The Evolution of an Idea: Scripts & Scripting
Who is the script for?

- **Actors and crew**—talent gravitates to a good script (voice is talent)
- **Investors**—selling your story
- **Yourself**—a good script directs itself
- **The Director**—especially when the writer and director are not the same people.
Script Format

- **1:1 ratio** -- 1 page equals 1 minute of screen time

- **12 pt. Font** -- Courier New

- **Spacing** -- done in [www.Celtx.com](http://www.Celtx.com)
EXTERIOR FOREST - NIGHT

The moon shines on the pale, serene face of ELEANOR SAWYER.

ELEANOR (softly)

Midnight.

She mounts a horse and rides into the darkness, the hoof beats muffled by the leaves and flora on the forest floor.

*Extracted from “The Screenwriter’s Bible” by David Trottier
Script format

• **EXT.** (when outside), **INT.** (when inside), or **EXT./INT.** (when moving from inside to outside like with a car)

• **CAPS** for first intro of character

• **CAPS** for sound effects

• **Voice Over (V.O)**--for narration

• **Off Screen (O.S.)**--for character not visible

• “MONTAGE”, “SERIES OF SHOTS”, and “BACK TO SCENE”
Script Grammar

- **Subject-Verb-Object (S-V-O)**
  - ex.- “Jack and Jill walk up a hill.”

- **Simple present tense (mostly)**
  - ex.- “Jack and Jill walk up a hill.” Not “Jack and Jill were walking, or walked, or might walk”, just “walk” works. (watch for gerunds)

- **Active voice (not passive)**
  - ex.- “Jill hit Jack.” Not “Jack was hit by Jill.”

- **Action verbs (use a Thesaurus)**
  - ex.- “Jack and Jill bound up a hill.”
Script Writing

• Descriptive adjectives/adverbs--impressionistic rather than elaborate; the essence of a person or place
  
  • ex.- “Stale pizza and Rock Band” in a dorm room captures the essence of a college student instead of listing everything in the room and on the walls

• Beats of action, or units of action--not a shot, but two or three

• Keep paragraphs short

• Spec script--not about camera yet
Script Guidelines

• Show don’t tell -- if it’s not an action, you can’t show it

• Read out loud

• Keep the flow of the story

• Let your own voice and the style of the piece come out

• Finding the right word is like hitting the right note; take time with it

• Writing is rewriting
Celtx

Let’s check it out.
Celtx

“Cute”
an original piece written in class

little guns are cute
big guns are cute
girls are cute
may be a guy’s cute
bigger guns are even more cute, cutier
or most cutestest

“Shitty first draft” or “child’s draft” -- Anne Lamott