Scriptwriting for Videos

Description of Scriptwriting

The foundation of a digital story is the script. Scriptwriting *gathers and organizes content into a structured text format.* It is important to refer to the instructor's assignment in order to incorporate all the relevant elements into the script. The creative process enters when deciding how to convey the content visually and auditory.

Scriptwriting is an iterative process, meaning the video creator revises throughout.

Scriptwriting Process

Scripting begins with brainstorming. What visuals, sounds, and narration will best meet the assignment requirements? What thoughts and feelings are being invoked with each word choice? Who is the primary audience? Does the audience relate primarily to this content intellectually or emotionally? How can audience interest be created and sustained?

Narration is usually written in first person and conversational in tone. Videos tend to be more casual than an academic essay. Pretend you are explaining your content to a friend.

Storytellers must consider use of sensory details to enhance the viewer's experience. Sensory elements - *sight*, *sound*, *smell*, *touch*, *taste, and awareness of surroundings (proprioception)* - connect the text with emotional experiences. For example, pull up a favorite clip. Play it. Now, play it muted. What do you notice? Was your sensory experience dulled?

Once scriptwriting has gone through the brainstorm and sensory process, it's time to incorporate new ideas into the original script while keeping it aligned with the assignment expectations. Before filming or recording narration, revise the script by imagining what to film and record to make the digital story a full sensory experience.
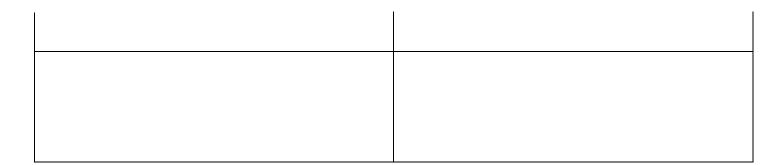
Production Report Template

Like written essays and PowerPoint projects, digital stories are better produced when a plan of action is written up. This is where a *Production Report* can help organize your ideas. Below is a template as well as an example of how a *Production Report* can be laid out.

Video Title:

Purpose:

Audience:

Length:

Production Dates:

Due Date:

AUDIO	VISUALS

Script Example

Video Title: "Example Coffee Shop Project" (How does the title prime audience interest?)

Purpose: Advertise the Example Coffee Shop (Why are you making this digital story?)

Audience: College Students, Business Professionals (Who is the intended audience?)

Length: 2-3 Minutes (How long is the digital story intended to be?)

Production Dates: 09/14/20 - 09/18/20 (When do you intend to film & edit your project?)

Due Date: 09/21/20 (What day is your video due?)

AUDIO	VISUALS
(Music, sound effects, and voiceovers)	(Videos, images, and text on screen)
(1) ** Music, Fade in: Guitar strumming **(4) ** Music**, lowered volume: Guitar strumming	** **Video**, multiple: (*Back-to-back videos of café*) **(1)** *Cashier & customer transaction ->* **(2)** *French press pouring ->* **(3)** *Outside, front storefront ->* **(4)** *Table w/ store owner*
** **Voiceover**, Store Owner: **(1)** *"We have been a community staple since 2009. Thanks to consistent service and products."* **(2)** *"When you enter in, you're not in just any coffee shop… "*	** **Video**, multiple: **(1)** *Side of owner* **(2)** *Front-facing owner* **(2)** Customers sipping coffee, talking and smiling

(3) ** Music**, increased volume: Guitar Strumming **(4)** *"you're home."*	
	(4) *Candid of owner drinking coffee/smiling with customer*
** **Voiceover**, store owner: **(1)** *"From lovingly crafted pour overs to cold brewed coffees, we are here to get your day off to a great start."* **(2)** *"All of our baristas have first-hand experience in the roasting process and are skilled in presentation."* **(3)** *"Our coffee shop is our neighborhood gathering spot. We look forward to seeing you soon."* **(4)** ** Music**, fade out: Guitar strumming (3 seconds)	** **Video,** multiple: **(1)** *Menu of coffee beans available* **(1)** *Employee pouring latte art* **(2)** *Employee smiling handing off latte to customer* **(3)** *Zoom-in shot on latte, revealing detailed latte heart* **(4)** ** **Video**, fade out: Fade out to black

Tips

Unless noted in the course instructor's assignment rubric, students should consider writing the script more as a conversation and less like an essay. The *natural flow* of conversation will transition easier into recording.

Pacing - the average person speaks about 125 - 150 words per minute. Knowing this helps plan script length.

Definitions

Audio Elements: These include anything that would be *heard* in your video (ex. music, sound effects, and voiceovers).

Production Report: A plan that organizes the details of your digital project and includes the script as well

Voiceovers: Spoken dialogue that *does not show* the speaker at the same time (this would turn it into an interview or video) (ex. narration).

Visual Elements: These include anything that would be *seen* in your video (ex. pictures, videos, text-on-screen, animations, and transitions).