**Production Portfolio: Idea Development**

Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, the student will:

* start development of the idea for his or her major short film project for this term
* discuss what is the nature of an "IB short film" and what it can and cannot do

The Adventure Begins


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Today you will being a journey that will span several months and will, if you complete it, leave you with a wonderfully crafted short film you can exhibit proudly to your friends, family, and the rest of the world. Who knows? It may even open the door to film school, if that interests you, or even a future job on a professional crew.

The focus of today's lesson is get you started thinking what your short film will be about and how to go about developing ideas that will allow you to show off your skills while also working within the parameters of the IB Film course. This might mean you will not have the absolute freedom you would want in order to create your ideal film. It would be useful to remember your task here is not to create the best possible film you can, but the best possible **IB** film you can. Hopefully, those two will go hand in hand, but if they do not, you might as well put the complaints aside from the start. The parameters are what they are and you need to work within them.

Read the Guide

If you have downloaded a copy of the IB Film Guide, go ahead and open it. If not, head over to the [**Production Office**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week35/35_prod.htm) and grab it from there. Turn to the assessment section and find the rubrics for the Production Portfolio. Make sure you are looking at the ones for Standard Level, since the Higher Level ones involve extra components your course does not include. Read them over now, so you can see how you will be scored.

The Production Portfolio is an [**internal assessment**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week35/35_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) . What this means is, unlike the [**Presentation**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week35/35_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) or the[**Independent Study**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week35/35_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3), your instructor will be assigning marks for your work. Your instructor is then moderated by the IB to make sure he or she is marking consistently and in accordance with the expectations of the course. Your instructor will be guiding your journey in the creation of your short film and will give you helpful feedback and advice along the way.

You will notice your work will be scored as a portfolio, not just a finished film. The portfolio will eventually contain your film, your [**rationale**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week35/35_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) for the film, and a written [**commentary**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week35/35_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) on each stage of the production process, which includes relevant excerpts from any production materials generated as part of the filmmaking.

## Save Everything

It might seem like this will be a huge undertaking. Indeed, it will be. One habit to acquire right away is to save everything. Every scrap of paper you create that is connected to your film should be saved in a safe place. Every candy wrapper where you jot down a quick insight or idea should be kept. Every drawing you draw and every Post-it® you post should be tucked in a folder somewhere. These all become potentially useful evidence for your portfolio at the end of this process.

Obviously, this also means saving digital backups of all your project files, footage, images, and other assets. Save early, save often, save everything. Make archival backups of all your digital assets as well. Better safe than stressed out at the end when everything disappears—because it will.

## Content Restrictions

You have encountered the content restrictions before, but it never hurts to go over them again, especially since some of them may prevent you from developing a certain idea. The exact wording is, of course, in the IB Film Guide itself, so you should read it, since those are the standards to which you will be held. Note, there are restrictions about instructional drug use, pornography and explicit sexuality, and excessive violence and profanity, among others.

You will also note, in several places in the IB Film Guide, you must be the creator of all audio and visual material in the film, or at least have taken part in a substantial creative dialogue with the artists who create assets with you. This is not merely a matter of copyright infringement. Even if you acquire the rights to use something you did not make, you cannot use it. Everything in the film needs to be yours creatively, not just legally. Your instructor can help clarify the rationale behind this, if you need clarification, but the bottom line is quite simple: if you did not make it, do not use it.

These restrictions often mean the films students really want to make are out of the question. Again, your task is to make the best IB film you can, not necessarily that film you always wanted to make.

## Production Role Selection

One of the first things to consider as you start brainstorming possibilities is to settle on which of the five assessed production roles for which you want to be considered: **[writer](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week35/35_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3)**,[**director**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week35/35_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3), [**editor**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week35/35_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3), [**sound designer**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week35/35_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3), or [**cinematographer**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week35/35_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3). You will want to be sure the film idea you choose showcases your talent in that role in the best possible way.

For example, you might have a fantastic idea for a film that has no cuts whatsoever, but is just one long continuous take. It is a great challenge and could make an interesting film, but it would be a terrible showcase for an editor, since there are no edits. A silent film would do a poor job of highlighting the work of a sound designer. A film that is shot with only the available light and a loose, hand-held style does not do a great job of revealing what a cinematographer can do. You get the idea. Choose your role and then build your film idea around really showing what you have learned about your production role.

## Heed the Time Limit

You have a time restricition of no less than four and no longer than five minutes. Failing to adhere to it means failing to meet formal requirements and carries a severe penalty. Consider the time limit right from the start, and choose your idea accordingly. That wonderful three-act structure you learned last year is inappropriate to the short film. Do not make the mistake of trying to compress a character arc that requires two hours to resolve into a four- to five-minute sequence; you will fail. Likewise, you should not just blunder on ahead and figure you can just cut your story down by a minute or two during post-production. This is also a recipe for disaster. You are making a four- to five-minute film. What kind of story can be told well in four to five minutes?

Four- to five-minute stories tend to involve simple reversals and small changes in character rather than life-altering events. A shy guy likes a girl and works up enough courage to ask her out. Short film. A shy guy likes a girl, but she has a boyfriend already and has champagne taste, so our hero goes back to college, earns a degree in business, becomes an entrepreneur, and eventually a caped crimefighter when the girl dies, etc. Feature film. See the difference? Too many student films play like really sped-up feature films, when they should just be simpler stories, told at normal speed.

## Story?

Does it have to be a complete story or could it be a piece of a larger story? It certainly could be just a piece, but the piece should have a sense of completion about it, rather than leaving the audience feeling like nothing got resolved. For instance, a typical **[heist](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week35/35_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3)**film will often have a scene where the crooks race the clock to get the safe open before the guards arrive. The larger film will, of course, develop characters and have planning sessions and set up motivations for why this job matters, but a short film could be just that tension-filled safe opening [**sequence**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week35/35_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3). Just make sure the sequence resolves meaningfully, even if there is still a sense that the story would continue. In other words, we should see if they get the safe open or not.

Does it have to be a story at all? If you consider the rationale behind your other current production task—the filming of a poem—then you should be able to answer that question. A short film can get away with much more than a feature film, which because of length almost has to be a story. However, an audience can sit through something a bit more experimental and [**non-narrative**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week35/35_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3), as long as it is short. A four- to five-minute film is perfect for this kind of experimentation. Nevertheless, you still need to have a solid sense of how your film coheres and why an audience would actually engage. In other words, you cannot just throw anything on the screen and ask an audience to go along for the ride. You need to find a compelling reason. Stories are naturally compelling, but there are other ways, too.

## Common Pitfalls

Over the years, IB Film students have made some brilliant short films. They have also made some films that were...difficult to watch. Here are some of the things you should consider avoiding, while also keeping in mind that for every rule here, there is an example of a student film that breaks the guideline superbly. Proceed with caution.

### [Morning-routine Sequence](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week35/35_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3)

One of the typical pitfalls is the morning-routine sequence. Alarm clock sounds, a character hits the clock, wakes up sleepy, brushes his teeth groggily, gets dressed, and pours a bowl of cereal. One minute—or more—of your precious four to five minutes has been wasted, for little to no story effect whatsoever.

**Solution**: Start the action in the most relevant place for the story you want to tell, just drop it right in the middle of the action. Even the most mundane life can be interesting, if you start the telling at an interesting part.

### [School or Classroom](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week35/35_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3)

Another pitfall is to have everything take place at school. This includes staging scenes in classrooms that are clearly supposed to be somewhere else in the world of the film. Classrooms look like no other rooms in the world and are instantly recognizable. Using them for other locations is evidence of poor planning and shoddy creativity. You also do not want to write stories that only take place at a school. Is school all there is? Is that all you know?

**Solution**: Come up with ideas that fall outside of the school environment.

### [Teenage Cast](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week35/35_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3)

Avoid using students your age to play characters of other ages. Stage makeup might be fine for a stage play, but for a film it just looks bad, and teenage voices do not have the texture and resonance to play age effectively. Casting only teenagers to play all ages just looks cheesy and adds an unintended comic effect. It is sloppy and unprofessional.

**Solution**: Either create a story in which the characters are all teenagers, or make sure you can find actors to play younger and older.

### [Large Cast](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week35/35_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3)

Avoid large casts. Actors lead busy lives and getting everyone to have three or four hours free at the same time, especially during the busy school year, can become virtually impossible. So many production portfolios are doomed because of scheduling nightmares.

**Solution**: Keep your cast small.

### [Film Cliche](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week35/35_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3)

Avoid making the film about not being able to make the film. This is the standard deadline-is-looming, last-ditch effort to turn in a portfolio idea. You might think you are being terribly meta-cinematic and clever. You are not. It is an IB Film cliche.

**Solution**: Just don't do it.

Write What You Know

Use what you know, particularly what you know outside of school, to generate your ideas.

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What inspires (or frustrates) you?

* What gets your mind spinning about what the world has to offer you?
* What are the qualities you admire (or despise) in others?

Strong emotions can lead to great short films. Remember, you do not have to solve all of life's great mysteries. A small insight can do the job. What is it about being on this planet that only you know? Share that.

If you still just cannot get past the writer's block, then ask yourself what are your favorite conventions of your favorite film genre? Can you work around one of those? You can either do this as an homage, as a loving parody, or as a new spin on old conventions.

There are many possibilities for great short films inside you. Now, go find them.

In Two Weeks

In two weeks, you will pitch your film idea to your instructor and possibly even your classmates. Do not wait until the last minute to come up with some good ideas. Our muses can be fickle sometimes and do not arrive precisely when called. Start calling now.

# 37.03 The Pitch

## Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, the student will:

* become acquainted with the practical problems of how to pitch a film idea effectively
* utilize lessons learned in an actual pitch of the idea for his or her term production project

## Industry Context

In the movie business, all over the world, everything starts with an idea. Although it is often the case the [**screenwriter**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week37/37_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) is the one who comes up with the original idea for a film, ideas can actually come from anywhere and from anyone in the production process and even outside of the industry altogether. Sooner or later, however, the initial idea has to be presented to someone. Almost always, this someone is the one who will be expected to pay for the expensive undertaking that is the making of a film. The presenting of an idea is referred to as a [**pitch**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week37/37_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3). You will be presenting your pitch—also known as pitching—as your production assignment for this week.

### **Sub-plot**

If you get a chance, check out [**Robert Altman**](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0000265/)'s film, [**The Player**](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0105151/). Not only is it a great thriller about the making of movies, it also ruthlessly parodies the whole pitching process. Even though Altman's satire is biting, it is still worth noting how intensely the screenwriter tries to get the producer to picture the scene. Pitching can be a performance.

At what stage in the process does an idea get pitched? Actually, that varies. Most new screenwriters do not pitch their ideas until they have a completed [**script**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week37/37_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3). Some established writers can get away with writing a few pages, or even just a [**treatment**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week37/37_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3), or general outline, of the film's plot. Some producers pitch only ideas to their bosses before they get the [**greenlight**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week37/37_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) to start packaging the film. In your case, you will be pitching before you write the script, so your instructor can give you guidance, and to make sure you have a workable film idea. It is a little unusual for a new writer, but it will help the process go a little more smoothly for you.

You should have already come up with an idea for your final short film project, either as part of a crew, or as a solo filmmaker. Now, you simply need to convince your instructor (and your classmates if you choose to make your pitch public) that this idea will turn into a film worth watching.

Read through this entire lesson. Then, record and upload your pitch.

## Professional Attire

Although this is more in the lines of a suggestion than an outright requirement, consider dressing professionally when you record your pitch. What this means is you should wear what you would wear to a serious job interview or audition, in your country. If you were going for the kind of job that people could make into a career, what would you wear?


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This might seem like a silly and superficial suggestion, but it actually is not. When we wear professional attire, we tend to carry ourselves differently; we stand up straighter, use more elevated diction, and behave with dignity and poise. It just happens, whether we think about it or not.

Some students, instead of wearing professional attire, choose to wear the [**costume**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week37/37_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) of one of the main characters in the film idea. Although this would not be an ideal choice for an actual pitch, it can be a viable one for your class pitch. It sends the message you have thought significantly about your film and already have a clear vision about what one aspect—the character design—might be like in the finished film. It also helps your instructor better envision your concept. So, if you would rather dress as a character than put on a tie, you should consider that an acceptable choice.

Dressing up, whether in professional attire or as a character, also sets the tone for this whole process that will occupy you for the next several months. You are about to launch into an amazing adventure of making your own short film, so start it off right by smartening up your outfit. If you do not take your appearance seriously, why would anyone choose to spend so much money and time on your film?

## First Impressions Count

If you have ever been through an audition or a job interview, then you have probably had the sneaking suspicion the director or manager has made their mind up long before the process concludes. In fact, most directors and managers will admit it only takes a few seconds to make up their minds. Why this is the case, is hard to say. Human beings do rely an awful lot on intuition. Whether this is a good or bad thing, is a debate better suited for your Theory of Knowledge class, but the fact remains you need to make the first moments of your pitch count.

### **Sub-plot**

In Hollywood every year, there is a huge gathering of screenwriters and producers called Pitchfest, where hopeful writers pitch their ideas all weekend long in rapid succession. It is a bit like a giant, cinematic, speed-dating session. Every producer there is looking for the next big hit, and every screenwriter hopes their idea is the one. They have 60 seconds to get their concept across before the buzzer rings and they have to move one seat down and do it again. Can you pitch your idea in 60 seconds?

In order to make sure you do not waste precious time fumbling around, you should rehearse your pitch several times before you actually commit to recording it. Imagine there is a great deal of money on the line, and you need to get the [**producer**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week37/37_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) to agree to fund your project, as opposed to the next writer who walks through his door. Just like the first few minutes of a film are designed to hook an [**audience**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week37/37_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) into the world of the film, the first seconds of a pitch establish all the urgency we need to not only want to see this film, but feel we must see it, or miss out on something truly special.

## Instructor as Producer

What you want to do is imagine your instructor as an executive producer at a movie [**studio**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week37/37_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3), someone who is in charge of the money, and who ultimately decides whether or not to greenlight, or approve, your film idea. Even though, by now, you may have developed a good connection to your instructor, try to maintain some professional distance and actually sell your idea. You have to overcome the producer's first line of defense—the automatic no—by being energetic, passionate, charming, and confident.

Set the scene verbally.

* What will the opening [**shots**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week37/37_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) be like?
* How will we be introduced to your main character?
* How will the dramatic situation be revealed in visual terms?
* What propels the action forward and how does it resolve?
* If your film will be [**non-narrative**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week37/37_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3), then what holds it all together?
* What makes the viewer keep watching?
* What makes the viewer care?

These are all questions you will have to answer quickly, clearly, and concisely.

## Done in 60 Seconds

Sixty seconds is all you get. It is the length of a typical trailer. If it takes any longer than that to explain your concept, then chances are it will not work for a short film anyway. Remember, you have a no less than four, no longer than five-minute time limit on the final film, so it should not take longer than 60 seconds to pitch the idea for it.

You do not have to tell the whole story. Think about what trailers do. It is possible to get a strong sense of what the film will be like without revealing everything.

If you still do not believe you can do it, go ahead and try this experiment. Pick one of your favorite films. Pitch it to someone who has never seen it before, as if you were trying to get the film made in the first place. You have no more than 60 seconds. Chances are you can do it. You may not be able to include all your favorite parts in the pitch, but you should definitely be able to get the main thrust of the story across.

One common pitching technique is to come up with a quick one-sentence concept that can be grasped instantaneously. For example, [**Joss Whedon**](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0923736/)'s [***Firefly***](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0303461/) television series could be described, “It is the Wild West, but in outer space.” Sometimes, concepts can be pitched in terms of a mash-up of two other well-known films or known properties. [**Brad Bird**](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0083348/)'s [**The Incredibles**](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0317705/) could be described as “James Bond meets The Fantastic Four." It is actually a fun party game to play with a bunch of friends who love movies, to try and envision a film as the love child of two other films.

You could also think about what the film's [**tagline**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week37/37_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) would be. If the movie poster existed, what would that little sentence underneath the title say?

If you want to bring in [**props**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week37/37_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) as part of your pitch, feel free. Sample [**storyboards**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week37/37_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3)? Go for it. Do whatever you feel will sell the idea best. Just make sure you are done in 60 seconds.

## Getting the Greenlight

When a producer likes an idea, he or she gives it a greenlight. This gets the money flowing so a cast and crew can be assembled, and [**pre-production**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week37/37_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) can begin. In your case, your instructor will be greenlighting your project. If the pitch is good enough, you may get the greenlight right away. However, your instructor might ask you to pitch again, taking some additional feedback into account. Remember, your instructor is an experienced teacher of IB Film, and knows what tends to work for student films, and what leads students into trouble. You would do well to heed this advice.

Once you have been given a greenlight, then go ahead and start hammering out the script. You learned the format last year, and there will be a refresher lesson coming up soon.

## Setting Up and Exporting

There are two main ways you could go about this task. You need to supply a film with both audio and video for your pitch. You could either set up your webcam to record your pitch, or use your camera on a tripod (or other stabilizer). Light the room well enough so you can be seen. Hit that record button, take a deep breath, and pitch away.

If you want, you may trim excess footage off the front and back of the footage, but otherwise you should not do any editing. If you make a mistake, just pause, gather your thoughts and keep going. You could not stop in a live pitch, right? Treat this as if the producer is right there in the room with you.

You may do a noise reduction pass on the audio if you feel it is necessary. Export the film using the proper encoding procedures and you should be ready for upload.

View the rubric and submit your assignment:

# The Pitch Assignment

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Formal Requirements** | **Yes** | **No** |
| Is the finished pitch no more than 60 seconds long? | 1 | 0 |
| Are the opening shots, characters, action, and dramatic situation quickly described? | 1 | 0 |
| Has an explanation of what keeps the viewer watching been described? | 1 | 0 |
| Has an explanation of why the viewer will care been described? | 1 | 0 |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Evaluated Requirements** | **Excellent** | **Good** | **Satisfactory** | **Poor** |
| The pitch provides a clear, concise explanation of the intended film's concept. | 10–9 | 8–6 | 5–3 | 2–0 |
| The pitch quickly engages the interest of the intended audience. | 10–9 | 8–6 | 5–3 | 2–0 |
| The pitch is presented with energy, passion, and confidence. | 10–9 | 8–6 | 5–3 | 2–0 |
| Total points: 34 |

# 40.03 Script Form and First Draft

## Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, the student will:

* evaluate proper industry-standard script format
* utilize script-formatting and pre-production software in creation of a first draft of a short film script

## Brief Review

You learned narrative script format in Module 6 last year, and also had the chance to do some practice with the form. If you have an opportunity, you may want to read the lesson again. We will start this week's lesson with a brief review of the major aspects of the format. Remember, if you are using script formatting [**software**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week40/40_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3), like CeltX, then every feature of the format can be accessed by either selecting "Tab" or "Enter." It is very simple once you get the hang of it, and is designed in such a way that when you are in a creative groove, you do not have to let the formatting slow you down.

## Key Points

* 
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Everything will be in single-spaced [**12-point Courier font**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week40/40_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3).

* Every scene begins with a **[slugline](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week40/40_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3)** or scene heading, which consists of INT. or EXT., where the scene takes place in the world of the film, and the time of day (usually either DAY or NIGHT).
* Use action paragraphs to concisely describe what we see and hear, but nothing else.
* Dialogue will have a character's name on its own line, followed by the dialogue below.
* Brief stage directions will be put in as a [**parenthetical**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week40/40_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3). Longer ones will be in an action paragraph.
* There will always be an extra space between a slugline and an action paragraph, and between an action paragraph and dialogue.
* Important details should be put in all caps. Character names should be in all caps when indicating[**dialogue**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week40/40_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) and when introducing a new character for the first time.
* If a character's dialogue is interrupted by an action paragraph, indicate this with (CONT'D) after the character's name when the dialogue resumes.
* When in doubt about how to format something, just put what you want the audience to see and hear as an action paragraph.

## Sample Page

Just so you can see all the key points at work, view a [**sample page**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week40/40_03_a.htm).

The sample page covers almost all the situations you will encounter when writing the script for your short film. Let's consider a few aspects of the sample before you get to work and start writing.


© 2011 Celtx

Notice how sparse the prose is. Screenwriting is lean and mean. There is no room for flowery language and emotional detail. You have to write only what is seen and heard and that is it. If you are an especially creative writer, this will seem like very barren writing. However if you see the restriction as a challenge, instead, then you can still have some fun with it. It can be a bit like a game of figuring out how clear you can be with as few words as possible. If you can chop a 20-word sentence down to five, do it.

Although you may read scripts from time to time with directions for[**camera moves**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week40/40_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) and [**framing heights**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week40/40_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3), resist this temptation. As a writer, that is not your job. Leave those kinds of decisions to the[**director**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week40/40_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) and [**cinematographer**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week40/40_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3). Also, remember [**actors**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week40/40_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) are artists, too, so even though you may have a very clear vision of how a line should be read, avoid being heavy-handed with your stage directions. Let the actor figure out the delivery. You may be surprised when an actor delivers a line in a much better way than you ever thought it could be.

If you recall last week's discussion of McKee's theory about the turning of charged values, you will probably notice how the sample scene turns.

### **Jump Cut**

See if you can figure it out. Try and express the character's relationship in the sample scene as a pair of charged values, one positive and one negative.

* How does the scene begin?
* Does it turn?
* In what way?

One way to look at the sample scene is in terms of a charged pair of intimacy/isolation. The mother, Janet, wants this farewell moment at the bus station, seeing her daughter off to university, to be close and intimate. Her desire is thwarted by a daughter, who is at first indifferent, and then downright cold. Although the scene is seemingly innocent, there is a clear history between these two people, of not ever quite connecting. When the bus pulls away, leaving Janet alone in an empty parking lot, there is very little hope they will ever be close. Janet moves from intimacy to isolation. The scene turns. Alexis moves from indifference to coldness. The scene turns. Perhaps you expressed the relationship in a different way, and that is fine, too, just as long as you get the idea that in every scene, something has to change.

In every scene, something has to change.

## Getting in Late and Leaving Early

This rule is important for all scenes in all [**narrative**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week40/40_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) films, but especially important for you to remember in light of your no less than four, no longer than five-minute film. For every scene you write, you want to enter the scene at the last possible moment, and leave at the earliest possible moment that still allows you to have the desired emotional or intellectual effect.


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Consider the sample scene again. The scene could have included the two women arriving at the bus station in a car, getting the luggage out, walking to the loading area, and waiting for the bus. The bus could pull in, and then the scene starts as written. In real life, we have to live all those moments, but in film we can cut out all the unnecessary stuff. Trust an audience's intelligence. If they see two women at a bus station, and the driver signals for everyone to get on board, they can infer the rest: the driving, the arrival, the unloading, the walking over, the waiting. What they need to see and hear is the actual farewell itself. That is important. That is where the scene begins.

This rule also applies to the end of the scene. Leave while there are still some questions unanswered. Let the audience do some pondering. In the sample, the scene ends with the bus pulling away, leaving Janet alone. What does she do next? We do not know. We can speculate, and that is part of the enjoyment of the scene, but we do not need to see it.

### **Jump Cut**

Now try something. There is a really good spot earlier in the scene, where we could get out even earlier. See if you can find it. Do not rewrite the scene at all, just cut it earlier. If you need a hint, consider this: the scene turns for Alexis on indifference to coldness. You can make her seem even colder by leaving earlier. Where?

If you picked cutting right after Alexis' line, “Don't worry. I won't call,” then you are getting the idea. If that is the intended effect, then the scene could be trimmed in half and you have just bought yourself another half page to play with, which is priceless. You lose the nice image of Janet alone in the parking lot, however. If you decide you want to keep that, then maybe you could cut after Alexis's cold line and then show the bus pulling away after the cut. Oooo, now it is ice cold.

In fact, this process is often where the [**editor's**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week40/40_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) craft comes to play in [**post-production**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week40/40_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3). An editor might discover the emotional effect of a scene can be intensified by a well-placed trimming of the scene. This collaboration of a variety of artists is what can make film such an amazing art form. However, if you want to make sure the finished film gets close to your original intention when you wrote the script, then you can trim out the unnecessary parts yourself ahead of time.

## Uploading Your Draft

All screenwriting software packages, including CeltX, allow you to convert your script to a PDF (Public Document Format) in order to ensure everyone can read it no matter what software they have. The [**Adobe PDF reader**](http://get.adobe.com/reader/?promoid=DJDVP) is free, and usually comes pre-installed on most modern computers. If you do not know whether or not you have it, odds are you do. It is also easy enough to download and install from the Adobe site.

Head over to the [**Production Office**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week40/40_prod.htm) for final instructions for your draft script assignment.

# 41.03 Script, Draft Two

## Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, the student will:

* analyze feedback on the first draft of the short film script
* create a second draft of the short film script

## The Art of Taking Feedback

Last week, you received feedback from your instructor, and if you were so bold as to share your **[script](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week41/41_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3)**with your classmates, then hopefully you received feedback from them as well. Now, you are faced with the problem every artist faces as he or she develops his or her work: What do I do with the feedback?


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You may have received varying responses to your script. Some people may really like a [**scene**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week41/41_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3); others may hate it. Some may think the [**dialogue**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week41/41_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) is sharp and witty; others label it as crass and obvious. As they say, "There is no accounting for taste." To consider this problem from the perspective of Theory of Knowledge, you have to conclude there is no such thing as "true" feedback. There are only individual perceptions about what is good and what is not, what works and what does not.

Ultimately, the choice to apply feedback, or not apply, to your revision is up to you. Only you truly know your intentions with the script. Only you get to decide what the next draft will have in it.

However, you do not want to get all precious about your script and protect it like some overzealous mother lion. Feedback is coming to you from people who care about your success. They want your film to be good, for your sake, and they are here to help. Only an inexperienced filmmaker would dismiss feedback out of hand. Your instructor and classmates are giving you information about how an [**audience**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week41/41_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) might respond to your characters and scenes. You may think you have written something with crystal clarity, but if the ideas are not coming through as intended, then it is useful to figure out why that is the case.

Consistency of feedback should be a huge warning sign. If several people make the same comment, then that should be the first line of attack for your revision. One person's isolated criticism may be an anomaly; a chorus of criticism indicates a weakness in the script.

Your instructor's feedback should be given special consideration, and not because he or she is going to be marking your work. Your instructor has a tremendous amount of experience in film, in filmmaking, and in the teaching of IB Film. He or she has seen student films that soar to great heights, and ones that crash and burn. Tastes may vary widely, but experience should count for something. If you still decide you want to go your way, then so be it, but proceed with caution. Furthermore, feedback about how you are not meeting formal requirements or how you are violating IB content restrictions should never be ignored, unless you want to risk earning a zero mark for your work. Those aspects are not optional.

## Knowing the Actor's Craft


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If you can develop at least a passing sense of what actors do, then you can greatly increase the quality of your second draft. Although there are scores of books on acting technique on the market, you should try and understand two main ideas to help improve your next draft: [**subtext**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week41/41_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) and [**motivation**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week41/41_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3). We will take them one at a time.

Subtext refers to the meaning beneath the words. You have probably experienced tingling intuition that tells you when the person speaking to you does not mean what he or she says. In many conversations, there is a surface meaning connected to the spoken words, and then there is everything else, all the hidden meanings, implications, innuendoes, and downright denials. The hidden world is the world of subtext.

Actors love the possibility of subtext, because it allows them to use the full range of their skills as thespians. They can say one thing and mean the opposite, using subtlety, gesture, body language, and tone to imply a whole river of unexpressed thoughts and feelings. An actor understands psychology and how people usually are not mad for the reason they think they are, or for the reason they are expressing.

Read over your script, and focus on the dialogue. If the characters always express exactly what they are thinking, then your dialogue is too "on-the-nose." Give the actor a chance to explore subtext by putting a veneer of innocent dialogue on top, so meaning has to be inferred by the audience instead of simply receiving a handout. Yes, if you have not guessed already, not only do actors love subtext, but audiences do, as well. An audience wants to discover the meaning themselves. They want to have things to discuss after the movie. Give them what they want.

### **Sub-plot**

Check out any of the films of the Coen brothers, like [**Fargo**](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0116282/) or[**Miller's Crossing**](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0100150/), if you want to see masterful dialogue at work. Their films are loaded with subtext and ambiguity. Another good example to look at would be the opening scene of[**Quentin Tarantino**](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0000233/)'s **[Inglourious Basterds](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0361748/%22%20%5Co%20%22Inglourious%20Basterds%20at%20IMDb%20-%20will%20open%20in%20a%20new%20window%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)**. You will never look at a glass of milk the same way again. [**Jane Campion**](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0001005/)'s film,**[The Piano](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0107822/%22%20%5Co%20%22The%20Piano%20at%20IMDb%20-%20will%20open%20in%20a%20new%20window%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)**, is another one that is rich in subtext.


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Actors are also constantly searching for their character's motivation in the scene. They know the most powerful verb in their arsenal is not "I love" or "I hate," but "I want." Characters have desires. They want things. Sometimes those things are tangible: they want the bag of money, the gold watch, the magic ring. Sometimes they are intangible: they want honor, respect, love, solitude. These are all wants. They are all desires. As the writer, you need to build your characters around these wants, and then try as hard as you can to keep your characters from achieving their desires for as long as possible.

In other words, when a character wants something, and does not get it right away, we have the recipe for [**conflict**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week41/41_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3). Without conflict, there is no drama. Without drama, an audience will leave the theater and not stick around to see how your film ends.

Look over your script again. Does the character have an understandable motivation? Have you put in a big enough obstacle, in every scene (a villain, a physical barrier, a mental block, a natural phenomenon, etc.) to keep their desires from them for as long as you can? If not, if you are making things to easy for your protagonist, then that is another aspect to focus on for your revision.

## The Fear of Starting Over

Do not be afraid to scrap everything and start again. Do not change your idea, since that is the pitch that was approved, but you might find you have discovered a better way to approach the telling of your story. It is sometimes faster to just jettison those few pages you already have than to try and cobble together scenes that really just are not working anymore. Starting over can actually be hugely freeing. Let that fear go.

## Create a Second Draft

Go ahead and revise your script. Try and make this draft as "final" as you can. You will get another round of feedback and the final script will be due soon, but if you put yourself in the mental space that this is your last chance, right now, then you will get it in great shape. Plus, if you have nothing else to fix on this draft then your final draft assignment will be extra easy for you.

## Uploading Draft Two

Head over to the [**Production Office**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week41/41_prod.htm) for final instructions for your draft two script assignment.

# 42.03 Pre-Production Work

## Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, the student will:

* review important production forms
* begin other aspects of pre-production, besides the script, such as finding performers and shooting locations

## Pre-Production Has Begun

Maybe without even realizing it, you are already into the [**pre-production**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week42/42_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) process of your short film.[**Scripts**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week42/42_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) can go through many revisions during this stage, but the writing of scripts is not all of what happens before the [**cameras**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week42/42_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) start rolling. There are actually a great many tasks that need to be accomplished beforehand. This week's lesson will offer some suggestions about how each of the assessed production roles can be involved during pre-production.

## No Storyboarding Yet

Since your script is not finalized until next week, it would be unwise to start [**storyboarding**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week42/42_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) at this stage. Do not worry, it will be an assignment in the very near future, but you may find some scenes will be trimmed and some rearranged slightly as you conclude your final draft. Creating elegant panels is a key component of pre-production, and many artists draw boards for a living, but they should be postponed for now.

## Production Documents and Journal

Regardless of whether you are working solo or in a group, you need to live by a simple rule if you have not already started doing so—save everything. Every piece of paper you generate for this filmmaking process should be saved and stored in a secure place. Archive every e-mail, and save multiple versions of all your files. You should save every draft of your script. Print all the feedback you receive. Every scribbled note on a napkin you grabbed in a restaurant while you had that brilliant brainstorm over dinner—save, save, save.


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You should also keep a regular record—like a journal—of what you do and why you do it and how it worked and why it failed. Maintain it regularly. Keep it safe. This whole process will take several months, and you will forget all the crazy stuff that happened at the beginning of it by the time you reach the end.

Why are you doing all this saving, you ask? You will be turning in a production portfolio when this is all through. It will consist not only of a finished short film, but also all the supporting documentation and reflective commentary on the process. Without the supporting documentation—all the bits of stuff you saved—your portfolio will be a sad, empty wasteland of unsubstantiated comments. Get a box or a binder. Put everything in it. It will come into play later.

## Professional Forms

In the **Production Office** you will find a variety of forms modeled after the kinds of forms professional film crews might use. Using them will help you stay organized, and will also lend some credibility to your crew if you find yourself needing to negotiate with someone over the use of their property for filming. Many of the pre-production tasks mentioned in this lesson have a corresponding form you can download and use.

### **Jump Cut**

Head over to the [**Production Office**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week42/42_prod.htm) and review the forms provided, being sure to save a copy. Then, come back here and finish the lesson.

## Location Scouting

Assessed production roles best suited to this task: [**director**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week42/42_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3), [**cinematographer**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week42/42_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3)

Chances are, the major locations of your film will not change as you make the final revisions to your screenplay, so scouting locations would be an excellent task to accomplish. Make a list of all the locations, major and minor, the script calls for and then, go find several suitable options for each one. Take along a camera and actually take stills, so you can review them later and decide on the best options.

Some things to consider as you evaluate the appropriateness of each location:


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* Electricity—Lights and cameras draw a lot of power, so make sure the location has what you need.
* Noise—Busy streets mean plenty of traffic noise that will ruin your shot. Make sure you can control sound to the degree needed.
* Accessibility—Is the place easy for cast and crew to find? Can they park conveniently?
* Security—Is it safe to have expensive equipment in the neighborhood? Will your cast and crew be safe?
* Availability—Will you be able to use it on the day(s) you want to film?

Obviously, you also want the location to be believable as the place it is supposed to be in the world of the film. If you want an audience to take your work seriously, then you have to find places that can fill the part. Take your time. Search your city. Do not just try and hang a sheet in your garage and hope no one will notice. Everyone will notice.

You would be surprised to find out how many people and business owners will open their homes and shops for a polite, respectful film crew who behave like professionals. Dress formally. Set up a meeting. Discuss your intentions clearly. Offer them complimentary tickets to the premiere and a [**credit**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week42/42_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) in the film. People love to see their names on a screen. Ask for what you want, and you just might get it.

On the flip side, do not film where you do not have permission to do so. Shopping malls and banks, for instance, will never allow you to bring a camera inside, so do not even bother trying. If you film there anyway, you run the risk of being arrested. Always get permission for filming when the property belongs to someone else.

## Casting Call

Assessed production roles best suited to this task: director, [**writer**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week42/42_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3)


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Another great use of your pre-production time is to assemble your[**cast**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week42/42_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3). You might already have actors in mind, in which case all you have to do is ask them. However, you could also post notices outside your performing arts center that you will be holding a [**casting call**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week42/42_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) for an upcoming short film. If you have specific types you need, post those in the notice as well. At the audition itself, you can have sample script pages, called [**sides**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week42/42_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3), ready for your prospective actors so they can show you how they might interpret the lines. If they have them, they can give you a resume of their acting work.

You are not necessarily looking for the perfect actor or actress for each role. You are looking for the best cast. The most amazing actor in the world will not work for your film if he or she does not play nicely with the other students, or fails to respond well to direction, or simply has no chemistry with the other actors. Have you ever watched a film with two otherwise amazing actors who, for whatever reason, have no connection on screen? Sparks sometimes just do not fly. You need to be on the hunt for sparks.


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Check how well the actors respond to suggestions from you. You will be giving them direction for many months. If they cannot even respond to you in an audition, then send them away. They will be a nightmare to work with. On the other hand, you do not want someone who will just blindly follow your orders, either. You do not want a sheep. What you want is a fellow artist, someone with whom you can collaborate.

Be sure to check availability for your intended shooting days/weeks. You do not want someone who is very popular and busy. They will be almost impossible to schedule.

Once you have found your perfect people, then lock them in. Make them get out their planners and write your shooting days inside. In pen. Get phone numbers and e-mail addresses. Find out where they live. You can do all this without seeming like a stalker, but they have to know this is a serious commitment, and your faith in them needs to be well-founded.

Make sure you get permission to use his or her image in your film.

## Titles and Credits

Assessed production role best suited to this task: [**editor**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week42/42_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3), writer

Pre-production is also a great time to create [**title**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week42/42_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) and credit sequences. Instead of waiting around for[**footage**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week42/42_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) to appear, which can often leave an editor stranded for weeks, try to create a title sequence over a temporary background that can be [**keyed out**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week42/42_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) later. Many student films feature a sloppy credit sequence at the end of an otherwise decent film. This not only ruins the final effect of the film, but it is clear evidence that pre-production time was not spent wisely. Try, instead, to take your time and really build a title and credits sequence that matches the tone of the film, sets the mood, and leaves the audience in the proper emotional space as they gather up their empty snack containers.

## Soundscape

Assessed production roles best suited to this task: [**sound designer**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week42/42_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3), director.

Finally, use this time to record all kinds of sound effects for use later on. Go through the script and write down all the sounds you will need, remembering, as you learned last year, that everything makes a sound, even silence. Build up a library of well-recorded (and well-named) [**sound effects**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week42/42_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) you can drop into the[**timeline**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week42/42_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) when editing begins.


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Pre-production is also the time to compose music or to contact local musicians so you can create some compositions with them. Remember, you do not need to be the actual composer, but you do need to engage in a substantial creative dialogue about the music as it is being created. You may not just use someone's pre-recorded song. The music has to arise out of creative dialogue between you and the musicians in question. Gather examples of [**scores**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week42/42_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) you like that would fit the desired tone of the film, and play them for whomever will be creating your score with you.

If any of the film's dialogue is supposed to be heard as [**voice-over**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week42/42_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3), record it now. Get it over with. Set the actors up in a studio and record as many [**takes**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week42/42_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) as you need. Label all your files and put them away for safe-keeping.

Always carry a [**microphone**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week42/42_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) and a recorder with you as you go about your day at school or on the weekend. Cool sounds are everywhere, just waiting for you to discover and record them.

You should also use this time to get comfortable with whatever audio tools you will be using, so you will waste no time with a steep learning curve once you hit post-production.

## Finish Your Script

Of course, finish the final draft of your script, which is due next week. Good luck!

# 43.04 Final Script

## Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, the student will:

* explore the real meaning of revision
* prepare a final script

## The First Milestone


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This week, you will take your first major step towards the completion of your final film. Congratulations! You have written two drafts of your [**screenplay**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week43/43_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3), and received feedback from your instructor and, hopefully, from some of your classmates as well. Now, it is up to you to create the final draft of the script and submit it for assessment. You have begun the [**pre-production**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week43/43_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) process in other areas as well, so actually this whole phase is about to be wrapped up. In two weeks, you will be creating the storyboard and finishing up all that remains. [**Principal photography**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week43/43_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3), the main aspect of the [**production**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week43/43_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) phase, is just around the corner. This is always a thrilling time, when your film can be just about anything you can imagine. The practical realities of equipment, talent, knowledge, and experience will soon put limits on that vision, but for now, it is still okay to dream a bit.

## The Real Meaning of Revision

Try not to let the fact you have already done two drafts prohibit you from making significant changes. You are not just rewriting the screenplay this week, you are revising it. "Revise" literally means "to see again." Look at your story as if with fresh eyes, and do not be timid about changing aspects of it, for good reasons. That last bit should receive extra emphasis: **for good reasons**. Change for the sake of change is silly, but a well-considered change can be the difference between "just another student film" and "Film students made this? This is brilliant!"

Let us consider revision in a few key areas. These are not the only ones, obviously, where revision can come into play, but they are the major aspects to consider, and we will look at them one at a time.

## Do You Come Here Often?


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An important place to begin your last major revision would be to reconsider the [**setting**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week43/43_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) of your scenes. Have you really selected the most dramatically compelling places to stage the action, or have you resorted to cliches or easy choices simply because they are the places you usually inhabit in your everyday life? Amateurish student films often set their scenes in the living rooms of their houses or apartments, or in classrooms at their schools. These choices make sense for practical reasons, but they usually make for dull viewing. We spend most of our lives in these spaces, so why would we want to see them in the movies as well?

Re-read your first scene. Now, without thinking about it or judging the possibility, make a list of 10 other places this scene could exist. Do this quickly. If you ponder too much, your rational mind will take over and eliminate choices out of hand. As you probably know from your discussions of the arts in Theory of Knowledge, the artist sometimes has to shut down the censor and the critic in his mind in order to access deeper truths that remain hidden in the murky depths below. Do not judge, just write—10 alternative places. Keep going if the flow is there. Once you get to at least 10, go back and re-imagine your scene in the new place. What is the effect of taking that mundane living room scene and putting it in:


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* a parking lot?
* a junk-filled alley?
* a pawn shop?
* a cemetery?
* a desert?
* a basketball court?
* a fishing boat?

It is important you weigh these possible changes in light of the dramatic[**intent**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week43/43_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) of the scene, rather than making a change just because it is quirky or random or different. Consider the [**conflict**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week43/43_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) between characters and the [**charged values**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week43/43_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) that need to reverse before the scene is over. Yes, characters can certainly have an argument on a couch, but that argument will certainly be intensified if one of them is climbing a steep rock face, while the other one is belaying him with a rope down below, right? Changing the setting can raise the stakes and turn a scene that would otherwise be ordinary into one that is extraordinary.

## The Perfect Line


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Another aspect that deserves some revision attention is the [**dialogue**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week43/43_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) itself, which is one of the main influences the [**screenwriter**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week43/43_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) has on the finished film. Chances are your dialogue falls into two main categories: it either sounds too much like the words you hear your friends speak every day, or it sounds like the words no one would ever say or ever want to. The first category often means your lines are guilty of being too mundane and ordinary; the second means they are too stilted and lack plausibility. At first glance, it might seem like if you fix either of these problems, you just create the other one, but this is not the case. Let us explore why.

To bring in Theory of Knowledge once more, you are likely aware that one purpose of art is to imitate real life. Aristotle referred to this as art's [**mimetic function**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week43/43_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3). In Shakespeare's famous play, Hamlet advises the players to "hold as 'twere the mirror up to nature" (Hamlet, 3.2.21–22). Certainly, this would seem to justify writing lines of dialogue that sound ordinary, so what is the problem then? Well, if you actually were to listen to the rhythms of "real-life" speech, you will find it is peppered with awkwardness, stops and starts, and random insertions of filler words like "um" and "like." Try and record real life sometime. When you play the conversation back later, it will make you cringe, unless you happen to record a particularly gifted storyteller, which is rare.

You may have had the artistic intention of "capturing real life" on the page, and that is why you wrote ordinary dialogue to begin with. In this sense, you might even have had ambitions like the [**French New Wave**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week43/43_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) filmmakers you have been studying. But consider this: does the dialogue in any of those French New Wave films sound realistic, as if one might overhear these conversations on the street somewhere?


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Also, consider your favorite lines of dialogue, the lines from movies you quote all the time. Do you quote them because they sound realistic, as if one of your friends could come up with them? Or, do you quote them because they are so extraordinary you can never exhaust their awesomeness, even after repeating them for years? To think about this another way, have you ever been in a verbal argument with someone and lost because your wit failed you in the crucial moment? Perhaps a day later, after you replayed the fight in your mind again and again, you finally come up with the perfect retort. You think to yourself, "Oh, if only I had said that, I would have been so cool!" Keep that in mind as you revise your dialogue. Your characters get to be "so cool." They will always have the perfect line at their disposal, because you get to provide them with it.

Again, you might argue, "But what if I want my characters to sound un-cool or awkward? Can't I write awkward dialogue then?" The answer is, sure, you can, but do not write lines that are awkward in an everyday sense. Make those lines be the most memorably awkward lines ever written. Heroically awkward. Poignantly awkward. Make your audience think, "Wow, I thought I lacked social skills. At least I'm not **that** guy!"

However, you do not want to go so far in the other direction that the dialogue sounds awkward, stilted, heavy-handed, or obvious. Remember, characters rarely argue about what they are arguing about. Is your dialogue too on-the-nose? Does it lack [**subtext**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week43/43_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3)?

The trick, ultimately, is to make sure the world of your screenplay is consistent and coherent. If you establish early on that all the characters speak in iambic pentameter, as if in one of Shakespeare's plays, then so be it. That is the world you have established. If you have decided in your world the characters speak as if they were in a [**Western**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week43/43_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3), then great. As long as you obey your own setup, your dialogue will sparkle with originality and style. Perhaps this is a better way to think about realism: you are not trying to copy real life; instead, you are creating the realism of your own cinematic world and abiding by the new rules you set.

### **Sub-plot**

If you want some inspiration for terrific dialogue, you could check out any film by [**Ethan**](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0001053/) and [**Joel Cohen**](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0001054/) (Cohen brothers), such as [**Raising Arizona**](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0093822/) (1987) or [**Fargo**](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0116282/) (1996). A great film that takes the [**hard-boiled detective**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week43/43_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) genre—including the dialogue—and transplants it in a high school setting is [**Rian Johnson**](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0426059/)'s film, [**Brick**](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0393109/) (2005). The charming, sassy teenagers in[**Ivan Reitman**](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0718645/)'s film, [**Juno**](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0467406/) (2007), speak like no other teenagers on the planet, but they do speak the way every teenager **wishes** they could speak—that witty, that clever, that amazing. The screenwriter, [**Diablo Cody**](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm1959505/), has given them lines that are unrealistic and yet believable. Does your dialogue do the same?

## Unconventionally Conventional

Hopefully, you had a clear [**genre**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week43/43_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) in mind for your film when you wrote your earlier drafts. As you revise, consider the degree to which you fulfill the expectations for that genre in your script.

* Are all the typical elements there?
* If you are missing some of the [**genre conventions**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week43/43_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3), why have you left them out?
* Is there a clever way to get them in there without going over the time limit?

Is there a way to take some of the genre conventions and play with them, or subvert them in some way? This is especially important if you are creating a [**parody**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week43/43_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) of a genre, which, by definition, involves taking genre expectations and flipping them or applying them to silly or trivial contexts.

**Genre Parody: Sub-plot**

[**Mel Brooks**](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0000316/) is one of the masters of the genre parody. You need look no further than films like [**Blazing Saddles**](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0071230/)(1974), which parodies the Western, or [**Young Frankenstein**](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0072431/) (1974), which parodies early Universal[**horror**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week43/43_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) films, to see what happens when you take serious genres and treat them in a hilariously silly manner.

The subversion of genre conventions can be humorous or thought-provoking or both. There is perhaps no better way to demonstrate your mastery of film than to show you understand genre so well you are able to have fun with it and re-invent it in clever and unexpected ways.

What happens when you transplant a genre into an unconventional setting?

**Unconventional Setting: Sub-plot**

The films of [**Akira Kurosawa**](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0000041/) you have been studying in this module answer this question brilliantly. Kurosawa was inspired by early Hollywood Westerns, but transplanted them magnificently into a Japanese setting—cowboys become samurai. His films, in turn, inspired other Hollywood filmmakers, who transplanted them back to the American West. In each context, familiar genre conventions are brought out and then re-examined, each time with a new effect.

The subversion of genre conventions can be humorous or thought-provoking or both. There is perhaps no better way to demonstrate your mastery of film than to show you understand genre so well you are able to have fun with it and re-invent it in clever and unexpected ways.

What happens when you mix genres in surprising new ways?

**Mixing Genres: Sub-plot**

The film ***[Lagaan: Once Upon a Time in India](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0169102/%22%20%5Co%20%22Lagaan%3A%20Once%20Upon%20a%20Time%20in%20India%20at%20IMDb%20-%20will%20open%20in%20a%20new%20window%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)*** (2001), directed by **[Ashutosh Gowariker](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0332950/%22%20%5Co%20%22Ashutosh%20Gowariker%20at%20IMDb%20-%20will%20open%20in%20a%20new%20window%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)**, shows what happens when you mix the conventions of the [**Bollywood musical**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week43/43_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3)with those of the [**sports**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week43/43_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) film. [**Darrell Roodt**](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0740213/)'s film,***[Sarafina!](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0105316/%22%20%5Co%20%22Sarafina%21%20at%20IMDb%20-%20will%20open%20in%20a%20new%20window%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)*** (1992), very cleverly blends social protest drama about apartheid in South Africa with the conventions of the musical as well, to very stirring and powerful effect. [**Joss Whedon**](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0923736/)'s film, [***Serenity***](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0379786/) (2005), based on his television series, blends [**science fiction**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week43/43_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3)and the Western, and the combination brings out interesting parallels between the frontier mentality of the American West and the hypothetical problems with the future colonization of space.

The subversion of genre conventions can be humorous or thought-provoking or both. There is perhaps no better way to demonstrate your mastery of film than to show you understand genre so well you are able to have fun with it and re-invent it in clever and unexpected ways.

**Structurally Unsound**


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Finally, you might consider revising the structure of your screenplay. There are three main ways to go about doing this, and you should think about trying all of them.

* You could add scenes.
* You could delete scenes.
* You could shuffle the order of the scenes.

If you are like most students, the first choice is not going to be a viable option. The most likely scenario is your script is actually too long right now—remember the no less than four, no longer than five minute limit—and could not properly absorb new material. However, it just might be the case that a well-placed extra little scene could mean the difference between audience clarity and audience confusion. Proceed with caution.

Deleting scenes will probably be your best bet. Cut your first scene. Now, read your script all the way through, imagining the film in your head. Is anything vital really lost by removing the scene? If the answer is no, then cut it. Repeat this process with the other scenes. Also remember, if a scene does not propel the action forward—cut it—it is dramatically pointless. The companion of deleting scenes altogether is shortening them. Can we enter the scene later and leave earlier? Remember to trust the intelligence of your audience. They can fill in the unseen bits if the rest of your scene is clear. Filling in the missing bits is actually part of the fun, so do not deprive them of that pleasure.

The really fun part of revision can come with a shuffling of the order of your scenes.

* Can you begin with the end?
* End with the beginning?
* What happens if you mess with the order in the middle?

You might just be surprised by the results.

## Document Your Choices

You now have four solid ways to consider the revision of your script: setting, dialogue, genre, and structure. There are, of course, many others, all of which could help you showcase your mastery of film, which is, after all, the primary goal. Remember, you are trying to make the best IB film possible, which has specific constraints and requirements, and not the perfect film you might want to make if you were completely independent of that context. Above all, document your rationale for making the revisions you choose to make, and save all your earlier drafts. You need to keep a repository of material, so you can assemble your portfolio, of which the finished film is only a piece, at the end of this process.

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**45.03 Script to Storyboard**

Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, the student will translate his or her final approved scripts into a usable storyboard or blueprint for the short film project.

Pre-Production Continues


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Just as you did in your film production exercises last year, now you want to translate your finished script into a [**storyboard**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week45/45_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) or [**animatic**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week45/45_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3). This is the stage where all the other production roles—[**director**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week45/45_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3), [**editor**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week45/45_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3), **[cinemotographer](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week45/45_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3)**, and[**sound designer**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week45/45_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3)—can actually step forward and join the [**screenwriter**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week45/45_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3). Always try and remember that all roles should be involved in all three phases of production, even though one of those phases will be the main one for that role (e.g.. editor's main phase will be [**post-production**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week45/45_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3), cinematographer's main phase will be [**production**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week45/45_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3), etc.) This lesson will give you some ideas about how to get everyone involved, and if you are working alone, will get you thinking about all those aspects, even now, during pre-production.

Use the Frame

Remember the rectangular shape of a storyboard panel does not represent the entire world. It is a piece of the world the camera's eye will isolate from everything else. When you draw objects and people in that frame, draw them how they will appear in terms of size and shape and shadow. An [**extreme close-up**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week45/45_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) on the eyes will fill the entire frame. The silhouette of a samurai on a hilltop should be colored in to indicate shadow. A [**close-up**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week45/45_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) of a watch or knife will not show much else. Do not be afraid to draw things as big as they will actually be. And if you cannot draw, then take digital still photographs, which can be just as effective.

The Importance of Stand-ins


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On a professional movie set, there are always a group of actors who have a special job—they are [**stand-ins**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week45/45_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) for the major stars. A stand-in is an actor who resembles the star in build and body type, and somewhat in looks, who stands in for the star while all the rest of the crew do all the tedious setup work that is necessary for a high-quality shot. The star can stay in his or her trailer getting ready, while the stand-in basically stands in position and lets the cinematographer set up lights and camera moves. Then, when it is time to roll camera, the stand-in steps out and in comes the star, ready to go.

You can use the concept of the stand-in a slightly different way for your pre-production needs. A stand-in can be anyone you know, or anyone on your crew, basically anyone who is around at the time you are planning what your future shots will look like. Perhaps, as the cinematographer, you are taking digital stills instead of drawing each shot setup frame by frame. Get a stand-in so you can actually see what the shot will look like with a person in it. Maybe instead you are drawing storyboard panels. Well, every artist needs a model, right? Get a stand-in. Siblings and friends are great for this. Parents are as well.

Stand-ins can also provide you with a temporary audio track, or [**temp track**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week45/45_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3), of the spoken dialogue. If you are going so far as to make an animatic (which you should), then record someone—anyone—saying the lines of dialogue. If you lay that temp track down in the audio track of a film project and then put stills (digitized drawings or digital photos) in the video track, you can actually get a pretty decent sense of how long each shot will need to be. Play around with the timing. Stretch one still out for a few seconds longer. Trim another by a few seconds. See what the effect for each choice is. A still or digitized drawing can be re-timed much more easily than actual [**footage**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week45/45_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3). Thus, the editor can, in a very real sense, pre-edit the movie this way. Later on, in post-production, the editor can also lay the finished animatic in a layer that can be turned on and off, so that, as new footage comes in, it can be laid precisely in place.


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Taking the full animatic one step further, you can then have your sound designer put in a temporary music track and some placeholder [**sound effects**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week45/45_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) as well. Not only can the designer then hear whether or not certain audio ideas are working, but he or she can also hear exactly how many sound effects still need to be recorded or created.

The director, of course, should be the one overseeing the whole process of creating the storyboard or animatic. Working with stand-ins can provide a low-stakes practice round of giving direction. Long before the actors are ever summoned to a set, the director will already have had a shot at clearly and precisely communicating the [**intent**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week45/45_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) of the scene. Doing it for real later on will seem easy after that. If the storyboarding/animatic process is handled properly, then production will be considerably less stressful since all the difficult parts will already have been figured out and practiced ahead of time.

Nothing to Upload

For this piece of pre-production, you will not [**upload**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%203/week45/45_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) anything for instructor assessment. The extent to which you take the creation of a storyboard or animatic is entirely up to you, now. Do not take this an an excuse to disregard this piece of pre-production. Only a very foolish crew goes into production without a solid plan. However, every crew creates a different kind of storyboard or animatic, and it would be difficult to standardize requirements to fit all situations. Basically, create what you need in order to get the job done, but consider, if you watch the special features of most well-made films on DVD, what do you usually see?—A storyboard-to-finished-film comparison. Why? Because all good film crews make a storyboard. You should, too.

# 49.04 Production Meeting

## Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, the student will:

* participate in production meetings during which accomplishments and frustrations on the short film project are shared
* preview any finished sequences for feedback from classmates and instructor

## Dailies

During the production process on a professional film set, members of the production crew, and sometimes even the more prominent members of the cast, will get together to discuss how the film is going and to troubleshoot problems. These production meetings usually occur with great frequency, because the making of a film is an expensive endeavor with very high stakes for all concerned. Some film productions meet on a daily basis to go over the day's footage, and even start to single out the most usable [**takes**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%204/week49/49_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) for the [**editor**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%204/week49/49_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3). These meetings and the shots reviewed in them are called [**rushes**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%204/week49/49_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) or, quite simply, [**dailies**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%204/week49/49_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3).

### **Sub-plot**

In the world of animation, dailies are sometimes referred to as the [**sweatbox**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%204/week49/49_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3). The term dates back to the 1930s when the animators at the **Walt Disney** studio would gather in a small room with a Moviola in it to screen their current shots. With no air conditioning, and the added pressure of viewing their in-progress work with Disney himself, these animators certainly felt the heat as their colleagues and boss relentlessly critiqued their work. Animators to this day, at studios like**Pixar**and**Dreamworks**, still tend to refer to these screening sessions as a sweatbox.

In the days when all films were shot on actual film, the crew had to wait to get the film back from the developer in order to view dailies. In today's digital world, shots can be reviewed instantly, and bad takes can be deleted on the spot. However, even in this on-demand world, it still helps to set aside some time to review current progress and to make well-reasoned, thoughtful decisions about where and how to proceed with the production.

## A Virtual Production Meeting

Occasionally, you will be asked to reflect on the progress of your work in a virtual production meeting, and this week marks the first of those instances. In a traditional Film classroom, you could meet with your instructor face-to-face and let him or her look at actual footage or edited scenes for feedback. Most IB Film instructors build such work sessions into the curriculum and make it a regular part of the class, especially as deadlines loom. Online, this interaction will have to be slightly delayed, as you upload your work and then wait for feedback from your instructor and perhaps your classmates. Still, the thoughts you receive about your work should enable you to improve your film, since your instructor has a wealth of experience in terms of helping students see their ideas blossom.

### **Assessment Advice**

The additional benefit of these production meetings, besides improving your film before you submit it for final assessment, is you get to pre-write your final commentary. Type your thoughts and reflections as a separate document first—think of it as an ongoing journal, more or less—and then save as a .pdf. You will upload your reflection at the end of this lesson, but save the original document as well. That way, you might already have several usable sections for your final portfolio that can be included with some revision and editing.

## Short Segment for Review


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In addition to an overall reflection on the current state of your short film production, you will also upload a short segment from the film itself, for your instructor and possibly your classmates, to look at and critique, just like you would in actual dailies. Pick any 30–45 second section you want, or if you do not have that much edited yet, pick any 30–45 seconds bit of raw footage. Export using the standard[**encoding procedures**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%204/week49/49_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) for this course.

Ideally, you want to select a segment that is directly related to your chosen production role. This recommendation means, if you are working in a crew, you might not all select the same section for upload for this particular meeting. Since you might get feedback that calls for you to go back and re-shoot certain scenes, you want to share the ones that have a bearing on what you actually contributed. Otherwise, the feedback will not be useful to your individual portfolio. Even though the finished film will be the same for everyone on the crew, the accompanying commentary will vary by individual. So, you want to make sure you get the most you can out of the experience and advice your instructor has to offer.

You do not necessarily want to select your best 30–45 second sequence. Do not be afraid to upload a section that really is not working well. What better way to improve it than by sharing it with people who may have some fantastic ideas about how to fix it, right?

## Guiding Questions

Here is a list of potential questions to consider as you type a 200–300 word reflection on the current state of your film production. You should feel free to ask questions yourself, or comment on areas not directly covered by these questions. Be honest and thoughtful as you compose your responses. You will find doing so will lead to a greater willingness on the part of your instructor to give you usable feedback.


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* What stage of the production process are you currently in?
* How have the work sessions been going overall?
* What has been your best example of creative problem-solving thus far?
* Have you been able to apply something you have learned about[**film history**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%204/week49/49_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) or [**theory**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%204/week49/49_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3)?
* Have you made any attempts to replicate techniques you observed from the films you have studied?
* In what ways have you been able to demonstrate excellence in the use of [**film language**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%204/week49/49_04.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3)?
* What has been the biggest hurdle towards making good progress on the film?
* Is the film emerging in the way it was originally envisioned?
* How have you been able to overcome technical limitations in terms of equipment?
* How have you been able to improvise when your technical know-how has been deficient?
* What aspects need to be fixed?
* What will you be able to do to improve the film before the next production meeting?
* What specific areas do you want feedback on?

Do not feel like you need to answer all of these questions. However, this list should provide ample material from which you can craft a usable reflection. The answers to these questions will also, not coincidentally, be the kinds of remarks a future examiner would be interested to read as he or she assesses your work.

### **Assessment Advice**

Even though the Production Portfolio is an internal assessment (scored and marked by your instructor), it is also moderated by the IB. This means your instructor is required to send in a sample of his or her marks to the IB to determine if the marks are fair and consistent. Always keep in mind your portfolio might be reviewed by a total stranger, so write with that in mind. Explain everything you did and why you did it, without assuming the person reading your work "already knows the whole story behind everything that happened."

## Upload Assignment

Head over to the [**Production Office**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%204/week49/49_prod.htm) to submit your assignment for this lesson.

# 49.05 Production Meeting Two

## Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, the student will:

* participate in production meetings during which accomplishments and frustrations on the short film project are shared
* preview any finished sequences for feedback from classmates and instructor

## New Segment, New Reflection


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This week calls for you to upload a new 30–45 second segment from your short film, with a new reflection based on the guiding questions. Hopefully, you have been able to make significant forward progress in the last two weeks. If the segment you originally submitted for review has been changed in a substantial way, then you may upload the revised version for review. Otherwise, submit a new segment.

Be sure to reference specific aspects of the segment you upload in terms of what you believe is working well, and what you feel needs a great deal of work. You might actually be surprised to discover other people feel exactly the opposite, and appreciate what you despise, hate what you love. As you probably know from discussions in Theory of Knowledge, there is a huge amount of subjectivity that is inherent in the arts. Your emotion often clouds your judgment about whether or not your work is good. Therefore, the proper attitude would be one of humility, in both extremes, good and bad, towards anything you have created. If you never share what you think is the truth about your work, then you might never hear what others have to say. It is precisely those others who get the final word regardless of what you share—they write the reviews, they recommend your film or pan it, and they assign your work a final mark. Get their responses now when it is not too late to fix the problems.

## Guiding Questions

Here is a list of potential questions to consider as you type a 200–300 word reflection on the current state of your film production. You should feel free to ask questions yourself, or comment on areas not directly covered by these questions. Be honest and thoughtful as you compose your responses. You will find that doing so will lead to a greater willingness on the part of your instructor to give you usable feedback.

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* What stage of the production process are you currently in?
* How have the work sessions been going overall?
* What has been your best example of creative problem-solving thus far?
* Have you been able to apply something you have learned about [**film history**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%204/week49/49_05.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) or [**theory**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%204/week49/49_05.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3)?
* Have you made any attempts to replicate techniques you observed from the films you have studied?
* In what ways have you been able to demonstrate excellence in the use of [**film language**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%204/week49/49_05.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3)?
* What has been the biggest hurdle towards making good progress on the film?
* Is the film emerging in the way it was originally envisioned?
* How have you been able to overcome technical limitations in terms of equipment?
* How have you been able to improvise when your technical know-how has been deficient?
* What aspects need to be fixed?
* What will you be able to do to improve the film before the next production meeting?
* What specific areas do you want feedback on?

Do not feel like you need to answer all of these questions. However, this list should provide ample material from which you can craft a usable reflection.

## Upload Assignment

Head over to the [**Production Office**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%204/week54/54_prod.htm) to submit your assignment for this lesson.

# 53.03 Production Meeting Three

## Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, the student will:

* participate in production meetings during which accomplishments and frustrations on the short film project are shared
* preview any finished sequences for feedback from classmates and instructor

## End Credits

Yet another aspect of student films that often gets little attention is the end credits. Just as with the title sequences you looked at two weeks ago, consider that your end credits can help your audience come to terms with the ideas and feelings you intend for them to deal with after watching your film. End credits can also help make the transition from film world to real world, or in the case of a film showcase, from one film to another.


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Watch your time limit and build at least 20 seconds into your final edit for closing credits. Vertically scrolling text on a black screen has a nice, classy traditional look, and can be a solid choice if you are pressed for time. You can be more creative if you like, especially if your credits match the tone and mood of the rest of your film.

Whom should you credit? The simple answer is—credit everyone. There is almost no one who does not enjoy seeing his or her name up in lights, so provide an end credit for everyone who made your film what it is (or will be, once you finish). Thank everyone who provided you a service, a favor, a budget, or an idea. There is no downside to appreciating people. It is, quite literally, all good.

What you should never do for an IB short film is include bloopers. Although they may be hilarious to watch later with your friends, or with a cast and crew that want to reminisce about just how crazy that day of shooting was, your formal audience (instructor, examiner, serious film-goers) do not want to see these segments. Leave them out. It can be especially humiliating for you if your bloopers are more entertaining than your actual film. It is best to leave them out.

Remember, your no less than four-, no greater than five-minute limit includes your titles sequence, film, and end credits. Plan accordingly.

## Short Segment for Review


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In addition to an overall reflection on the current state of your short film production, you are also being asked to upload a short segment from the film itself, for your instructor, and possibly your classmates, to look at and critique, just like you would in actual dailies. Pick any 30–45 second section you want or, if you do not have that much edited yet, pick any 30–45 second bit of raw footage. Export it using the [**encoding procedures**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%204/week53/53_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) that are standard for this online course.

Ideally, you want to select a segment that is directly related to your chosen production role. This recommendation means, if you are working in a crew, you might not all select the same section for upload for this particular meeting. Since you might get feedback that calls for you to go back and re-shoot certain scenes, you want to share the ones that have a bearing on what you actually contributed. Otherwise, the feedback will not be useful to your individual portfolio. Even though the finished film will be the same for everyone on the crew, the accompanying commentary will vary by individual. Make sure you get the most you can out of the experience and advice your instructor has to offer.

You do not necessarily want to select your best 30–45 second sequence. Do not be afraid to upload a section that really is not working well. What better way to improve it than by sharing it with people who may have some fantastic ideas about how to fix it, right?

## Guiding Questions

Here is a list of potential questions to consider as you type a 200–300 word reflection on the current state of your film production. You should feel free to ask questions yourself, or comment on areas not directly covered by these questions. Be honest and thoughtful as you compose your responses. You will find that doing so will lead to a greater willingness on the part of your instructor to give you usable feedback.


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* What stage of the production process are you currently in?
* How have the work sessions been going overall?
* What has been your best example of creative problem-solving thus far?
* Have you been able to apply something you have learned about[**film history**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%204/week53/53_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3) or [**theory**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%204/week53/53_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3)?
* Have you made any attempts to replicate techniques you observed from the films you have studied?
* In what ways have you been able to demonstrate excellence in the use of [**film language**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%204/week53/53_03.htm?_&d2lSessionVal=2dicqRFpCLeBUUxjQHoBQLex9&d2l_body_type=3)?
* What has been the biggest hurdle towards making good progress on the film?
* Is the film emerging in the way it was originally envisioned?
* How have you been able to overcome technical limitations in terms of equipment?
* How have you been able to improvise when your technical know-how has been deficient?
* What aspects need to be fixed?
* What will you be able to do to improve the film before the next production meeting?
* What specific areas do you want feedback on?

Do not feel like you need to answer all of these questions. However, this list should provide ample material from which you can craft a usable reflection. The answers to these questions will also, not coincidentally, be the kinds of remarks a future examiner would be interested to read as he or she assesses your work.

### **Assessment Advice**

Even though the Production Portfolio is an internal assessment (scored and marked by your instructor), it is also moderated by the IB. This means your instructor is required to send in a sample of his or her marks to the IB, to determine if the marks are fair and consistent. Always keep in mind your portfolio might be reviewed by a total stranger, so write it with that in mind. Explain everything you did and why you did it, without assuming the person reading your work "already knows the whole story behind everything that happened."

## Upload Assignment

Head over to the [**Production Office**](https://courses.pamojaeducation.com/shared/Courses%20M2016/M2016%20Film%20SL/Semester%204/week57/57_prod.htm) to submit your assignment for this lesson.

# 55.04 Portfolio Documentation

## Portfolio Commentary


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This week, we focus on assembling the commentary portion of your Production Portfolio. The entire portfolio is comprised of the film itself (which should be done by now, or very close) and the written documentation that accompanies the film.

The written documentation consists of two basic parts:

1. The rationale of no more than 100 words
2. The written commentary of no more than 1200 words

As a goal, you should try and complete both of these tasks this week. We will go over both aspects of the written documentation, one at a time.

## The Rationale

You wrote a version of your rationale early on in the production process, so if you have that one close to hand, dig it up now. Does it still hold up? The rationale should be an expression of what the creative intentions of the film project were.

* What did you hope to achieve, technically and artistically?
* What do you hope your audience experiences while watching your film?

Choose your words carefully, since you only have 100 of them. Cut the fluffy verbiage. Be direct and clear. The rationale also helps orient your examiner, should yours be one of the portfolios submitted for moderation, as to what he or she should be looking for. Without the rationale, the examiner might get the wrong impression early on in the viewing of the film and never quite be able to shake it later on. If you are clear from the outset what you wanted to achieve, then your examiner will be "on your side" from first fade-in. Remember, an examiner wants to find the good in your film portfolio, rather than ferret out the bad. A well-crafted rationale can help highlight exactly what the good is supposed to look like in your particular case.

## The Commentary


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The commentary allows you to build on the implication of the rationale and add to its foundation with plenty of examples and evidence. In the allotted 1200 words, you will need to discuss the entirety of the film project from beginning to end, from pre-production all the way through post-production.

You have been writing short reflections on a regular basis for your Production Meetings each week. Use those. You will, of course, need to shape them into some kind of unified structure that flows nicely, but the bulk of the work should already be done. This phase is when all the diligent saving of production notes pays off. Go back to the earliest notes and try to re-capture what it was like to set off on this film-making adventure.

What should you write about? Consider all these possibilities:

* Highlight what you did, especially in light of your chosen production role.
* Bring up how you applied the lessons from film history and theory in your practical production work.
* Discuss how you creatively solved problems, rather than ranting about how other people let you down, or blaming faulty or deficient equipment.
* Point out interesting creative choices that might not be apparent in a casual viewing of your film.
* Cover all three major production phases, even if your role was more significant in one of the three.
* Point out what you perceive as your film's strengths and weaknesses. Be humble, but fair. You have created a unique work of art, so it is perfectly fine to let a little pride shine through.

### **Quick Tip**

If you do not know how to take a screenshot, find the button on your keyboard labeled “Print Screen.” That button will capture whatever is on your screen and send it to a default images folder. You can crop the image from there with any image editing program. Then a simple “Insert Image” from inside your word processor, and you have instant proof for your written commentary.

## Where Is the Proof?

The difference between an outstanding commentary and a mediocre one lies in the tangible evidence that accompanies your words. At various points in your commentary, wherever appropriate, insert relevant excerpts from production documents to help illustrate the point being made.

For example, if you are making a point about how the final shot in a certain scene closely resembled the original storyboard you drew, then insert a storyboard-to-screenshot comparison image. If the dialogue in a scene changed dramatically based on working with the actors on set, put in an excerpt from the original script page to help make that point evident. It is one thing for an editor to say a certain sequence involved multiple assets and was a dozen layers deep, but quite another to actually see a screenshot from the editing software. If you did an homage to a famous composition in one of your scenes, put an image of the original next to a shot of your tribute. You get the idea. How many inserts should you put in? There is no formal requirement in terms of number, but if you have at least one per typed page, you will be in good shape.

## Assembly

Once you have it all written, create one master document that has everything in the following order:

1. A cover sheet (like the one you did for the IS, but with "Production Portfolio" on it instead of "Independent Study"
2. The rationale, on a separate page
3. The commentary, with the images inserted in the appropriate places, not as an appendix at the end

Export this master document as a .pdf, with the filename, "JohnSmith\_1234-123\_ProductionPortfolio," or something to that effect so your instructor can keep all the files straight.

You will submit the entire portfolio—film plus documentation—along with a separate submission form in the next few weeks.

# 57.03 ****Uploading your Production Portfolio****

The Production Portfolio must be uploaded to Pamoja during this week. Your SBC will be able to help you with this. Film SL students submit complete Production Portfolio IA work to teachers via course Dropbox. This must not be late as the deadline is not flexible.

What to submit:
1. The signed coversheet
2. Your written commentary
3. Your film. It should be exported as an MP4 at H264. The file size should not exceed 720p. Remember that the film must include a slate stating your name, candidate number and assessment role. Tech support at your school should be able to assist if you have difficulties.