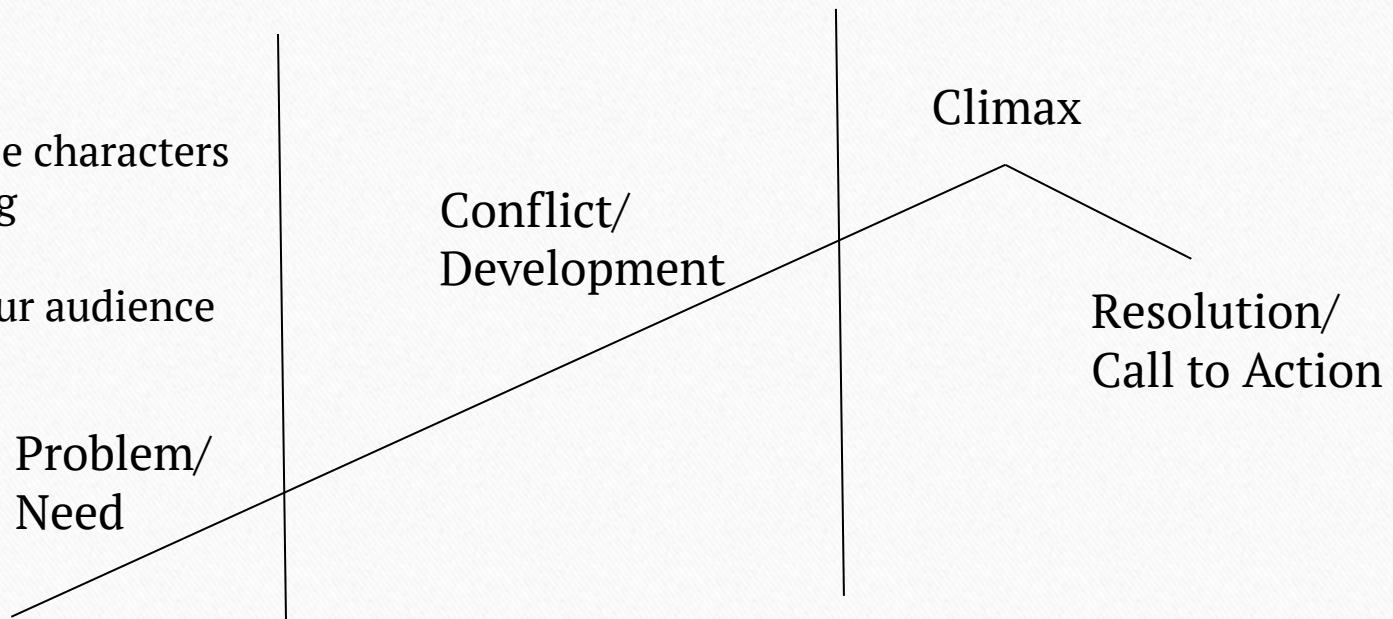
Hook your audience

Problem/
Need

Conflict/
Development

Climax

Resolution/
Call to Action



DEVELOPING YOUR SCRIPT

“The script is the blueprint to the production.”

Choose Your Story

- Which story are you most passionate about?
- Which story best speaks to your audience and accomplishes your goal?
- Which story best lends itself to being filmed?



Research Your Story



- Explore the background and context of your story.
- Visit (either in person or online) the setting and people of your story.
- “Pre-Interview” those you may feature in your project.

Structure Your Story

Beginning

Middle

End

Hook your audience

Conflict/
Development

Climax

Resolution/
Call to Action

Problem/
Need



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graph LR; subgraph Beginning; A[Hook your audience]; B[Problem/Need]; end; subgraph Middle; C[Conflict/Development]; end; subgraph End; D[Climax]; E[Resolution/Call to Action]; end; B --> C; C --> D; D --> E;
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Hone Your Story

- Write a synopsis/treatment of your story.
- Revise your treatment based on feedback.

“Writing is a marathon, not a sprint.”

— Robert McKee



Script Your Story

Dramatic Script

FADE IN:

EXT. EDMONTON, CANADA - ESTABLISHING - DAY

WE DRIVE BY a synagogue, a mosque, a church.

JACQUELINE ISAAC (V.O.)
An overwhelming majority of people
worldwide identify with a religious
faith.

INT. UBER - DAY

LAYLA, 16, a pensive Arab girl in an oversized sweatshirt and
baggy pants, gazes out the car window at her new home.

JACQUELINE ISAAC (V.O.)
Eighty-four percent, and this
figure is growing.

INT. INTERVIEW SET - DAY

SUPER: "JACQUELINE ISAAC -- INTERNATIONAL LAWYER, ADVOCATE"

JACQUELINE ISAAC
With so many in the world
affiliated with a religious faith,
it's clear that violating the free
practice of our beliefs is
counterproductive, even
destructive.

Script Your Story

Audio	Visual
This is Bob. Bob is a home sharing host	Bob standing in front of his house, waving to the viewer, smiling, proud of his home
This is Bob's house...	Wide shot of Bob waving in front of his house.
his neighborhood...	Wide shot looking at a beautiful street. Bob on sidewalk waving to camera
his favorite coffee shop..	Bob walks out of a coffee shop
and that view overlooking the city.	Scenic view of city
Bob loves his city	pan or cut to reverse, Medium CU of Bob taking in the view, smiling, breathes in the fresh air
As a homesharing host, Bob's had a few guests	Show a few of the guests all together...In front of the house
actually...a lot of guests.	Pan out to all of the guests
They...ALWAYS got lost	Couple with map, lost

Audio/Visual Script

Storyboard Your Story

'How to Film' storyboard part1



1. Wide shot of both Sarah and Callum illustrating where they are and what the film is about
Props: Megaphone, Clapper board



2. Close-up of Sarah speaking directly to camera
Script: Sarah
'One thing you must remember!...'



3. Low angle camera pointing up at Callum
Props: Moustache, Paintbrush
Script: Callum
'Oops! Sarah is right...'



4. Close up of Sarah holding photograph









5. Camera zooms out to a wide shot showing Sarah speaking about using photographs to plan your storyboard.



6. Over shoulder shot of Callum pointing to drawings of different shots that you could try filming.

Storyboard Your Story

Story Board					
Pathways to Peace: A Real-life Tale of a Human Rights Supporter from a Third World Country					
Scene No	Dialogue/ Narration	Visuals	Shot Description	Reference Pictures	
Scene No 1	Voiceover: Being a human rights supporter from a third world country, it can feel like a long road , a journey full of tests, trials and hardships.	Protagonist is walking on a long road looking up to the sky with satisfying smile. "Ruth Rukhsana - Advocate" will appear on the screen as the scene opens.	Low angle wide shot. Mid shot of gir's walking Close up of her smile. (Slow Motion)		
Scene No 2	Voiceover: But the thing I have learned is that you have to carefully decide when to be a chain breaker or a silent observer... I chose to be chain breaker.	Protagonist sitting on the study table. Chain Breaking shot	Track out shot while thinking. Video clip from stock footage closely of chains breaking.		
Scene No 3	Interview Dialogue: I am passionate about education because it helps people develop careers that can lead to thriving business economies. My journey of being an advocate started at very young age. Since I come from a background as a religious minority and woman. I knew this journey was going to definitely be challenging.	Ruth talking to the interviewer who is sitting behind the camera. B-roll of church building while talking about minority.	Rule of thirds. Mid Frame		

Review

Audience

Goal

Point of View

Theme

Characters

Conflict

Story Structure

Review

Choose Your Story

Research Your Story

Structure Your Story

Hone Your Story

Script or Storyboard Your Story



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MEDIA

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