Grade 9

Unit Six

PRE-INSTRUCTION CHECKLIST

MECHANICS	ACQUAINTANCE & ANALYSIS	
	☐ Story: Script	
Review as necessary to enable revision skill use	WRITING ON DEMAND	
	☐ ongoing, all disciplines	

GENRE FOCUS
Story: Script

NOTES

Writing a script is grueling and wonderful at the same time, especially if your care about your story deeply. Some writers spend years sweating over and cursing at one script. Conversely, in high school classrooms, beginning writers often are able to really enjoy the process. However, for a script to be extremely readable, the beginning, middle, and end need to be perfectly aligned and in appropriate place. Anne Lamott in Bird by Bird discusses this lengthy journey. She answers the question, "How do you know when you're done?" Lamott writes, "I don't quite know how to answer it. You just do." She goes on to comfort her readers by emphasizing that imperfection isn't always a bad thing for writers who care deeply for their plot. Ending a story is a lot like putting an octopus to bed. "I think this perfectly describes the process of solving various problems in your final draft. You get a bunch of the octopus's arms neatly tucked under the covers – that is, you've come up with a plot, resolved the conflict between the two characters, gotten the tone down pat—but two arms are still flailing around. Maybe the dialogue in the first half and the second half don't match, or there is that one character who still seems one-dimensional. But you finally get those arms under the sheets, too, and are about to turn off the lights when another long sucking arm breaks free." All of this can lead writers to insanity, but Lamott finally states that your script may not be perfect but, "there is simply no more steam in the pressure cooker and it's the very best you can do for now – well? I think this means that you are done."

PATTERN STATEMENT
Stories sometimes end with questions looming.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

The pattern, *Stories sometimes end with questions looming*, can be illustrated by showing the ending to Star Wars Episode V: The Empire Strikes Back. Show the scene where Darth Vader discloses to Luke that he is Luke's father, and the movie abruptly ends. Questions loom, viewers struggle to comprehend, and anticipation thickens. Writing a script is all about suspense and the recognition that sometimes beloved stories end without having all the questions answered. Guide students in a discussion about other stories, movies, or novels that left them hanging. Highlight the pattern, *Stories sometimes end with questions looming*.

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GENRE

Story: Script

GENRE

STORY: Script	
Definition	Objective
Presents a story in dramatic form with lines to be spoken by actors and any necessary stage directions.	With teacher prompting, student writes a two-act play with at least two different scenes in each act and features a problem to be solved or challenge to be met and a reasonable (i.e., believable within the context) resolution.

Rubric			
EXEMPLARY	**PROFICIENT**	**ADEQUATE**	**NOT YET**
‣ Writing features a problem to be solved or challenge to be met and a reasonable (i.e., believable within the context) resolution. ‣ Dialogue is natural/consistent with the characters and setting. ‣ Script includes basic information necessary for staging. The writing suggests an understanding of the genre's form and methods. ‣ The script has elements of originality. The characters' words and actions are not overly predictable and/or the scene/play resolves in surprising but satisfying ways. ‣ Additional revisions may produce minimal improvements.	‣ Writing features a problem to be solved or challenge to be met and a reasonable (i.e., believable within the context) resolution. ‣ Dialogue is natural/consistent with the characters and setting. ‣ Script includes basic information necessary for staging. The writing suggests an understanding of the genre's form and methods. ‣ While believable, the script lacks originality. The characters' words and actions are overly predictable (i.e., stereotyped) and the scene/play resolves in foreseeable ways. ‣ Additional revisions could increase the script's originality.	‣ Writing features a problem to be solved or challenge to be met and a reasonable (i.e., believable within the context) resolution. ‣ Some dialogue is unnatural or inconsistent with the characters or setting. AND Script includes basic information necessary for staging. The writing suggests an understanding of the genre's form and methods. ‣ Additional revisions could improve the script's dialogue and/or staging information.	‣ Script lacks one or more of the following: a problem to be solved or challenge to be met and/or a reasonable (i.e., believable within the context) resolution. AND/OR Script is not presented in the correct form; it is not obviously a script for a scene or play. ‣ Additional revisions could significantly improve the script.