

Screen Writer Badge

Purpose: When girls complete this badge, they will know how to create a screenplay for a show or movie.

Step 1: Decide what makes a good script

In this step, think about the movies or TV 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. Watch one movie or three episodes of a show. Take note on at least three of the elements above and how they make things entertaining. Screenplays not only include dialogue, but also descriptions of action that clarify how the scene is intended to look on screen. Try to find the written script for the movie or show you watched. How are those elements written into the script? How are they interpreted once on the screen?

Step 2: Come up with an idea for a story

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 turned out. Before you can write any of these pieces, you need a basic idea to build your script. Think of a story from your own life that could be entertaining enough to turn in to a movie, or take a story you already know like a fairy tale and try to tell it from another character's point of view.

Step 3: Get to know your characters

Whatever your story idea, you'll need a protagonist and an antagonist. Get to know them by writing a one-page description of each. Use one of these choices to add details, from their hobbies to their jobs to their postures and the sound of their voices. Spend some time watching characters in a show or movie. Take notes on what they wear and how they act. You can also exaggerate details about a real person that you know. Maybe someone you know loves the color red, so your character could always be dressed from head to toe in a red velvet track suit.

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Girl Scout Cadettes





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Step 4: Build the plot

You have a story idea and 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 towards the climax, where the protagonist faces their most difficult challenge. Look through some news stories, can you identify the protagonist and antagonist? Sometimes the antagonist is not a person, but an event, obstacle, or disaster such as a hurricane or tornado. Have you ever been watching a movie and thought you knew how things would go, but something happened that surprised you? Think about these types of plot twists and how they change the story.

Step 5: Write a 12-page script—and share it!

It's time to put everything together! Share your 12-page script when you're finished, perhaps by reading it aloud to your family. You can even ask for others to play the different parts. You can even ask your friends to record themselves reading the different parts and edit them together to make your first reading!

Congratulations! You've earned the Screen Writer badge!

