

Will Black Girls Don't Get Love

SCREENWRITING WORKSHOP SYLLABUS

WEEK 1

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 16 – Session 1: Working in the Media Industry

This workshop will explore practical career opportunities in the media industry and ways to avoid the “starving artist” narrative. As the media industry is frequently labeled “a relationships business,” our team will dive into practical ways to build relationships with colleagues, funders, employers, and collaborators, as well as teaching tried and true strategies for conquering internship and incubator applications.

Activity: We will have three sample applicant notices – one for an entry level job, one for an internship and one for an incubator. Students will choose one, and draft a cover letter, with guidance from the instructor.

Readings for next session: (1) Read the “Black Girls Don’t Get Love” book. (2) Read the short screenplay of “Black Girls Don’t Get Love.” (3) Read Lajos Egri’s *The Art of Dramatic Writing* (selection).

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18 – Session 2: Fundamentals of Storytelling

This session will explore storytelling as an important part of our daily lives and culture, as well as spark the students to broaden their horizons beyond the traditional idea of storytelling. Within this context, we will also explore how and where ideas come from, and how to look for ideas in the unexpected. We will learn about the concepts of messages and themes as a crucial element of storytelling.

Readings for next session in Google Classroom: (1) Read Aristotle’s *Poetics* (selection). (2) Read Joseph Campbell’s *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (selection).

Due on Google Classroom by Friday, September 20 by 5 p.m.: Prepare 3 story ideas for a short screenplay based on the world and characters of “Black Girls Don’t Get Love.” Have your second draft of your personal statement essay revised using the provided feedback. To be submitted on Google Classroom by Friday.

WEEK 2

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 23 – Session 3: Plot & Structure; Pitch Preparation

This session will explain and explore the basic building blocks of plot and structure, with an emphasis on using those building blocks to write a screenplay. We will discuss and analyze the

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different types of conflict within storytelling. We will also address the writing of an outline and the creation of loglines.

Readings for next session in Google Classroom: Selections from John Truby's *The Anatomy of Story*, Robert McKee's *Story* and Egri's *The Art of Dramatic Writing*

In class: Each student will declare which one of their ideas they will write their script on, with input and guidance from the instructor.

Due on Google Classroom by Friday, September 27 by 5 p.m.: A preliminary logline and a basic outline for your short script.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25 – Session 4: Writing a Scene/Visual Writing

This session will explore the concept of visual storytelling in screenwriting, focusing on the concept of “show, don’t tell” through language – the same grammar skills they are learning in their classrooms but through a different lens. We will also learn about proper industry formatting for screenplays.

Readings for next session in Google Classroom: Selections from Truby's *The Anatomy of Story* and Egri's *The Art of Dramatic Writing*.

WEEK 3

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 30 – Session 5: Character

This session will focus on characters. What are the different types of characters, including the tragic hero (Aristotle)? What are all the components of a character? What characters don't we see in current media? Discuss demographics in media – age/race/ethnicity/gender/sexual orientation, etc. on and off the screen.

Due on Google Classroom by Friday, October 4 by 5 p.m.: First draft of your short script. Revised logline and first draft of your pitch presentation. Revised 3rd draft of personal statement essay.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 2 - Session 6: Dialogue

This session will focus on writing dialogue and finding each character's voice through the words they say. We will analyze what constitutes good dialogue, bad dialogue and how dialogue functions within a screenplay.

WEEK 4

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MONDAY, OCTOBER 7 - Session 7: Pitch Preparation

This session will be devoted to final revisions and performance practice on the pitch of your script ideas. Each student will have time to get feedback and advice on the presentation.

Readings for next session in Google Classroom: Handouts on Revising and Peer Critiquing.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9 – Session 8: Revision and Critiquing

This entire session will be devoted to what we call “workshopping” their scripts. Girls will learn how to properly give and receive critique, then they will implement those lessons in critique circles and collaboratively work to improve each other’s scripts under their instructor’s supervision.

Time for any final questions about the Pitch Presentation even on Saturday, October 12.

NOTE: If you would like to submit a 2nd draft of your script for feedback from the instructor, please submit to **Google Classroom by Monday, October 14 by 5 p.m.** This is after the program has ended, but the instructor will provide you feedback.