

Screenwriting: Long Form
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Assignment: Staged Readings
Preparation: Tuesday, March 27th
Presentations: Thursday, March 29th
10 points

STAGED READINGS

For this assignment, you'll perform readings of a scene from each your screenplays in small groups.

The goals of doing readings and informal performances of your screenplay as you write it are manifold:

- To give you a sense of how your words flow when spoken aloud, rather than read from the page
- To visualize how your characters move about and how they might interact with—and react to—one another
- To watch your own writing instead of reading it, to provide some distance and give you a feel for the “big picture”
- To take a crack at directing your own writing

The class will be divided into groups of three. You'll have one class period to rehearse and block a scene from each person's script. You can choose any scene from what you've written for your screenplay so far—or you may use your short script. It's your choice. We'll then spend the next class period (maybe two) doing the presentations.

I recommend choosing a scene that might be posing problems for you or that you find especially interesting—one that you'd like to develop further.

The people in your group will serve as actors, and you can also bring in one or two props to help with the scene. If it can be avoided, the writer should not act in his or her own scene.

This is an informal presentation—you will not be graded on acting ability, you don't need to memorize lines, and your scene doesn't need to be elaborately blocked. Your presentation should simply demonstrate attention to visualizing your scene, blocking out interactions between characters, and thoughtfulness in making your scene become a physical reality. How will you evoke a cinematic quality in this presentation?

You will be graded on the adaptation and directing of your scene as well as your participation in other group members' presentations.