

SESSION 3: How writing novels differs from writing screenplays And Basic Screenplay Format

1. Writing novels is different than writing screenplays.

Always present tense.

400 page book vs. 100 page screenplay.

Movies / TV are visual.

2. Basic screenplay format. **See other handout: Sample Script page.**

See book: *The Hollywood Standard*, 3rd Edition by Christopher Riley

Basic 4 Parts in writing a script. Names may vary.

1. Scene Headings or Shot Headings

At least 3 parts: INT. or EXT. Location (specific order). Time (day or night?).

2. Direction / Action / Description

What is seen and heard. INTRODUCE CHARACTERS in all caps.

3. Dialogue

Just the words spoken by the actor. Parentheticals tell how to deliver lines, no directing the actors.

4. Transitions

Between scenes. Many different kinds.

What we can / can't put on the screen.

Resources:

- *The Hollywood Standard*, 3rd Edition (or latest edition) by Christopher Riley
- Final Draft software: <https://finaldraft.com/>