

**COURSE  
GUIDE**

**FMC 422  
ADVANCED FILM DIRECTING**

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COURSE**

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## MODULE 1 GENERAL OVERVIEW OF FILM

- Unit 1 Explaining the concept and history of film in Nigeria
- Unit 2 Film genres and classification
- Unit 3 Functions and characteristics of film

### UNIT 1 EXPLAINING THE CONCEPT AND HISTORY OF FILM IN NIGERIA

#### Unit Structure

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 1.3 Concept of film
  - 1.3.1 What is a film?
- 1.4 Brief History of Film in Nigeria
- 1.5 Summary
- 1.6 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 1.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises



#### 1.1 Introduction

It is good to have you here. You must have previously learnt some fundamentals of film and film production in Nigeria in the “Introduction to Film” course. This part will be an added knowledge with detailed explanation on what film is all about and everything that film encompasses. This unit will also do well to explain the history of film and how film came to be in Nigeria. It is my expectation that you will make the most of this class and do well to follow through with the assessments and exercises designed to increase your understanding of the course.



#### 1.2 Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- discuss the concept of film from strong knowledge
- explain critical events in film history.



## **1.3 Concept of Film**

### **1.3.1 What is Film?**

A film, also called a movie, motion picture or moving picture, is a work of visual art used to simulate experiences that communicate ideas, stories, perceptions, feelings, beauty, or atmosphere through the use of moving images (Sevemy, 2013). These images are generally accompanied by sound, and more rarely, other sensory stimulation. Film can also be said to be a series of real or fictional events recorded by camera and projected onto a screen as a segment of moving pictures, usually with an accompanying soundtrack (Onogu, 2008).

The term 'film' is commonly applied to movies of an artistic or educational nature and is not expected to have broad, commercial appeal. It is created by photographing actual scenes with a motion picture camera; by photographing drawings or miniature models using traditional animation techniques; by means of computer animation; or by a combination of some or all of these techniques and other visual effects. It is a series of images, which when displayed on screen, create an illusion of moving images by the phi phenomenon.

Film is the art of making motion pictures. It is the definition of cinema that communicates ideas, stories, perceptions, feelings, beauty or experiences by the means of recorded or programmed moving images along with other stimulation. It usually includes an optical soundtrack, which is a recording of the spoken words, music and other sounds, which accompany the images.

Films are considered to be cultural artifacts created by specific cultures, which are reflected and affected. It is considered as a source of popular entertainment and a powerful medium for educating and providing information to the citizens. The visual basis of a film gives it a universal power of communication.

Typically, a film is made by big productions, which includes art direction, casting and creation of scripts, and fabulous sets. It is usually projected on big screens as in the cinemas. A feature film has a running time of more than 60 minutes and a short film has a running time of 40 minutes or less.

## Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 3 minutes.

1. Which of these is not synonymous with film?
  - a. Moving pictures
  - b. Documentary
  - c. Motion pictures
  - d. Movies
2. Film engenders cultures and cultural values. True or False?
3. A film is made by big productions, which includes \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. Prose, poetry and drama
  - b. Tales, fiction and documentary
  - c. Art direction, casting and creation of scripts
  - d. Cinema, Docudrama and Acting
4. Film comprises image and sound track. True or false?
5. Films can only project series of real events. True or false?



### 1.4 Brief History of Film

Film has been present in various countries around the world before it came to Nigeria. Film as a medium first arrived in Nigeria in the late 19th century, in the form of peephole viewing of motion picture devices. These were soon replaced in the early 20th century with improved motion picture exhibition devices, with the first set of films screened at the Glover Memorial Hall in Lagos from 12 to 22 August 1903.

The earliest feature film made in Nigeria is the 1926's *Palaver* produced by Geoffrey Barkas; the film was also the first film ever to feature Nigerian actors in a speaking role. As at 1954, mobile cinema vans played to at least 3.5 million people in Nigeria, and films being produced by the Nigerian Film Unit were screened for free at the 44 available cinemas.

The first film entirely copyrighted to the Nigerian Film unit is *Fincho* (1957) by Sam Zebba; which is also the first Nigerian film to be shot in colour. After gaining independence in 1960 Nigerian film industries as was evident by the establishment of many new cinema houses across the nation at that time.

As a result of this, Nigerian content in theatres increased in the late 1960s into the 1970s, especially productions from Western Nigeria, owing to former theatre practitioners such as Hubert Ogunde and Moses Olaiya transitioning into the big screen.

In 1972, Yakubu Gowon issued the Indigenization Decree, which demanded the transfer of ownership of about a total of 300 film theatres from their foreign owners to Nigerians, which resulted in more Nigerians playing active roles in the cinema and film. The oil boom of 1973 through 1978 also contributed immensely to the spontaneous boost of the cinema culture in Nigeria, as the increased purchasing power in Nigeria made a wide range of citizens have disposable income to spend on cinema going and on home television sets.

After several moderate performing films, *Papa Ajasco* (1984) by Wale Adenuga became the first blockbuster, grossing approximately ₦61,000 (approx. 2015 ₦21,552,673) in three days. A year later, *Mosebolatan* (1985) by Moses Olaiya also went ahead to gross ₦107,000 (approx. 2015 ₦44,180,499) in five days.

After the decline of the Golden era, Nigerian film industry experienced a second major boom in the 1990s, the industry peaked in the mid-2000s to become the second largest film industry in the world in terms of the number of annual film productions, placing it ahead of the United States and behind only India and as of 2013, Nigerian cinema was rated as the third most valuable film industry in the world based on its worth and revenues generated (Okon, 2019).

For more detailed information: visit-  
<https://infoguidenigeria.com/history-films-nigeria/>



## Self-Assessment Exercise2

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 3 minutes.

1. What year did General Yakubu Gowon issue the indigenization.
  - a. 1960
  - b. 1972
  - c. 1985
  - d. 1993
2. The first film in Nigeria was in \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. 1903
  - b. 1926
  - c. 1957
  - d. 1960
3. The first film in Nigeria was produced in \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. Ibadan
  - b. Abeokuta
  - c. Lagos
  - d. Calabar
4. Moses Olaiya started film production ahead of Wale Adenuga. True or false?
5. The first film ever to feature Nigerian actors in a speaking role is 'Mosebolatan' by Moses Olaiya. True or false?



### 1.5 Summary

We have been able to explain the fundamental knowledge of film concept, feature and a brief historical record. Your understanding and ability to distinguish film from other artistic works will aid you in key decisions and analysis of film production even beyond this course. The historical record of film will also enhance your understanding of the stages and processes that filmmaking has passed through before now.



### 1.6 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

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<https://www.thegreatcourses.com/courses/how-to-view-and-appreciate-great-movies> .



## 1.7 Possible Answers to SAEs

### Self-Assessment Exercise 1

1. B
2. True
3. C
4. True
5. False

### Self-Assessment Exercise 2

1. A
2. A
3. C
4. False
5. False

## UNIT 2      FILM GENRES AND CLASSIFICATION

### Unit Structure

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 2.3 Film Genre
- 2.4 Film classification
- 2.5 Summary
- 2.6 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 2.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises



### 2.1 Introduction

You are welcome to the second unit of module of this course, Advanced Film Directing. I am convinced that you have understood the concept of film and how film came to be in Nigeria as discussed in Unit 1 of this module. In this unit, let us build on what we have learnt in Unit 1 by discussing film genres and the classifications of films in Nigeria. It is my expectation that you will make the most of this class and do well to follow through with the assessments and exercises designed to increase your understanding of the course.



### 2.2 Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- identify and explain some genres of film
- classify films into various unique group using some generic structures.



### 2.3 Genres of Film

A film genre is a stylistic or thematic category for motion pictures based on similarities either in the narrative elements, aesthetic approach, or the emotional response to the film (Lannom, 2020).

Drawing heavily from the theories of literary-genre criticism, film genres are usually delineated by conventions, iconography, settings, narratives, characters and actors (Grant, 2007). One can also classify films by the tone, theme/topic, mood, format, target audience, or budget (Hayward,

2006). These characteristics are most evident in genre films, which are "commercial feature films [that], through repetition and variation, tell familiar stories with familiar characters and familiar situations" in a given genre (grant, 2007).

Genres are not fixed; they change and evolve over time, and some genres may largely disappear, e.g. the melodrama (Hayward, 2006). Not only does *genre* refer to a type of film or its category, a key role is also played by the expectations of an audience about a film, as well as institutional discourses that create generic structures.

- The setting is the environment—including both time and geographic location—in which the story and action take place (e.g., present day or historical period; Earth or outer-space; urban or rural, etc.). Genres that are particularly concerned with this element include the historical drama, war film, Western, and space-opera, the names of which all denote particular settings.<sup>[4]</sup>
- The theme or topic refers to the issues or concepts that the film revolves around; for example, the science-fiction film, sports film, and crime film.
- The mood is the emotional tone of the film, as implied in the names of the comedy film, horror film, or 'tearjerker'.
- Genres informed by particular target audience(s) include children's film, teen film, women's film, and "chick flick"
- Genres characterized by the type of production include the blockbuster, independent film, and low-budget film, such as the B movies (commercial) or amateur film (non-commercial)

Screenwriters, in particular, often organise their stories by genre, focusing their attention on three specific aspects: atmosphere, character, and story. A film's atmosphere includes costumes, props, locations, and the visceral experiences created for the audience. Aspects of character include archetypes, stock characters, and the goals and motivations of the central characters. Some story considerations for screenwriters, as they relate to genre, include theme, tent-pole scenes, and how the rhythm of characters' perspective shift from scene to scene (Williams, 2020).



## 2.4 Films classification using some generic features

The table shows detailed descriptions of various genres and sub-genres:

| Genre          | Description   | Sub-genre   | Examples   |
|----------------|---|---|--|
| Action Film    | Associated with particular types of spectacles (e.g., explosions, chases, combat).  | Disaster film<br>Heroic bloodshed:<br>defined by stylized action sequences and themes such as duty, brotherhood, honour, redemption.<br>Martial arts film: focusing on the excitement and values of martial arts<br>Spy film: centered on the excitement and entertainment of espionage rather than political or psychological aspects.<br>Superhero film | <i>The Killer</i> (1989)<br><i>Hard Boiled</i> (1992)<br>James Bond films<br><i>Mission: Impossible</i> film |
| Adventure Film | Implies a narrative that is defined by a journey (often including some form of pursuit) and is usually located within a fantasy or exoticized setting. Typically, though not always, such stories include the quest narrative. The predominant emphasis on violence and fighting in action films is the typical difference between the two genres | Pirate film<br>Swashbuckler film<br>Samurai film  | <i>Lawrence of Arabia</i> (1962)<br><i>Raiders of the Lost Ark</i> (1981)<br><i>Yojimbo</i> (1961)           |

|               |  |   |   |
|---------------|--|---|---|
| Animated Film | A film medium in which the film's images are primarily created by computer or hand and the characters are voiced by actors. Animation can otherwise incorporate any genre and subgenre and it is often confused as a genre itself  | CGI animation<br>Cutout animation<br>Live-action animated film<br>Stop motion film<br>Claymation<br>Traditional animation                               | <i>The Princess and the Frog</i> (2009)<br><i>Chicken Run</i> (2000)<br><i>South Park: Bigger, Longer, &amp; Uncut</i> (1999)<br><i>Shrek</i> (2001)<br><i>Space Jam</i> (1996) |
| Comedy Film   | Defined by events that are primarily intended to make the audience laugh   | Action-comedy film<br>Buddy comedy<br>Dark/Black comedy film<br>Mockumentary<br>Parody film (including spoof film)<br>Romantic comedy<br>Slapstick film | <i>Rush Hour</i> films<br><i>Superbad</i> (2007)<br><i>Spaceballs</i> (1987)<br><i>This Is Spinal Tap</i> (1984)  |
| Drama         | Focused on emotions and defined by conflict, often looking to reality rather than sensationalism.  | Legal drama<br>Medical drama<br>Melodrama<br>Political drama<br>Docudrama<br>Teen drama   | <i>Doubt</i> (2008)<br><i>Midnight Cowboy</i> (1969)<br>)<br><i>First Reformed</i> (2018)   |
| Fantasy Film  | Films defined by situations that transcend natural laws and/or by settings inside a fictional universe, with narratives that are often inspired by or involve human myths. The genre typically incorporates non-scientific concepts such as magic, mythical creatures, and supernatural elements | Contemporary fantasy<br>Dark fantasy<br>High/epic fantasy<br>Urban fantasy  | <i>Harry Potter</i> films<br><i>Pan's Labyrinth</i> (2006)<br><i>Pirates of the Caribbean</i> (2003)  |

|                      |   |   |   |
|----------------------|---|---|---|
| Historical Film      | Films that either provide more-or-less accurate representations of historical accounts or depict fictional narratives placed inside an accurate depiction of a historical setting   | Alternate history<br>Biopic<br>Historical epic<br>Historical event<br>Historical fiction<br>Period piece        | <i>Lincoln</i> (2012)<br><i>Catch Me If You Can</i> (2002)<br><i>Spartacus</i> (1960)<br><i>Titanic</i> (1997)<br><i>Inglourious Basterds</i> (2009)        |
| Horror Film          | Films that seek to elicit fear or disgust in the audience for entertainment purposes  | Ghost films<br>Monster movie<br>Vampire films<br>Werewolf films<br>Slasher film<br>Splatter film<br>Zombie film | <i>Nosferatu</i> (1922)<br><i>The Shining</i> (1980)<br><i>Get Out</i> (2017)<br><i>Pulse</i> (2001)<br><i>Hellraiser</i> (1987)                            |
| Science Fiction Film | Films are defined by a combination of imaginative speculation and a scientific or technological premise, making use of the changes and trajectory of technology and science. This genre often incorporates space, biology, energy, time, and any other observable science   | Post-apocalyptic film<br>Military science fiction<br>Steampunk film<br>Tech noir<br>Utopian film<br>Space opera | <i>12 Monkeys</i> (1995)<br><i>Tomorrowland</i> (2015)<br><i>Children of Men</i> (2006)<br><i>Blade Runner</i> (1982)<br><i>Howl's Moving Castle</i> (2004) |
| Thriller Film        | Films that evoke excitement and suspense in the audience. The suspense element found in most films' plots is particularly exploited by the filmmaker in this genre. Tension is created by delaying what the audience sees as inevitable, and is built through situations that are menacing or where escape seems impossible | Psychological thriller<br>Mystery film<br>Techno-thriller   | <i>Night of the Hunter</i> (1955)<br><i>The Terminator</i> (1984)<br><i>What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?</i> (1962)   |



|         |  |  |  |
|---------|--|--|--|
| Western | A genre in which films are set in the American West during the 19th century and embodies the "spirit, the struggle and the demise of the new frontier." These films will often feature horse riding, violent and non-violent interaction with Native-American tribes, gunfights, and technology created during the industrial revolution | Epic Western<br>Revisionist Western<br>Spaghetti Western | Django<br>Unchained (2012)<br>The Good, the Bad and the Ugly (1966)<br>The Wild Bunch (1969) |
|---------|--|--|--|

Source: Wikipedia.org

### Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 3 minutes.

1. Which of these is not a film genre?
  - a. Action film
  - b. Science fiction film
  - c. Horror film
  - d. Hollywood
2. Film genres are fixed. True or False?
3. Define what you understand by film genre.



## 2.5 Summary

We have been able to explain the fundamental knowledge of film concept, feature and a brief historical record. Your understanding and ability to distinguish film from other artistic works will aid you in key decision and analysis of film production even beyond this course. The historical record of film will also enhance your understanding of the stages and processes that film making has passed through before now.



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## 2.7 Possible Answers to SAEs

### Self-Assessment Exercise 1

1. Hollywood
2. False
3. A film genre is a stylistic or thematic category for motion pictures based on similarities either in the narrative elements, aesthetic approach, or the emotional response to the film.

## UNIT 3      FUNCTIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF FILM

### Unit Structure

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 3.3 Functions of Films
- 3.4 Characteristics of Films
- 3.5 Summary
- 3.6 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 3.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises



### 3.1 Introduction

You are welcome to the second unit of module of this course, Advanced Film Directing. I am convinced that you have understood the concept of film and how film came to be in Nigeria as discussed in Unit 1 of this module. In this unit, let us build on what we have learnt in Unit 1 by discussing film genres and the classifications of films in Nigeria. It is my expectation that you will make the most of this class and do well to follow through with the assessments and exercises designed to increase your understanding of the course.



### 3.2 Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- establish the functions of films in our society
- identify the characteristics of films.



### 3.3 Functions of Film

**Economic Functions of film:** Film is a source of income for government and individuals. Government gets an income through licensing of films and value added tax, while individuals get their money through acting, distribution and marketing. Film generates employment opportunities for the teeming population of the country. Individuals are employed at various stages of film production. There are a lot of careers in the film industry.

**Political Functions:** Film can be used as a political tool for laundering the image of the country. Film is also a powerful tool of hegemony among countries. Government can use film during mass mobilization and orientation programmes. Films influence opinions and mobilize people for development projects. For instance, electioneering, health care campaigns, HIV stigma eradication etc. Film makers are people who come out with ideas about something they want to say or something they want to tell someone. Films can also be used for propaganda.

**Cultural Functions:** Film can be a potent tool for showcasing rich cultural heritage of a nation. Film is an important tool in building cultural institutions and reinforcing cultural pride. Film could be used to heal the psychological wounds created by slavery and colonialism and to provide moral uplift. Film reflects culture and also serves as an avenue for cultural preservation. Most films depict Nigerian culture or that of a particular ethnic group thereby inculcating and preserving culture from one generation to another. Its uses of cinema for cultural projection are very important because 'the functioning of every human body is molded by the culture within which the individual is born and reared.

**Social functions:** Film is a means of socialization in the society. That is the process an experience that helps the individual to become sensitive to the expectation of other members of the society, their values and culture.

**Communication functions:** Film is a powerful form of communication. Through sound and images filmmakers make use of technical, symbolic, audio and written codes to convey strong messages. These themes are portrayed in all types of films such as documentaries, features and commercials. Thus, through films we can communicate ideas, morals, ethics, facts, events etc effectively

**Educational functions:** Every film is a lesson meant to be learnt. As such every story, every image, or every sound has an impact on the society, either visually and/or emotionally. Most people learn manners, eating habits, health education, scientific innovation etc. from films.

**Entertainment functions:** Film serves as entertainment and relaxation for people. The function of a film is to provoke thought as well as feeling and to provide an experience that transcends the time spent actually sitting in the theatre.



### 3.4 Film Characteristics

- a. **Intensity, intimacy, ubiquity:** The qualities of intensity, intimacy, and ubiquity have been singled out as the salient characteristics of the motion-picture image. Its intensity derives from its power to hold the complete attention of the spectator on whatever bit of reality is being shown. Outside the theatre, a person's attention is usually dispersed in the endless surrounding reality, except for sporadic moments of concentration on what is selected for closer scrutiny. In the cinema one is compelled to look at something that not the viewer but the filmmaker has selected, for reasons that are not always immediately apparent. This quality of intensity becomes most noticeable when the camera remains fixed on something for a longer time than seems warranted, and spectators gradually become acutely conscious of their loss of volition over their own attention. This technique is not often used but is very effective when used well.

The intimacy of the film image is related to the camera's ability to see things in greater detail than the eye can. This ability is demonstrated in long-distance shots through a telephoto lens as well as in close-ups. At the beginning of the Japanese film *Suna no onna* (1964; *Woman in the Dunes*), for example, a pervading theme of the film is indicated by shots of grains of sand many times enlarged.

The impression of ubiquity—being everywhere at once—is achieved in part by the camera's apparent freedom to move from place to place or to approach or withdraw instantaneously. No less important to this illusion of ubiquity is the effect achieved by editing, which allows countless images representing a long, elaborate action to be presented in a comparatively short film or sequence, such as that exemplified by the opening of *The Battle of Algiers*. The geographic and temporal authority of the image even permits credibility to be given to sequences representing the past, the future, and dreams.

- b. **Particularity**  
This is an essential element of film in which film makers carefully craft the language and visual aesthetics of film to tell a particular, relatable and specific story. Particular insistence of given photographed objects also explains why the juxtapositions of montage are so effective—the spectator

compulsively searches for the reason behind a particular sequence of images.

**c. Neutrality**

Another characteristic of the film is its neutrality. The world people see around them is strongly influenced by their emotions and their interests. A plumber fixing pipes in a museum may not see the masterpieces around him or her, while an angry person may hear an insult where none was intended. The camera and the microphone, however, are thought to reproduce images and sounds without feeling. Although focus, directionality, and other technological factors limit what can be seen and heard, audiences are prepared to believe that the motion picture itself is nonhuman or even superhuman in its passive reception of information.

**d. Luminosity**

The intense brightness of the picture projected by powerful light onto a coated screen in itself transforms the most mundane element of reality. The appeal of a luminous picture is attested by efforts of advertisers to achieve luminous effects in posters and displays. The luminosity of the motion-picture image also results in a considerable range of tone, between the brightest highlight and the deepest black. In both black-and-white and colour films, the most delicate gradations in the image are therefore possible.

**e. Movement**

As a feature of the motion picture, movement is so obvious that its central importance is sometimes forgotten. The motion picture has much in common with the graphic arts, but the added dimension of movement transforms it, allowing a narrative or a drama to unfold in time in a way no other graphic art can. Both in filmmaking and in film appreciation, movement must constantly be borne in mind: composition in the motion picture is kinetic rather than static. It is not a single colour but the cumulative effect that matters, not a single situation but a developing plot. The composition within any frame, or exposure, of a motion picture is as important as the relationship of that frame to those that precede and follow it.

**f. Realism**

Another essential element of the motion-picture image is that it gives an impression of reality. Whether in a drama enacted expressly for the camera or in a documentary film of an event at which the camera just happened to be present, this feeling of realism deriving from motion-picture photography accounts for

much of the force of motion pictures. Animated films, which lack this element of photographic realism, tend to be taken as fantasies.

The attempt of the motion picture to reproduce three-dimensional reality on a flat screen presents the same problems and opportunities that are encountered in still photography and in painting. The standard camera lens, in fact, is constructed to produce visual effects precisely similar to those achieved by painters using the principles of perspective that were developed during the Renaissance.

Cinematic realism is most fully heightened when the images are accompanied by synchronous sound, whereby a second sense, hearing, ratifies what the eyes see. Although reproduced sound can be manipulated with regard to distance, timbre, clarity, and duration, in combination with photographed moving images, it forcefully brings alive its subject as present in a way unavailable to the other arts of representation

**g. Montage**

Perhaps the most essential characteristic of the motion picture is montage, from the French *monter*, “to assemble.” Montage refers to the editing of the film, the cutting and piecing together of exposed film in a manner that best conveys the intent of the work. Montage is what distinguishes motion pictures from the performing arts, which exist only within a performance. The motion picture, by contrast, uses the performances as the raw material, which is built up as a novel or an essay or a painting, studiously put together piece by piece, with an allowance for trial and error, second thoughts, and, if necessary, reshooting. The order in which the segments of film are presented can have drastically different dramatic effects.



### Self-Assessment Exercise

Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 3 minutes.

1. Which of these is a function of film?
  - a. Political
  - b. Fear factor
  - c. Marital function
  - d. Nutritional function
2. Does film educate? Yes or No?
3. Some of these make up film characteristics \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. Prose, poetry and drama
  - b. Simile, Metaphor and Hyperbole
  - c. Particularity, Movement, and Neutrality
  - d. Acting, rehearsal, and Story



### 3.5 Summary

In this unit, we have been able to establish the functions of film and how film can be distinguished from any other artistic arts work. This was made easy by establishing the distinctive characteristics of film. I believe this module has prepared you for further discussions on film directing as we progress to the next module.



### 3.6 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

Grant, Barry Keith (2007). *Film Genre: From Iconography to Ideology*-Short cuts. Wallflower Press

Onogu, A. (2008). The role of producers in the film industry. In Onabajo, F. & Bayo, R.M (Ed.), *Fundamentals of home video production*. African Renaissance books Incorporated

Okon, P. (2019). History of films in Nigeria. From; <https://infoguidenigeria.com/history-films-nigeria/>

Sevemy, A. (2013). The movie theatre of the future will be in your mind. From: <https://tribecafilm.com/future-of-film/future-of-the-movie-theater-is-in-your-mind>

Ugondo, P.I., (2015). Film, cinema and literature.  
<https://www.nou.edu.ng/sites/default/files/201802/MAC%20324%20FILM%2C%20CINEMA%20AND%20LITERATURE.pdf>



### **3.7 Possible Answers to SAEs**

1. Political
2. Yes
3. Particularity, Movement, and Neutrality

## MODULE 2      FILM SCRIPT

|        |                              |
|--------|------------------------------|
| Unit 1 | What is a film script?       |
| Unit 2 | The structure of film script |
| Unit 3 | Principles of Script Writing |
| Unit 4 | Story board                  |
| Unit 5 | Film production script       |

### UNIT 1      WHAT IS A FILM SCRIPT?

#### Unit Structure

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 1.3 What is a Script?
- 1.4 Summary
- 1.6 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 1.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises



#### 1.1 Introduction

Glad to have you again. I believe most of us have the basic knowledge of film from the previous lesson. In this section, we are going to expose you to the fundamental knowledge of film script and script writing, this will also contain samples and templates of production script. The lesson will also cover technical knowledge of storyboard and other principles of screen writing. Links and samples that can assist the write film scripts and story boards have been provided.



#### 1.2 Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- discuss film script
- explain the principles of script writing
- explain how to develop a success script.



#### 1.3 What Is a Script?

A script is a document that comprises setting, characters, dialogue, and stage directions for movies, TV shows, and stage plays. When directors stage such productions, they follow the instructions provided by the

script. In live theatre, script writers are playwrights, and the scripts are also known as playscripts. In film and television, script writers are called screenwriters. A film script is called a screenplay, and a TV script is called a teleplay (Rhimes, 2021).

The script starts the artistic process for a dramatic performance, but film, TV, and theatre are all inherently collaborative. Directors, actors, and designers interpret the script. Sometimes these professionals uncover new insight about the material that the original screenwriter may have never imagined during the scriptwriting process. While a great script forms the foundation of a great performance, it is not the only factor in the artistic process (Rhimes, 2021).

A movie script details all the parts – audio, visual, behaviour, dialogue that you need to tell a visual story, in a movie or on film. It is usually a team effort, going through loads of revisions and rewrites, as well as the relentless efforts of the producers, directors, and actors. However, the script generally starts with the hard work and brainpower of one person. Because film shows are audiovisual mediums, budding scriptwriters need to include all the audio (sound) and visual (sight) parts of a story. His job is to translate pictures and sounds into words. Importantly, you need to Show the audience what is happening, not tell them. If that is gotten correctly, then the movie project is on its way to a blockbuster.

The first step to an incredible screenwriting is to read some good scripts. You cannot get it wrong by making efforts to read scripts that have been previously written by established screenwriters in the industry. It is an especially good idea to read some in the genre that your script is going to be in, so you can get the lay of the land. If you are writing a comedy, try searching for best comedy scripts, if it is other genre, like action film, you then do well to read action scripts.

One of the surest way develop your skill and to get it write is also by watching and rewatching your favourite films and figure out why you like them so much. Make notes about why you love certain scenes and dialogues. Examine the characters and make notes on why they appeal to you. It should be noted that as you practice and write more scripts with regular improvements, you are going to get better as you progress (Leighfield, 2022).

**Self-Assessment Exercise 1**

- a. Give a cogent definition of script.
- b. A film script is also called screenplay. True or False?
- c. A script can be written for any of these two, except.....
  - i. TV
  - ii. Film
  - iii. Newspaper

**1.4 Summary**

I hope you had a great start in this module. Of course, we have been able to see what film script is all about and some of its critical ingredients. Kindly give attention to the explanation and some of the salient points that revolve around writing screenplays and how the screenwriter invested in this craft. Also, endeavour to do your personal research in order to increase your understanding and for you to be properly grounded.

**1.5 References/Further Readings/Web Resources**

Leighfield, L. (2022). How to write a script: Step-by-step guide.  
<https://boards.com/how-to-write-a-script>

Rhimes, S. (2021). What Is a Script? Basic Elements of Screenplays and Playscripts.  
<https://www.masterclass.com/articles/script-writing-explained#what-is-a-script>



## 1.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises

- a. Give a cogent definition of script.

A script is a document that comprises setting, characters, dialogue, and stage directions for movies, TV shows, and stage plays.

- b. True  
c. Newspaper

## UNIT 2 THE STRUCTURE OF A FILM SCRIPT

### Unit Structure

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 2.3 The structure of Film Script?
- 2.4 Screenplay Structure
- 2.5 Summary
- 2.6 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 2.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises



### 2.1 Introduction

Glad to have you again. I believe most of us have the basic knowledge of film from the previous lesson. In this section, we are going to expose you to the fundamental knowledge of film script and script writing, this will also contain samples and templates of production script. The lesson will also cover technical knowledge of storyboard and other principles of screen writing. Links and samples that can assist the write film scripts and story boards have been provided.



### 2.2 Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- discuss the structure of film script
- explain the principles of script writing
- compare some of the styles.



### 2.3 The Structure of Film Script

Before anything else, let us first of all define what film structure is. We have mentioned earlier that a film script is also called **screenplay**. Therefore, a film script structure/ screenplay structure is a guideline how a story is written. It provides instructions to the writers on when certain actions/beats should happen, how drama should be built, how to hold audience attention, and more.

Generally, basic screenplay structure is taught as a rough guideline to help the structure and pace of a script. Structure is arranging your story's elements into a specific chronological order to elicit the perfect emotional response from the reader. If you're writing a screenplay, the same thing



goes, but of course, you'll eventually want to see your screenplay evolve into a movie and so again, screenplay structure is arranging your screenplay's story elements into a specific chronological order so that you elicit the perfect emotional response from your audience.

Story structure also refers to a way in which your characters, events, reactions and outcomes of a story are organised in order to create a solid plot (Maio, 2019).



## 2.4 Screenplay Structures

This will be discussed based on Miyaomoto, (2021). ideas, where he highlighted ten structures of film script.

- a. **Three-Act Structure**  
This has been the story structure followed by mankind since the days of telling stories around the village fire or etching cave paintings on stone walls depicting worthy stories of hunting for prey (beginning), confronting the prey (middle), and defeating the prey (end).  
Movies like *Star Wars*, *The Fugitive*, *Witness*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, and *Die Hard* are perfect examples of the three-act structure.
- b. **Real-Time Structure**  
Rather than piecing together a screenplay only using the story's most vital parts as you do in the three-act structure other scripts represent their stories in a single uninterrupted stream. The causality of whatever conflicts are thrown at the characters is presented in *real time*.  
There are no breaks, no time jumps, no flashbacks, or anything of the sort. The story is presented unbroken and unfiltered. Every moment is important and screenwriters that attempt to apply this structure to their stories must understand that. For instance, because Jack Bauer in the real-time structured television series *24* he was never seen going to the bathroom in a single 24-hour period — every moment has to matter. Other movies that made use of real time structure are: *High Noon*, *The Ticking Time Clock*, *Nick of Time*, *2 Angry Men*, *My Dinner with Andre*, etc.
- c. **Multiple Timeline Structure**  
This is perhaps one of the most complicated structures in screenwriting. You take a few otherwise linear stories and mix them up together. Most of the time the stories are blended together peppered with the same themes, emotions, and messages, but are not always specifically and directly connected. One story's causality does not always affect the others. The sole connection

between them is the shared themes, emotions, and messages beyond production choices like using the same actors to portray different characters, showcasing the same locations in different time periods, etc.

The magic of this structure is that it can give the audience the sense that all life in the universe is somehow connected.

d. **Hyperlink Structure**

Linear stories, like those found in the three-act structure, showcase somewhat of a domino effect. Each domino falls forward, causing the next to fall, and the next, and the next, until a final resolution is made. It is telling a story from Point A to Z, never missing an alphabetical point in between.

But some cinematic stories are like multiple timeline structures, but with each and every story hyperlinked, like multiple different rows of falling dominoes weaving in and out of each other but always ending in the same resolution at the end. The cause and effect of each story lead everything together.

These types of stories give the audience a sense of how our individual lives can be so interconnected. The cause and effect of what we do or do not do can have a parallel cause and effect in other people's lives. Examples of movies with hyperlink structure are: *Magnolia*, *Crash*, and *Babel*.

e. **Fabula/Syuzhet Structure**

This structure comes to us from Russia, using terms that originated from Russian formalism and employed in narratology that describe narrative construction. *Fabula* is the meat of the story while the *syuzhet* is the narration and how the story is organised. This specific structure employed by American cinema often utilizes original organisation by showing the end first, and having the audience view how they got there. The story is about the journey and focuses on the *how* as opposed to the *what*.

f. **Reverse Chronological Structure**

One of the more original structures we have seen in movies is telling stories in reverse chronological order. Now, this differs from the Fabula/Syuzhet structure. While we do start with the end — or near end — we are not going back to a chronological storyline. We are slicing the screenplay into pieces and then arranging the story using those sections from end to beginning with each scene itself told in order. The beginning of the story becomes the main cause of tension, curiosity, and intrigue.

Reverse chronological structures are difficult to construct. It is not as simple as slicing that script into chunks and reversing the order of those story chunks. You have to still write a compelling and engaging story that plays better in that reverse order, leaving cliffhangers and presenting questions that readers and audiences may ponder — all while answering questions at the same time.

g. Rashomon Structure

This structure is derived from the classic Akira Kurosawa masterpiece of the same name, *Rashomon*. It centers on telling the same story from different points of view. These stories can often use elements of the Fabula/Syuzhet Structure by having a character within the *syuzhet* remembering or recalling events. However, the *fabula* is different here because it is the same story told multiple times from the perspective of different characters.

While the story itself is the same, it's different because of the way it is being told. This allows the audience to remember that there are always different sides to the same story. It allows you, the writer, to inject even more creativity and ingenuity into your screenplays.

h. Circular Structure

The circular narrative is a story that often ends where it starts and starts where it ends. This structure utilizes elements from the Fabula/Syuzhet Structure. Time travel stories are the most prominent circular structure narratives and utilize the circular aspect of the narrative in the most literal of ways. It is also possible that non-time travel stories can embrace this structure as well, in almost any genre, and can handle the circular aspect in a loose fashion. *Odyssey* is an example (but the movie mainly used subtle circular narrative).

i. Non-Linear Structure

Non-linear films tell stories by jumping backward, forwards, and sideways in time to tell a single story. Such stories are not presented in chronological order, or the narrative does not follow the direct causality pattern of the story events that you would find in a three-act structure or through the average *fabula*.

The concept behind non-linear films is to challenge the way we think we remember things, or how characters recall their own memories of experiences they have been through. This challenges the reader and the eventual audience. They have to remember where certain scenes and storylines left off and they have to be able to pick the story back up almost immediately.

j. Oneiric Structure

Oneiric Structure is unique as it depicts a cinematic story using dream-like visuals, exploring the structure of dreams, memories, and human consciousness.

Subtle usage of this structure is best represented by Cameron Crowe's *Vanilla Sky*. The lines between real world and dreamworld get more and more blurry as the film moves forward. We're not sure what is real and what is not.

- To get more information on structure of script and the 3 ACTS structure, click the links below:

[https://youtu.be/Vr7VIb4\\_QAE](https://youtu.be/Vr7VIb4_QAE)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HIFkyeUgbwk>

### Self-Assessment Exercise 2

- a. Briefly explain screenplay structure.
- b. Itemize at three major compositions of screen play structure.
- c. Story structure also refers to a way in which your characters, -----  
-----, ----- and ..... of a story are organised in order to



### 2.5 Summary

We have done justice to film script and screenplay structures. Even though several ideas and academic postulations about in this regard. We have been able to provide detailed discussion that clearly explained everything involved in film script and screenplay structures. You will obviously see all.



### 2.6 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

Maio, A. (2019). What is a screenplay? A brief definition for the beginner.  
<https://www.studiobinder.com/blog/what-is-screenplay-definition/>

Miyaomoto, K. (2021). 10 screenplay structures that screenwriters can use. <https://screencraft.org/blog/10-screenplay-structures-that-screenwriters-can-use/>



## 2.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises

- a. Briefly explain screenplay structure.  
It is a rough guideline to help the structure and pace of a script. Structure is arranging your story's elements into a specific chronological order to elicit the perfect emotional response from the reader.
- b. Itemise at three major composition of screen play structure.  
Three-act structure  
Real-time structure  
Multiple timeline structure
- c. Events, reactions and outcomes.

## UNIT 3 PRINCIPLES OF SCRIPT WRITING

### Unit Structure

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 3.3 Principles of Script Writing?
- 3.4 Summary
- 3.5 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 3.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises



### 3.1 Introduction

Glad to have you again. I believe most of us have the basic knowledge of film from the previous lesson. In this section, we are going to expose you to the fundamental knowledge of some essential guidelines you can adopt when writing the script for any film project. As you go through this lesson, be rest assured that some of the principles are relatable and most be given careful attention. Also, ensure you attempt the assigned assessment question (s) so you can be more adept at this.



### 3.2 Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- discuss some principles of film script
- apply the guidelines in real film projects
- list at least five applicable principles of script writing.



### 3.3 Principles of Script Writing

To successfully structure your script, the following principles of storytelling apply, irrespective of what story genres, story setting, or the medium;

1. **Give them what they want:** The audience subconsciously expects certain things to happen at certain points in a movie. Structure reveals this information so seamlessly they forget it is coming and are hooked to keep watching more. Without even realizing it, a well-structured movie causes your audience's emotions to run wild and live vicariously through both your Protagonist and main characters.

2. **Screenplay structure is story and plot:** Content of your story and the form used to tell your story. Two common ways to describe these two parts of narrative screenplay structure are story and plot.
3. **Proper pacing:** When it comes to releasing your story's information, pacing is critical to keep your audience on the edge of their seats. When you keep the pace fast, the Hollywood executive will be anxious to turn the page to see what happens next. Keeping a reader engaged is critical to selling a screenplay.
4. **Scenes:** As you write and eventually edit each scene, be clear on at least one overall goal for that scene. A scene that simply describes its location, or even something about a particular character, yet provides no real information, no decision, no action, no change or forward motion to your overall story is a scene without structure.
5. **Outline:** Do not build before you plan. The details are in your preparation, and for the screenwriter, the prep work is what we call The Outline. Outline first. Write second. (The Arena Group, 2022)

### Self-Assessment Exercises

- i. Explain two principles of script writing.
- ii. Script writing is applicable to any film genre. **True or False?**



### 3.4 Summary

This lesson must have definitely infused some practical knowledge that will always guide you whenever you are faced with the task of developing or writing a film script. Mind you, these principles may be fragmented or could be explained differently by other authors, your primary goal as a scholar is to enrich your experience with diverse resources that will improve your current knowledge. In any case, I believe what you have in this lesson will carry you through any film project.



### 3.5 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

Alan, C.H. (2019). Principles and elements of outstanding scriptwriting.

<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/mono/10.4324/9780429461361-2/principles-elements-outstanding-scriptwriting-alan-hueth>

The Arena Group, (2022). Script: 5 reasons screenplay story structure is important. <https://scriptmag.com/page/screenplay-story-structure>



### 3.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises

**Outline:** Do not build before you plan. The details are in your preparation, and for the screenwriter, the prep work is what we call The Outline. Outline first. Write second.

**Scenes:** As you write and eventually edit each scene, be clear on at least one overall goal for that scene.

**True**



## UNIT 4 STORYBOARD

### Unit Structure

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 4.3 What is a Storyboard?
- 4.4 Why is Storyboarding Important?
- 4.5 How to make a Storyboard?
- 4.6 Summary
- 4.7 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 4.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises



### 4.1 Introduction

Glad to have you again. I believe most of us have the basic knowledge of film from the previous lesson. In this section, I am going to expose you to the fundamental knowledge and the basics of writing a good storyboard. As you all know, there is no house without a foundation, in the same vein, I will like you to perceive storyboards as one of the essential features of a film production. I urge you to pay attention to all the samples provided and try as much as possible to make an attempt to design your own storyboard for a short play.



### 4.2 Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain storyboard in simple terms
- identify some importance of storyboard
- prepare a good storyboard.



### 4.3 What is a Storyboard?

A storyboard is a graphic organiser that consists of illustration or images displayed in sequence for the purpose of pre visualizing a motion picture, animation, motion graphic or interactive media sequence. It is a graphic representation of how your video will unfold, shot by shot. It can also be likened to a roadmap when you make a video (Vyond, 2021; Wikipedia, 2022).

A story board contains a set of sketches is arranged depicting consecutively the important changes of scene and action in a series of

shots for a film. It can be a visual outline of a film (be it a short film or feature film) or animation. The storyboard is an important part of the preproduction process and consists of a series of images that show everything that's going to happen in your finished piece.

Many storyboards are hand-drawn, but some creators or animators choose to use storyboarding software. The finished result resembles a comic book or a graphic novel (Foster, 2021).



#### 4.4 Why Is Storyboarding Important?

If you are working with a script, you already know the flow of your project. The key is to translate that flow and new ideas from word form to image form. Each image on your storyboard needs to include enough information that someone who has never read your script can look at it and know what's going on. But it should not contain *too much* information, as that will crowd out the relevant details.

- Think of the storyboard as the graphic novelization of your script, where each panel represents a new camera angle or a key moment in the action.
- The aim of the storyboarding process is twofold: to ensure that you get all the coverage you need on set to craft a coherent and exciting story in the editing room, and to do so in an economical way, so as to avoid spending time filming unnecessary shots or lose money in video production or special effects.
- Good storyboards can be supremely useful when directing big action sequences. Drawing out your shot list can be an organising principle in the cacophony of producing complicated shoots. Storyboards become a precise map of what's almost certain to be a hectic shoot day. You want to get this right.



#### 4.5 How to Make a Storyboard

The following four steps have been suggested by Foster, (2021):

1. **Make a short list.** Take a scene from your script and make a shot list. How can particular camera angles tell the story, or make a moment more impactful? What can you reveal about your characters and the story via camera angles? Draw a rough sketch of your shot list.
2. **Sketch it out.** Whether you are working on a feature film or a short animation, choose one of the more complex sequences, and scope out a vision for the scene. List all of the shots that you anticipate needing as raw material, and then sketch them out in the squares

of your storyboard, like a comic strip. If you are not much of an artist, it is fine to use basic shapes and stick figures on a piece of paper. But if you are not getting the effect you want, you can work with a storyboard artist to make changes or map out a proposed sequence.

3. **Fill in details.** Your storyboard has to contain the most important elements of each scene. But while it is a static image, the end result will be a moving video or animation that follows the entire storyline. With that in mind, be sure to indicate motion in your storyboard. For example, you can indicate the direction a person is walking with arrows. You will also want to include any props that will be present in the final product, as well as the camera angles and framing of each shot. A good rule of thumb is to include a general outline of all of the relevant details of each shot, without going too deep into distracting details.
4. **Add words.** Once you have created the images, it might help to add additional words at the bottom of the images to give more context about what's going on. This is a great place in the storyboard process to include anything that can't be expressed in your simple drawings, like any voice over you plan to include.



## 4.6 Summary

I am very confident that you enjoyed this lesson. The unit has provided the background knowledge needed for any student to be able to at least prepare a good storyboard. Kindly pay attention to all the Self-Assessment Exercises and ensure you practice regularly. Also, endeavour to furnish yourself with additional knowledge by checking the reference and reading sources provided to enhance your knowledge in this regard.

### Self-Assessment Exercise 3

1. What is a storyboard?
2. Itemize ways you can effectively write a storyboard.



### **3.5 References/Further Readings/Web Resources**

Vyond, (2021). What is a storyboard and why do you need one?  
<https://www.vyond.com/resources/what-is-a-storyboard-and-why-do-you-need-one/>

Wikipedia, (2022) Storyboard. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Storyboard>



### 3.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises

i. What is a storyboard?

A storyboard is a graphic organiser that consists of illustration or images displayed in sequence for the purpose of pre visualizing a motion picture, animation, motion graphic or interactive media sequence.

ii. Itemize ways you can effectively write a storyboard.

Make a shot list

Sketch it out

Fill in details

## UNIT 5      FILM PRODUCTION SCRIPT

### Unit Structure

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 5.3 Film Production Script
- 5.4 Details to Include in your Shooting Script
- 5.5 Benefits of Production Script
- 5.6 Summary
- 5.7 Glossary
- 5.8 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 5.9 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 5.10 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises



### 5.1 Introduction

I believe most of us have the basic knowledge of film from the previous lesson. In this section, we are going to expose you to the fundamental knowledge of film script and script writing, this will also contain samples and templates of production script. The lesson will also cover technical knowledge of storyboard and other principles of screen writing. Links and samples that can assist the write film scripts and story boards have been provided.



### 5.2 Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain film production script
- highlight some details of production script
- list some benefits of production script.



### 5.3 Film Production Script

A shooting script is a document used within the film and motion picture industry that indicates how different scenes in a movie breakdown. It incorporates the screenplay form the purpose of enhancing the production of the film proper. The production script is usually designed by the director and the cinematographer with details of shots, camera angels, scene numbers and other important directions for film production (Wikipedia, 2022; Wiesen, 2022).

The production script can basically be said to be a screenplay that has been adjusted by the director and other members of the film crew for use as a document to plan out different shots and days of filming. The pages of a shooting script are numbered, as are the individual scenes and shots that need to be filmed. This document also includes notations and instructions on how scenes will be filmed, with indications of different shots such as close ups and the angles that will be used (Mateer, 2021; Wiesen, 2022).

As changes occur to the shooting schedule or new scenes are added to a movie, the shooting script is adjusted accordingly. Directors and **cinematographers** typically make notations in a shooting script to indicate how different scenes are going to be handled during filming. This allows the cast and crew to better understand what is happening, and provides an overall guide for the shooting process. Technical cues are typically included in this, so that a scene within a shooting script might include specific instructions (Wiesen, 2022).



#### 5.4 Details to include in your shooting script

Formatting is ultimately up to you and depends on what works best for your team or production company. If you use screenwriting software, it may have a shooting script template you can use. Most likely, you will want to create a spreadsheet-style layout with a header row that labels each column of information.

The information you include depends on the needs of your team but may include the following:

- **Scene numbers:** These are important to ensure every scene gets covered and will come in especially handy when editing starts. To break down smaller scenes within a scene, use the alphabet (e.g., Scene 1a, 1b, 1c, etc).
- **Camera shots:** Include how many and which camera angles to use in each scene, what types of shots are needed (close-ups, medium shots, over-the-shoulder shots, POV shots, etc.), and any special information needed for those shots, such as lighting directions.
- **What to film:** Describe what is to be shown in each shot, including the character names, what actions will occur, what objects or B-roll should be captured in each setting and any desired acting notes.
- **Sets and props:** Name the location for each shot, list any special props or set decoration involved, and make note of key costuming details.

- **Special effects and stunts:** Describe any stunts, special effects, or transitions that will occur during the filming or editing (fade-ins, cross dissolves, abrupt changes where you’ll cut to the next scene, etc.) and any special considerations needed to allow them to happen.

SHOOTING SCRIPT SAMPLE 1

| PICTURE  | AUDIO  |
|--|--|
| Begin in black - fade in first testimonial white script on black - Acadia has transformed itself... Cutting edge but human...high-tech, high-touch.<br>Matthew Barrett, Chairman, CEO, Bank of Montreal<br>Fade out white script   | No sound   |
| Cut to edited intro similar to Connect Acadia intro but with <b>big, energy</b> shots of students in the fall at, for example, Homecoming weekend.   | Futuristic pop or light rock. Can't be heavy but has to be fast.                           |
| Cross dissolve to Jill dressed casually in the Sub. Start with an extreme <b>closeup</b> of her face as she moves the cup away from her face. Pull back to a medium shot. She is standing and holding papers. Her laptop and work are visible on the table. There should be students moving in the background. Her full name (Jill <b>usage</b> ) and home community appear as a subtitle. <b>Everytime</b> we see Jill in the video, she should be moving about with energy but also be extremely gregarious. | Hi, I'm Jill. I'm a student at Acadia University.  |
| She puts the papers on the table and "talks with her hands". The shot should be tight yet include her <b>hands which</b> can sometimes go out of frame.  | In the next ten minutes I'm going to give you my ten reasons why Acadia is the university. |

SHOOTING SCRIPT SAMPLE 2

| FAMILY LAND  |  |
|--|--|
| PICTURE  | SOUND  |
| FAMILY LAND, MAPS & RUINED HOMES—duration: 5:00  | <b>PIVO:</b> Don <b>Chabo</b> dictates the history of the family land. |
| <b>DC EXPLAINS HISTORY OF FAMILY LAND TO LEYTE</b>   | He speaks little Spanish, and his granddaughter speaks little Mayan.   |
| DC EXPLAINS FAMILY LAND TO LEYTE (WHITNEY)<br>LEYTE DRAWS TREES<br>FULL MAP OF FIRST FAMILY LAND<br>SECOND FULL MAP OF FAMILY LAND |  |

Source: Adobe, 2022



### 5.5 Benefits of Production script

1. The purpose of a shooting script is to help the Director and the rest of the production crew to organise the production. In a way that provides maximum use of the time and resources on the set.
2. A shooting script saves time, and time and money on the set. The shooting script outlines the details of the production process. This also includes details on how the director, cinematographer, and other members of the production crew have decided will be most appropriate to save the production time and to maximise use of resources.
3. The shooting script has the benefit of providing a clear picture of what shots and scenes must be captured, at what locations, and in what effect.



4. The shooting script is a good tool that synergizes the roles of the director and cinematographers and makes it easier to connect with other members of the production crew.



## 5.6 Summary

This section has extensively provided practical details on what film script is all about. The unit has discussed script and structure of script writing as well as principles of script writing. I hope students will especially be interested in engaging in personal practice to finetune their skills in designing a storyboard and in writing an interesting screenplay. Students should make efforts to understand everything that is encompassed in a production script and learn everything it should contain. Production script is very key to film production because the film project revolves around the screenplay.

## 5.7 Glossary

**Special effects:** Special effects (often abbreviated as SFX, SPFX, F/X or simply FX) are illusions or visual tricks used in the theatre, film, television, and video game, to simulate the imagined events in a story or virtual world.

**Screenplay:** screenplay or script is written text that provides the basis for a film production. Screenplays usually include not only the dialogue spoken by the characters but also a shot-by-shot outline of the film's action.

**Storyboard:** A storyboard is a visual outline of a film (be it a short film or feature film) or animation. It's an important part of the preproduction process and consists of a series of images that show everything that's going to happen in your finished piece.

## 5.8 Self-Assessment Exercises

- i. What do you understand by production scripts and state some of its benefits?
- ii. List the details to include in production scripts.



## 5.9 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

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### **5.10 Possible answers to self-assessment exercises**

- i. The production script can basically be said to be a screenplay that has been adjusted by the director and other members of the film crew for use as a document to plan out different shots and days of filming.
- ii. Camera shots, Scene Numbers.

## MODULE 3      STORY DEVELOPMENT AND WRITING

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| Unit 1 | Story writing ideas and development         |
| Unit 2 | Writing the synopsis, logline and treatment |
| Unit 3 | Casting and casting process                 |

### UNIT 1      STORY WRITING IDEAS AND DEVELOPMENT

#### Unit Structure

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 1.3. Story Writing Ideas and Development
- 1.4 Things to Consider When Writing a Story
- 1.5 Effective Story Development for Film
- 1.6 Summary
- 1.7 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 1.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises



#### 1.1 Introduction

It is another wonderful opportunity to introduce this interesting unit to you. From the last lesson, we discussed film script, film script structure and leading off to how to design a storyboard among other lessons. In this unit, we are going to learn how to write actual stories, how to develop story ideas, everything involved in story writing for film production. It also going to be added advantage to give attention to all listed sources for further reading; as this will not only aid your knowledge, it will also infuse the necessary skills you need to improve your story writing.



#### 1.2 Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- discuss the basics of story writing
- explain the fundamentals of story development.



### 1.3 Story writing ideas and development

Writing for movies is a specialized skill. It differs greatly from “normal” writing (i.e., writing a novel). Books and movies both start with a story idea. From there, the process of writing a movie is vastly different from writing a book (Swift, 2019). Story development is the most important part of brainstorming. Say you have an idea, a small piece of something you think could be a movie or a television show. Story development is the process you go through to take that kernel of thought and turn it into a fully fleshed-out screenplay or pitch (Hellerman, 2021).

This is like a journey of taking inspiration from your imagination and putting tangible details down on paper. By the time you are done, you should be able to communicate this to someone else and have them totally understand what you are trying to do (Hellerman, 2021).

Assuming you already have an idea for a movie, your next step should be to carefully craft a logline. The logline is a very brief summary that describes the central conflict of your story, introduces the characters, and hooks the reader (Swift, 2019).

### 1.4 Things to consider when writing a story

The part will consider the 9 approaches recommended by wikihow (2019):

- a. **Supplies.** You should gather everything you will need to write this story. You should get pens, pencils, paper, erasers and a pencil sharpener.
- b. **Think.** You should sit back and let your imagination run wild. You should imagine what you want the story to be like. There are many ways to gather ideas for a story, be it inspiration from your life, the world around you, or the works of other film makers but it is important you think outside the box and try to bring something new to the world. Try your best to come up with an idea that you and others would enjoy, ensuring that is worth all the effort writing the script will entail.
- c. **Decision.** You have to make a decision and decide what kind of story you want to write. If the plot to the movie is given to you already then build upon that.
- d. **Build.** You have to construct the story from scratch. If you want ideas, then you should read a few books that have to do with the plot of the movie. This will give you an idea of what to write. Possibly the most important aspect of this step is ensuring that the frame of your story has no big conflicting story points or plot holes

- in it (unless put there intentionally \*a dangerous move probably left to the professionals but if it works out, go right ahead\*).
- e. **Draft.** You should write out a draft for the story. You should review this yourself and decide if it is what you want. If it is not what you want, then write another rough draft.
  - f. **Critics.** You should show your rough draft to people you trust. Have them read the draft and tell you what they like or do not like about it. This way you know what you can correct or what looks good.
  - g. **Sample.** You should write out a lot of pages for your story. You should have this around as a sample to show people your work. This will give people you are working with an idea of how the story is coming along.
  - h. **Edit.** After you are done with your story, you can check it over and over again for mistakes. If you have enough income, take your story to an editor and have him or her review your story. If you have a professional who can review your story for free then go ahead.
  - i. **Call.** You should call all the important people you are working for or want to work for. Let them know you are done with your story. Set up a meeting and have them review your story.



## 1.5 Effective Story Development for Film

This part will adopt the suggestion found on masterclass.com (2020):

1. Stick to the main plot points and main characters. One page is limited real estate, so focus only on what's necessary to tell your story. This means you should omit smaller subplots and secondary characters that aren't essential to your script's A-story.
2. Write in the style of the movie's genre. Use language that elicits feelings associated with the tone of your screenplay's genre. For example, a comedy movie synopsis should convey how funny the script is, an action movie synopsis how exciting the script is, a horror movie synopsis how terrifying the script is, etc.
3. Create narrative propulsion. Each beat in your synopsis should be the cause of the next beat or the effect of the previous beat. This ensures that every beat has a narrative purpose and launches into the subsequent beat.
4. Emphasize character development. It's easy to be so focused on hitting your plot points that you forget to pay attention to your character arcs. Make sure your protagonist's motivations are clear and that you point out their emotional turning points throughout the synopsis. Additionally, every main character should have one or more distinctive characteristics to make them stand out from the other characters.

5. Spoil the ending. This isn't the time to end on a cliffhanger. Your synopsis should include spoilers for all your screenplay's main plot points, including the ending. Give your synopsis a satisfying conclusion and tie up all the loose ends that you introduced.

### Self-Assessment Exercise 1

- i. What do you understand by story development?
- ii List five essential elements to consider when writing a story.



### 1.6 Summary

It is my believe that you have been exposed to every detail you need to be a successful story writer. This unit has provided the requisite knowledge of film story ideas and has been able to explain other necessary elements you need to consider when writing a story. My appeal to you is that you make regular practice and attempt to answer the assessment questions. As you know, getting help or liaising with specialist who are already grounded in this craft may prove to be additional learning opportunity to improve your practical skills in this aspect.



### 1.7 **References/Further Readings/Web Resources**



## **1.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises**

- i. Story development is the process you go through to take that grain of thought and turning it into a fully fleshed-out screenplay or pitch.
- ii List five essential elements to consider when writing a story.  
Draft, edit, call, build, think.



## UNIT 2 WRITING THE SYNOPSIS, LOGLINE AND TREATMENT

### Unit Structure

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 2.3 What is a Synopsis?
- 2.4 Writing Film Logline
- 2.5 Film Treatment
- 2.6 Summary
- 2.7 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 2.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise



### 2.1 Introduction

It is another wonderful opportunity to introduce this interesting unit to you. From the last lesson, we discussed story writing, story development and other techniques involved in writing film story. In this unit, we are going to learn how to write the synopsis the logline, as well as everything involved in designing the film treatment. In order to enhance your knowledge, the lesson has infused some additional materials and samples of each of the elements we a discussing under this unit, to serve as visual aids while I encourage you to attempt your own project.



### 2.2 Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- discuss the basics for writing a synopsis
- explain what a logline is
- discuss how to design film treatment.



### 2.3 What is a synopsis?

A film synopsis is a brief summary of the entire screenplay, typically a one-page document that summarizes everything in your film. It contains the film's title, genre, logline (a one-sentence summary), and a five-paragraph explanation of the film's storyline, major plot points, and key characters. A screenwriter primarily writes a script synopsis as a selling tool to convince film industry higher-ups to read the full screenplay (Leighfield, 2021; Msterclass, 2020)

### **Tips for Writing Synopsis**

Keep it brief: Your synopsis should be roughly two to three pages long. A one-page synopsis is likely to not have enough detail, but anything over three pages is too bulky. Your reader should be able to finish reading your synopsis in a few minutes, and have a good idea of whether it's right for them.

Write in the present tense: You should always write in the present tense, even if your story is set in the past. For example, 'Rocky punches Apollo Creed' not 'Rocky punched Apollo Creed.'

Use the third person: Always write from a third person perspective. For example: use pronouns that depict third person; like 'he', she. And they.

Get your spacing and paragraphs right: Use single spacing. Keep each paragraph single spaced. Place an extra space between individual paragraphs. When you start a new paragraph, do not indent.

Stick to the main plot points and main characters: You do not have a lot of space to play with, so skip the subplots and secondary characters. If it's not essential to your script's A-story, cut it.

Write in the style of the movie's genre: If it is a comedy movie synopsis, it should be funny. If it is an action synopsis, make it exciting and energetic. Whatever the genre, the narrative should constantly be moving forwards. Each beat in your synopsis should cause the next beat or be the effect of the previous beat.

Emphasize character development: In your quest to hit all the plot points, do not forget to call out your character arcs. Your protagonist's motivations, and emotional turning points, need to be clear. Make sure each main character has at least one distinctive characteristic that helps them stand out from the other characters.

Use simple language: Avoid superfluous adjectives and adverbs, and stick to simple, succinct, clear language.

Ask for feedback: Send your synopsis to friends and family, and ask them to spot any sneaky spelling or grammar mistakes. They can also let you know if any parts of the synopsis aren't clear to them. Keep refining and editing your synopsis until it's error-free and flawlessly clear to anyone who reads it.

Prepare to make edits: When submitting your synopsis to different places, they may well have specific guidelines. Make sure you make any changes necessary to follow those guidelines. Agents, movie studios, and other

readers may also ask for changes to fit established word counts or page counts

### A FEW GOOD MEN

Synopsis by

Johnny Screenwriter

[j.screenwriter@johnnyscreenwriter.com](mailto:j.screenwriter@johnnyscreenwriter.com)

(310) 555-1234

A plea-bargaining Navy lawyer risks both career and prison if he exposes the commanding officer who ordered the hazing of a screw-up Marine his two clients are accused of murdering.

Lieutenant JG Daniel "Danny" Kaffee, an inexperienced U.S. Navy lawyer, leads the defense in the court-martial of two Marines, Lance Corporal Dawson, and PFC Downey. Both accused of murdering a fellow Marine, PFC William Santiago, at the Guantanamo Bay Naval Base, which is under the command of Colonel Nathan R. Jessup.

Santiago is a screw-up. He goes outside the chain to bargain for a transfer in exchange for blowing the whistle on Dawson for firing an illegal shot towards Cuba. Santiago's commanding officer, Lt. Jonathan Kendrick asserts to both Jessup and Jessup's executive officer, Lt. Colonel Matthew Andrew Markinson that he can handle Santiago.

When Dawson and Downey are arrested for Santiago's murder, Naval investigator and lawyer Lieutenant Commander Joanne Galloway suspects they were carrying out a "code red," a euphemism for extrajudicial punishment. She requests to defend them but command turns the case over to Kaffee.

Kaffee meets the defendants and finds them to be a little too gung-ho. He tries to both plea-bargain the case, then step down as lead counsel, realizing he was assigned this case due to his reputation for plea-bargaining, indicating someone high up didn't want the case to go to trial and because of that revelation, he proceeds to trial. During trial, it's established code reds are standard at Gitmo, as a means of getting screw-ups to get it together.

Eventually Galloway convinces Kaffee to call Jessup as a witness at great risk to his career. After questioning Jessup about his travel habits and comparing those to Santiago's, he accuses Jessup of ordering a code red on Santiago. Both prosecution and the judge object, but Jessup is caught in a lie. He stated Santiago was to be transferred off base for his safety in case other Marines sought retribution, but also stated Marines are honorable and always follow orders. Kaffee argues if other Marines were ordered to leave Santiago alone and always follow orders, Santiago would have been in no danger and thus, Jessup's argument that Santiago was to be transferred was a lie. Under pressure from Kaffee, Jessup furiously declares "You can't handle the truth!" and dismisses Kaffee as disrespectful of a Marine doing his duty, at which point he admits to ordering the code red. As Jessup angrily justifies his actions on the basis of national security, Ross arrests him, and the defendants are found not guilty of murder.

Regardless, the two Marines are dishonorably discharged for causing Santiago's death through their "conduct unbecoming a United States Marine." Downey does not understand why they are given dishonorable discharges, but Dawson accepts the verdict, and explains to Downey they failed to stand up for those too weak to stand up for themselves. As the two prepare to leave, Kaffee tells Dawson he doesn't need a patch on his arm to have honor. Dawson, who had previously been reluctant to respect Kaffee as an officer, barks "There's an officer on deck!" and salutes Kaffee.

Source: Hellerman, 2019



## 2.4 Writing film logline

A logline is a one-sentence summary or description of a movie. Loglines distill the important elements of your screenplay; from the main character, setup, central conflict, antagonist into a clear, concise teaser. The goal is to write a logline so enticing that it hooks the listener into reading the entire script.

### Tips for Writing the Perfect Logline

Writing a great logline is a craft in and of itself. Take time to practice multiple variations of your logline, following tips were proposed by Sorkin, (2021):

1. **Clearly lay out the narrative (but not the ending!).** A good logline clearly and succinctly lays out the dramatic narrative of a screenplay and hooks the reader, enticing them to read the entire script. For this reason, a logline never gives away the ending.
2. **Use active and visual language.** Good loglines use active language that articulate the visual possibilities for the film. Words like “struggles,” “journeys,” and “fights” are much more intriguing to read in a logline than “learns,” “wonders,” or “comes to find out.”
3. **Hone in on the irony of the premise.** The best loglines contain a sense of irony. Irony draws the reader in and tells us that we are in for an unexpected and unconventional story.

### How to Write a Great Logline

Even if nobody reads your logline, writing one is a useful exercise for boiling the core ideas of your story down to their clearest and simplest form. Try writing a logline for your story, then treat it as a guiding light for the rest of the writing and editing process.

1. **Identify the protagonist.** List out all of your main character’s biographical and physical information, then select the strongest adjective and proper noun combination that represents who they are. Some examples of strong combinations for your protagonist description include “cheerful school teacher,” “elitist funeral director,” or “depressed cop.”
2. **Describe the inciting incident.** The inciting incident is the jolt from the blue that sets your story in motion. This is also sometimes referred to as the “call to adventure” or “catalyst.” Now that you know who your protagonist is, what is the thing that blows your character’s life apart? Is it death? A promotion at work? A visit from an old friend? Summarize the inciting incident in a few words like “when her mom dies” or “after graduating from college.”
3. **Highlight your protagonist’s goal.** The hero's goal is the primary motivation for the rest of the action. In the logline, outline what the

hero wants or needs with a few quick words. This aligns the reader with the character's goals, and creates a level of investment and empathy when obstacles stand in the character's way. Goals can range from a character wanting to kill their nemesis to wanting to find her birth father or reversing the zombie outbreak.

4. **Create a compelling central conflict.** Write down a list of possible obstacles that will get in the way of your character achieving his or her goal. These antagonistic forces can be people, they can be ideological hurdles, they can be legitimate physical obstacles. Is your character's journey going to be difficult because there's a storm out? Select the conflict with the highest stakes (but make sure it still makes sense in your story). Describe this conflict in a few words, like "treacherous journey" or "before the ship sinks.

Examples of Some Great Loglines (Tom, 2021):

a. ***The Lion King***

"Lion cub and future king Simba searches for his identity. His eagerness to please others and penchant for testing his boundaries sometimes gets him into trouble."

b. ***The Terminator***

A human soldier is sent from 2029 to 1984 to stop an almost indestructible cyborg killing machine, sent from the same year, which has been programmed to execute a young woman whose unborn son is the key to humanity's future salvation.



## 2.5 Film Treatment

A film treatment (or film script treatment) is a multi-page, detailed synopsis of your film or visual project. It contains all the key elements of your film, like important scenes, main characters, and crucial plot points. And it is written in prose, not as a script (Leighfield, 2021). Film treatments are also referred to as story treatments, script treatments, and movie treatments (Deguzman, 2020).

Essentially, it is your whole story but broken down into one simple document. It is like a roadmap for a reader, producer, or writer. Anyone who picks it up should understand (and love!) the story immediately (Leighfield, 2021).

### **The four Elements of a Film Treatment**

Treatments contain detailed descriptions of the setting, theme, character roles, and plot in order to show how the story will play out for the audience. There are four main things a treatment should contain:

1. Title. Give your treatment a title, even if it is just a working title.
2. Logline. This is a short sentence summarizing the premise.
3. Plot summary. How long you want your story summary to be depends on you as a writer. Some writers give short one-page summaries, while others use 70 pages to tell their film's story.
4. Key characters. Provide a breakdown of key characters, including their arch or how their character develops in the story.

### **Why Do You Need A Film Treatment?**

Most screenwriters create film treatments for one of two purposes:

- **Working out a complex idea:** Writing a film treatment allows you to structure the story and find issues with the plot. It can also help with world-building and developing compelling characters.
- **Marketing a screenplay:** Before deciding to produce or invest in a movie, studio executives often read film treatments. A great film treatment can get producers interested in your screenplay.

### **How to Write a Good Treatment**

While there are different ways to style your treatment, there are a few general steps most writers take.

1. Start with your title: A title should be something that encapsulates the essence of your story. Some titles use the characters ("The 40-Year-Old Virgin"), the setting, ("Manchester by the Sea"), or the premise, ("Get Out"). Titles can also be metaphorical, ("Silence of the Lambs"). Titles should be as original as possible, and not sound like or be too close to an existing film title.
2. Compose your logline: A logline is just a brief sentence (or two) that captures the general premise of your movie. In your log line, include who the protagonist is and what they are up against in their world. This condensed summarization of the overall concept of your film should make the reader want to see the rest.
3. Summarize the concept: Here is your chance to expand on the shorter log line, and provide the next step in understanding how the film will play out. This is also where you can establish theme, tone, and cite any relevant background related to the conception of your story.
4. Set up the main characters: Who is going to be in this story? What do these characters want? How will they develop? Give a brief version of their possible arcs. You want to emotionally invest the reader by giving them a sense of who these characters are and what will become of them.
5. Explore the acts: Once you have set up the world and its inhabitants, it is time to delve into the story itself. Write out how the story begins: What do we open on? Who do we see? Tell the tale of your film as if it were a short-story, and include the juicy moments to keep the reader engaged in the world you've created.

6. **Epilogue:** The final paragraph of your treatment wraps up the narrative. State what the ending is, how the premise concludes, what happens to all the characters, and what they learn (if anything). Here is where you tie up any loose ends, and give the reader a sense of what will now happen to this world.

### **The difference between a film synopsis, logline, and treatment**

It is easy to confuse a synopsis with a logline or film treatment. But while they are similar terms, there are a few important differences.

- **Synopsis:** one-page script summary
- **Logline:** one-sentence script summary
- **Treatment:** longer scene-by-scene breakdown of the storyline that screenwriters use to pitch a movie idea before writing the full screenplay (read our film treatment guide).

### Samples of Treatment

[Title]  
Treatment written by  
[Your name]

**Logline:** *A one sentence pitch of your story that includes the protagonist, goal, and obstacles. There are many formats for loglines. Just ensure yours is hooky and sums up your story in a compelling way. Here's a simple format to start:*

When a [inciting incident], a [descriptor of main character] battles/sets out to/struggles to/tries to [goal] while confronting [antagonist, villain, internal demon].

**The Godfather logline:** The aging patriarch of an organized crime dynasty transfers control of his clandestine empire to his reluctant son.

**American Beauty logline:** A depressed suburban father in a mid-life crisis decides to turn his hectic life around after becoming infatuated with his daughter's attractive friend.

**The Matrix logline:** A computer hacker learns from mysterious rebels about the true nature of his reality and his role in the war against its controllers.

### **Characters:**

*This section is for your character list. Don't make it too long or include too many characters. Summarise your main characters with hints at backstory, demons, and what makes them unique. Try to create imagery that conjure images in the reader's head. Here's a longer example from Lost. You can make yours shorter:*

**Jack:** Brave, sharp-witted, powerful and vulnerable, Jack finds himself the hero whether he likes it or not...and he's more inclined to say "not". Despite having shared a story entering on his time as a surgeon and having clearly demonstrated his abilities as a doctor, Jack's past is shrouded in mystery. Simply put, it's not something he wants to talk about - but if he did, it would certainly explain his tattoos. Jack's reason for being in Australia is something he doesn't want to talk about either, but we come to learn he was heading back to the States for the funeral of someone who has long defined defined his path. As the series unfolds, our stories continue to find Jack as the one the other castaways call upon

Treatment template. Source: kaneholder.com

The Present.  
Los Angeles ghetto.  
Schoolyard.  
Night.

Among the spray-painted school buildings a cat prowls between the dumpsters. It looks up, freezing alert, at something beyond human perception.

A sourceless wind rises, and with it a keening whine. Papers blow across the pavement. The cat yowls and hides. Windows rattle.

The whine intensifies and with it comes a wash of frigid purple light. A concussion like a thunderclap right overhead blows in all the windows facing the yard. The cat's eyes are wide as the glow dies.

Electrical discharges arc from the dumpster to a water faucet and climb a drainpipe like a Jacob's Ladder. The sound of stray electrical crackling subsides.

In the middle of the previously empty yard stands a NAKED MAN.

Tall. Powerfully built. Handsome in an utterly unremarkable way, except for the eyes, which are intense blue and depthless.

He glances down, taking calm inventory of himself, then scans his surroundings. At the horizon, occasional lightning flashes presage a thunderstorm. He strides OUT OF SHOT.

A beer bottle smashes on the ground. PULL BACK to include its ex-owner and his two compatriots, YOUTH GANG MEMBERS lounging on a jungle gym in the kindergarten playground. They glance up as the naked man walks from between the school buildings and comes purposefully toward them.

In response to their derisive catcalls, he says to one of them without inflection, "Your clothes will fit. Give them to me."

Treatment for *The Terminator*. Source: kaneholder.com



NIGHT AT THE WELL OF SOULS.

The willows glow softly. Hundreds of torches light the gathered congregation of clans. Mo'at stands at the central willow, in communion with Gaia. The Na'vi sit in their concentric rings, also connected.

The camera starts wide, seeing the hundreds of softly chanting figures in the great circle. It swoops in toward the center, until it is hovering... looking down at two figures lying on the ground.

Josh and his avatar lie head to head. Human Josh is wearing a mask, connected to a rebreather which is lying beside him. Both figures are still, with hands folded on their chests. The silken threads cover them both. They lie cocooned like moths.

We see Zuleika, Grace and N'deh standing near the bodies. At the edge of the inner circle, the other controllers sit, crosslegged, watching intently.

As the camera moves in Zuleika moves forward, kneeling next to Josh's human form. Now we see only Zuleika and the two Joshes. She gently removes the mask from the human Josh's face. He is not breathing. She bends and kisses him.

The camera drifts down past her, centering on Josh's avatar.

Moving in to full close-up.

Zuleika moves next to Josh's avatar. Her hand comes into frame, stroking his cheek.

TIGHTENING slowly to extreme closeup until--

His eyes open.

CUT TO BLACK.

Treatment for *Avatar*. Source: [kaneholder.com](http://kaneholder.com)

### Self-Assessment Exercise 2

- i. What is a synopsis?
- ii. Give four tips for writing a good synopsis.
- iii. Briefly explain film treatment?



## 2.6 Summary

This unit has been exceptionally successful. The lessons on synopsis, logline and film treatment give a refreshing background to what every truly needs to have an interesting career and knowledge when embarking on such project.

## 2.7 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

Deguzman, K (2020). What is a film treatment? Examples of E.T and the shinning. <https://www.studiobinder.com/blog/what-is-a-film-treatment-definition/>

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Leighfield, A (2021). How to write an amazing film synopsis: A step-by-step guide. <https://boords.com/blog/how-to-write-a-film-synopsis>

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Tom, (2021). The most iconic logline examples. <https://www.google.com/search?q=samples+of+a+film+logline&oq=samples+of+a+film+logline&aqs=chrome..69i57j0i22i30j0i390l3.16331j1j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>



## 2.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise

- i. What is a synopsis?  
A film synopsis is a brief summary of the entire screenplay typically a one-page document that summarizes everything in your film.
- ii. Give four tips for writing a good synopsis.  
Keep it brief  
Write in present tense  
Use third person  
Stick to main plot and main character
- iii. What is film treatment?  
A film treatment (or film script treatment) is a multi-page, detailed synopsis of your film or visual project.

## UNIT 3 CASTING AND CASTING PROCESSES

### Unit Structure

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 3.3. What is Casting?
- 3.4 Casting Process
- 3.5 Summary
- 3.6 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 3.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises



### 3.1 Introduction

I welcome you all to yet another interesting unit in this class. From the last lesson, we discussed synopsis writing, logline and film treatments. This unit will afford us another opportunity to understand another critical phase in film production; which is casting and everything that is involved in the casting process. We may have likely heard this word or be familiar with it, this unit will offer practical details to explain what is professionally required to cast for a film production.



### 3.2 Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, you will be able to:

- explain casting
- explain everything involved in the casting process
- enumerate key requirements for casting.



### 3.3 What is Casting

Casting is a pre-production process that involves choosing actors to fill the roles in a particular TV show, movie, commercial, or play. The job of the casting director is to find the best possible talent for the roles and present these options to the directors and producers who then make their final casting decisions (Master Class, 2020).

Casting is the process of finding actors, or entertainers, for a particular production. Casting is part of the pre-production process. Casting can be for film, TV, theatre or commercials. Actors often think that auditioning

is synonymous with casting, but auditioning is only one part of the casting process (Hearle, et al, 2017).

You can have an award-winning script, high-end camera equipment, and all the resources in the world, but if you lack talented actors, none of it will matter (Walker, 2021). Casting is mainly done by the **casting director**.



### 3.4 Casting Process

The principle of casting process is fairly standard across television, film and commercial productions always begins with the producer and casting director generating a 'Breakdown'. A breakdown is a complete list of the required talent that is distributed to all of the local talent agencies.

After this, agents may then compare the needs of the casting director with their current roster of performers and select the best candidates for auditions. Once a talent agent has selected a performer for a role it is customary to send a performer portfolio. A portfolio can contain a resume of prior work, photographs or even reels or videotapes of past performances.

Once the principal casting director has filtered through all of the submissions and selected their desired talent, the agent will receive a callback with the audition information. Some casting directors will also send agents 'sides'. Sides are small portions of the script that the director wants to read at the audition.

Background casting, while not as complex as principal casting, still requires attention to detail. The background casting director will typically provide talent agents with a list of necessary criteria and the required numbers of performers. Auditions are not usually required for the background performers.

An audition is a sample performance by an actor, singer, musician, dancer or other performing artist. It is used in the casting process to demonstrate the level and range of a performer's talent. Auditions are essentially a job interview for the performing arts and are performed for a casting panel. Casting panels are often comprised of a casting director, producer, director and/or choreographer.

Most actors will have a repertoire of audition pieces to demonstrate different aspects to their talent set. However, some casting directors prefer to have the talent do 'cold readings'. Cold readings are performances based on non-memorized scripts. Most dance and music auditions also involve

variations of cold reading. Musicians are often asked to 'sight read' music as opposed to playing rehearsed works. With dancing, the focus is always on learning and showcasing new choreography instead of showcasing prepared performances.

### **How to Cast a Film**

For a general breakdown of the essential steps to take when casting your project, the following tips have been documented by Lee, et al (2020):

1. **Break down the script.** To break down a script, casting directors will read through a screenplay and create character descriptions for each speaking role. They compile these descriptions into a casting breakdown that contains information about all the different roles, including the age range of the characters, appearance, character notes, and any relevant backstory that can help the actor further embody the role.
2. **Send out the breakdown.** Some casting directors will set up an open call for auditions online or send the casting breakdown directly to talent agents. To hold an open casting call, post the breakdown online to relevant casting sites or forums to find lesser-known actors who may be right for the part. If you're sending the breakdown to a talent agency, they will use it to determine which talent on their current roster can fulfill the role and recommend actors they think are the right choice.
3. **Provide sides.** There are two types of auditions: in-person and self-tape (the talent records their audition and sends it to casting). Whether you're calling in an actor for an in-person audition or requesting a self-tape, you'll need to provide them with sides, a small sample of relevant dialogue, and actions for the talent to perform. Sides can help the casting director envision a particular actor as the character, or rule them out altogether.
4. **Send a callback.** When casting, it is essential to see as many performers as possible to broaden the selection of talent you can choose from. You may need to call back some actors multiple times to perform different scenes to see if they are the right fit for the role. You should also compare their performances to other potential actors to help you make the best possible casting decision. Callbacks help the casting department narrow down their search for the perfect performer, allowing the team to take another look at a viable choice.
5. **Screen test.** A screen test is a filmed audition where an actor performs sides on-camera. The casting department uses screen tests to analyze performance, wardrobe, makeup, and the on-screen chemistry between actors. If your project has multiple leads, you'll need to ensure they work well together and have good chemistry. Screen tests let you see how an actor performs for the camera, their

on-screen chemistry with their co-stars, and whether they have the right presence for the role.

6. **Make the selections.** While the casting company is responsible for wrangling the talent, the director and producers ultimately decide which actors to book for the role. Choose the actor that best suits the role and your budget.

### Self-Assessment Exercise

- i. Briefly explain casting.
- ii. List some of the things to consider when casting.



### 3.7 Summary

This module extensively covers critical elements of film story writing, development and essential preparations for pre-production; which includes writing the synopsis, treatment and logline. The synopsis especially is very important in order for film readers, producers and even intending directors on the film project to familiarize themselves with the story and the task that would be required to successfully deliver a good movie. Treatments can be especially useful for directors and cinematographers on a film project. The accompanying units have provided tips and principles that help us deliver synopsis, treatment and logline effectively. The lesson on casting has also shown casting to be a vital pre-production decision that must be handled diligently. The success and failure of a film project depends on how well the casting was taken seriously.



### 3.8 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

Hearle, A. et al, (2017). What is casting?  
<https://www.stagemilk.com/what-is-casting/>

Lee, S. et al (2020). How to write a movie synopsis to sell your screenplay. <https://www.masterclass.com/articles/how-to-write-a-movie-synopsis-to-sell-your-screenplay#what-is-a-movie-synopsis>

Master Class (2020). How to cast a film: Understanding the casting process. <https://www.masterclass.com/articles/how-to-cast-a-film#what-is-casting>



### **3.10 Possible answers to the Self-Assessment Exercises**

- i. Casting is a pre-production process that involves choosing actors to fill the roles in a particular TV show, movie, commercial, or play.
- ii. Provide sides, break down the script, make call backs, screen test, make the selection.



## MODULE 4 THE ART OF FILM DIRECTING

- Unit 1 What is film directing
- Unit 2 Responsibilities of a film director
- Unit 3 Qualities of film director

### UNIT 1 WHAT IS FILM DIRECTING?

#### Unit Structure

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 1.3 What is Film Directing?
- 1.4 Summary
- 1.5 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 1.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises



#### 1.1 Introduction

In the previous lesson, we learnt about story development, writing the synopsis, logline and treatment. After those have been done, getting the work in the hands of a competent director, who is a key member in the film production is the next decision. The director gives life to every script and story in terms of making technical decisions that will give the best output. Whether the film project is low budget or a high budget movie, the director's input is very significant to the film production.



#### 1.2 Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- discuss every facet of film directing
- state who a director is in a film project
- explain the importance of film directing.



#### 1.3 What is film directing?

Directing is said to be a process in which professionals with specialized skills in cinematography instruct, guide and oversee creative activities, performance and technical aesthetics of film making and film crew in

order to achieve superior quality, moderate budget and overall objective of a film production.

In other words, the director is the chief creative person for a movie. The director leads the viewer so the viewer gets the most out of the movie. The director wants the viewer to see the story from a particular point of view (Reich, nd).

The director is a person who determines the creative vision of a feature film, television show, play, short film, or other production. They have complete artistic control of a project. In addition to having a strong grasp of technical knowledge, they must also have a personal or emotional connection to the material (Foster, 2021). A director must also be familiar with all of the elements of a production while making sure each department works well with each other, ensuring her or his creative vision is realised.

Directing cinematography includes both the camera shots and the lighting to obtain both a particular type of effect and mood. The director also has control over the editing to create the pace, rhythm, coherence, story, and character development they and the producer want (Reich, nd).

Successful directing has much to do with intangible social relations, such as keeping harmony (or productive competition) alive on the set, drawing the best performances possible from actors, shaping a script into a form that takes advantage of the talents of the director of photography or of the main actor, or beseeching the producer for the money needed for a special shot. Beyond such routine expectations, the great director is identified for a unique or ingenious approach to the medium (Britannica, nd).

The director is one important piece of any successful film project. Even though they may not appear in front of the camera, the director is one of the most important people on a film set. They do more than shout “action” and “cut” behind the scenes; they are the person who determines the creative vision and makes all of the film’s biggest decisions (Foster, 2021).

In other words, the director is the chief creative person for a movie. The director leads the viewer so the viewer gets the most out of the movie. The director wants the viewer to see the story from a particular point of view. Like a stage director, a movie director tells the actors how to play a particular scene, sets the scene for a specific type of mood, and moves the actors around for a particular effect. In the above definition, the word setting is referring to the specific atmosphere created by the props, location, scenery, and costumes Milne (nd).

## Self-Assessment Exercises

- i. Briefly define film directing.
- ii A director is an important person in a film project. Yes or No?
- iii. The film director is the creative powerhouse of the film project. True or False?



### 1.4 Summary

The unit gave an insight into film directing and its definitions. If you pay close attention, you will see that this lesson explained film directing detailing the director's place in the entire phenomenon. This unit is a precursor to other essential contents that have been carefully placed in the subsequent units. Kindly follow through and ensure that you give attention to all the Self-Assessment Exercises in the lesson. Also, be encouraged increase your knowledge and learn more by endeavouring to read up other relevant materials.



### 1.5 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

Britannica (nd). Film directing. <https://www.britannica.com/art/motion-picture/Types-of-film>

Foster, J. (2021). What is a movie director? The responsibilities of a film director and tips on directing actors. [What Is a Movie Director? The Responsibilities of a Film Director and Tips on Directing Actors - 2022 - MasterClass](#)

Milne (nd). What is directing? [5. What Is Directing? – Exploring Movie Construction and Production \(geneseo.edu\)](#)

Reich, J. (nd). What is directing? <https://milnepublishing.geneseo.edu/exploring-movie-construction-and-production/chapter/5-what-is-directing/>



## 1.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises

- i. Directing is said to be a process in which professionals with specialized skills in cinematography instruct, guide and oversee creative activities, performance and technical aesthetics of film making and film crew in order to achieve superior quality, moderate budget and overall objective of a film production.
- ii. Yes
- iii. True

## UNIT 2 RESPONSIBILITIES OF A FILM DIRECTOR

### Unit Structure

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 2.3 Responsibilities of a Director
  - 2.3.1 During Pre-production
  - 2.3.2 During Production
  - 2.3.3 During Post Production
- 2.4 Summary
- 2.5 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 2.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises



### 2.1 Introduction

In the previous lesson, we explained what directing is all about in a film project. Then we located the role of the director in the entire filmmaking. In this unit, we will learn about the various responsibilities of a film director and how he accomplishes the cumbersome tasks involved in the respective phases of the film project. Also, in this lesson, we will learn the unique attributes of a good film director. The unit promises to be very enlightening, kindly ensure you follow through and give attention to all cited sources.



### 2.2 Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- itemise the strong qualities of a film director
- discuss every facet of film directing
- extensively discuss various responsibilities of the film director.



### 2.3 Responsibilities of a Director

Foster, (2021). categorised the director's responsibilities into 3 categories:

### 2.3.1 During Pre-production

- **Assemble the creative team.** The director is responsible for creative personnel such as the line producer, production designer, location manager, cinematographer, and assistant director.
- **Create vision for the film and communicate it to the crew.** He establishes a visual language for your film by creating a look book. This enables him to reference images to help you articulate your ideal color palette, locations, and framing. It helps to reference other films that inspire you.
- **Discuss his vision with each key crew member individually.** The director's vision affects every department differently. He must be ready to learn to speak the language of every department so he can successfully communicate what you need from them.
- **Make casting choices.** One of the many responsibilities of a film director is the decisions to oversee and supervise casting. He ensures that the actor is someone that is trustworthy to deliver the role to the best of their ability and who is willing to be flexible and collaborate.

### 2.3.2 During Actual Production

- **Guide the actors through scenes.** It is your job to help inform and shape their performances, so give the actors positive but specific (and short) praise and/or notes after every take. Make sure you're on the same page about who the characters are and what they want in each scene.
- **Ensure every department is doing its job.** You are the person who is most familiar with every part of the production. You must make sure every department is doing its job and working together to bring the film to life.
- **Communicate with everyone as much as possible.** Directing is a collaborative process. Having open communication with every team is vital to making the best film possible so everyone feels comfortable speaking up and knows exactly what they need to be doing.
- **Keep your artistic vision alive.** Continue to check in with every department, from the producers to the actors to the crew, about what you need from them in order to translate your creative vision to the screen.

### 2.3.3 During Post-production

- **Give notes to the editor.** Review the editor's cuts, break down the footage, and find the shots, angles, and takes that add the most meaning.
- **Check in with post-production teams.** Work with the sound design team, the music supervisor, and the visual effects team to ensure every post production decision is in line with your overall vision.
- **Give final signoff.** You have complete creative control, and it's up to you to determine when a project is finished.

#### Self-Assessment Exercise 1

- i. State six responsibilities a director across all three categories.
- ii. What are the three categories a director may exert his functions?



### 2.4 Summary

This unit has been able to clarify the various functions and responsibilities of a film director. The lesson carefully categorised each of these responsibilities under three critical or broad functions of the film director during a movie project. It is therefore very imperative to give attention to all the essential areas the director is useful and it is expected that you will make further research to benefit yourself.



### 2.5 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

Foster, J. (2021). How to make a storyboard for film.  
<https://www.masterclass.com/articles/how-to-make-a-storyboard-for-a-film#why-is-storyboarding-important>



## 2.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises

- i. State six responsibilities a director across all three categories.

Assemble creative team  
Make casting choices  
Guide actors through scenes  
Ensure every department is doing its job  
Check in with the post-production teams  
Give the final sign-off

- ii. Preproduction, Actual production and Pos-production



## UNIT 3 QUALITIES OF A FILM DIRECTOR

### Unit Structure

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 3.3 Qualities of a Film Director
  - 3.3.1 Personal Attributes
  - 3.3.2 Relationships and Communication
  - 3.3.3 Storytelling Skills
- 3.4 Tips to Successful Film Directors
- 3.5 Summary
- 3.6 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 3.7 References
- 3.8 Possible Answers to the Self-Assessment Question



### 3.1 Introduction

It is another fascinating opportunity to share an enthralling learning session with you in this unit. In the last class, we discussed the various responsibilities of the film director. This current lesson will take it a little further by explaining the important qualities of a good film director. This unit will expose you to some relevant tips for successful film directing. There is so much to learn in this lesson, just be very attentive and attempt all the self-assessment question. Also, you can watch the making of any video where you can see some of the attributes of film director put to practical test.



### 3.2 Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- itemise the three facets that demand the director's attributes
- list some qualities of a good film director
- highlight important tips of successful film directing.



### 3.3 Qualities of Film Director

A great director has many admirable qualities. Each director has their own strengths. Here are 19 qualities of a director that have been carefully categorized under 3 broad skill sets, (personal attributes, relationship and communication, and storytelling skill) as itemized by LaRovere (2019):

### 3.3.1 Personal Attributes

1. **Stress-Tolerant:** A great director can roll with the punches, be cool in a tough situation, and still make the decisions needed while under pressure. They do not crumble under stress and have healthy stress-coping mechanisms in place.
2. **Flexible:** A great director is open to new ideas so they can make the best film possible. He does not turn their nose up at ideas that could make the film better. The director does not always have the right answers and has to rely on many professionals, including actors, crew, and other collaborators to advise him/her.
3. **Positive Attitude:** A good director possesses qualities of a good leaders. Everyone on set looks to him/her to set the standard for behavior. If the director is always grumpy, pessimistic, has low morale, etc., so will everyone else on set.
4. **Uses Time Efficiently:** A great director has no time to waste. A director that is worth his name understands the value of time and uses it judiciously.
5. **Knows How to be Diplomatic:** Being diplomatic requires that the director exercises self-control in the face of hostile and frustrating situation.
6. **Knows When to Speak Up:** This is basically an extension of being diplomatic. The director must do well to exercise restraint to control his verbal expressions and also display utmost maturity when he is flustered.
7. **Thinks Outside the Box:** The great director doesn't feel constrained or threatened by others creative ideas/input. Instead, he or she uses them to his or her advantage. The great director is willing to try new things and take risks to get *great* results instead of only *okay* results.
8. **Problem-Solver – Not a Problem Creator:** There are those that focus on pointing out problems, often in a complaining manner. They want to be the first ones to point it out but do not offer any solutions. There are also people who create problems where none exists.  
A director identifies problems before they occur and he or she never walks away without offering one or two solutions. He is always working to move the team forward.
9. **Takes Responsibility:** The great director understands the distinction between *fault* and *responsibility*. He or she understands that everything that goes wrong or right about their film (as the leader of the filmmaking team) will be attributed to the director.

The great director accepts the risk and possible reward, his or her own mistakes, and always works to correct them without blaming others, because it is a waste of time to play the blame game.

### 3.3.2 Relationships & Communication

10. **Focuses on Fostering Relationships:** The director understands that business is largely about relationships. Therefore, he spends time building genuine relationships with a variety of people. He also understands how important networking and maintaining progressive relationships can be for the business.
11. **Communicates Effectively:** Communication is absolutely essential to create an efficient and pleasant working condition. He must not falter in displaying strong interpersonal skills and making sure he communicates as clearly as possible at all times.
12. **Motivates and Inspires:** A good director inspires people to give their best effort, even when they are not feeling particularly invested.
13. **Creates and Shares a Common Vision:** The director knows that creating a strong vision and sharing that with his cast and crew is important step for inspiring people's commitment.
14. **Leads by Example:** Leading teams to make great films requires sacrifice and hard work from everyone, and so he all what it takes to set good the examples for the crew members.

### 3.3.3 Storytelling Skills

15. **Understands the Filmmaking Fundamentals:** Film directors understand why they say, 'you need to know the rules before you can break them'. Only then can you break the rules in order to get specific, desired results.

Additionally, understanding the fundamentals of film production and techniques will help him communicate and work with the crew.

He deploys a number of storytelling tools at his or her disposal; both the technical and creative strategies. He is familiar with them and can mentally flip through that toolbox to make great directorial choices.

16. **Understands Real Human Behavior:** If one does not understand how people react in real life to various events, how can one portray them believably in film? A good director can anticipate how someone might react in a real-world situation and transplant that into the fiction of his story.
17. **Understands Film Conventions.** It is not just enough to know about how people actually act in reality. The director knows that reality is sometimes perceived differently than the equivalent in film, and can adjust how he or she presents events, conversations, and storytelling techniques in order for the audience to see what he/she wants them to see and feel what he/she wants them to feel.

18. **Can Walk in Others' Shoes.** The great director knows how to create believable performances from a variety of characters and perspectives because he or she understands how people tick, and has enough empathy and creativity to put him or herself in others' shoes.
19. **Understands How Humans Learn.** The great director understand that film story arcs (and stories in general) mimic the process in which humans learn (deep personal flaw, inciting incident, ensuing struggle, a realization, and finally, change or growth), and applies that to his or her films in order to create believable characters and moving stories.

### 3.4 Tips to Successful Film Directing

Directing actors is a collaborative process from prep to wrap. Whether you are on the set of a Hollywood blockbuster or a short film school project, Foster (2021) highlighted things to keep in mind when working with actors on set:

1. **Know who you are working with:** If you have never worked with an actor before, research them on your own. You can also call other directors they have worked with and ask about their process and how they like to work.
2. **Include your actors in your process:** If they are open to it, ask your actors if they would like to look at your shot list, look book, storyboard, or whatever else you have done in preparation. This allows them to better serve your vision.
3. **Create a calm and respectful environment:** Reassure your actors that you are there for them every step of the way. Try not to yell or raise your voice on set, as it creates unnecessary tension that is not conducive to creativity.
4. **Be prepared and be flexible:** Have a plan for how you want each scene to go, but be able to be spontaneous with different takes.
5. **Give your actors space to work:** Communicate your ideas in pre-production, talk through things before a scene starts, and give notes afterward. But when the camera is rolling, the actor is in control, and it's best to let them do a complete take before speaking up.
6. **Do not make actors wait.** If they are called at a certain time, do everything in your power to get them to set at that time. If you are unable to do so, check in with them as soon as possible so they know what is going on.
7. **Be direct.** If you want an actor to do something differently, tell them. Do not try to sugar coat anything. Be kind, but be blunt and honest about what you want. Some first-time film directors can be a little timid when it comes time to directing actors, but great actors actively want feedback and guidance. You both have the same

- goal: making an actor's performance as good as it can possibly be. If an actor needs a bit of coaching to get there, so be it.
8. **Avoid results-oriented direction.** For example, do not tell an actor you would like them to cry at the end of a scene or say things like "I want the audience to feel..." If an actor is only thinking about a result, this may block them from being able to emote and perform in an organic way.
  9. **Be aware of your actors' needs.** Sometimes you need to lighten the mood a bit, or the actor needs to step away from the character momentarily. Be conscious and thoughtful of their process so they can give the best performance possible.
  10. **Listen to your actors' instincts.** If a part of the writing is not making sense and the actor is having trouble getting it, consider a rewrite. The screenwriting process must be just as integrated as any other element of filmmaking, whether that is music, cinematography, makeup, set design, or acting itself.
  11. **Treat non-actors with the same respect you treat seasoned stars.** Some films may call upon non-professional performers such as local residents, high school students, and celebrities playing their real-life selves. Some of these actors come from casting calls and some are intrinsically part of the film. Show these performers respect, and trust that by being on a film set, they will absorb how good actors work and how collaborative the process of making movies really is.
  12. **Watch the work of other directors and observe how they handle film acting.** Do they use certain camera angles (like close-ups or side profiles) to convey certain emotions? Do they appear to embrace improvisation on set? If you study how good directors elicit a good performance from their actors, you can borrow the same techniques for your own film.

### Self-Assessment Exercises

- i. List five tips on successful directing.
- ii. What are some of the qualities a film director must possess?



### 3.4 Summary

This section has extensively covered lessons on the key attributes of a film director and all the various facets such qualities are tested on a film set. The lesson also provides tips on useful tips we may need to successfully accomplish a film project. The director's role comes to hand during the production (shooting) proper, where he is expected to

coordinate the entire production and the crew. The director must possess profound knowledge of film production, be vast and perfectly grounded in technical qualities, as well as have progressive interpersonal relationship skills.



### **3.5 References/Further Readings/Web Resources**

Foster, J. (2021). How to make a storyboard for film. <https://www.masterclass.com/articles/how-to-make-a-storyboard-for-a-film#why-is-storyboarding-important>

LaRovere, N. (2019). 19 attributes you need to be a great film director. <https://totalstoryteller.com/19-attributes-you-need-to-be-a-great-film-director/>



### **3.6 Possible answers to the Self-Assessment Exercises**

- i. List five tips on successful directing
  - Know who you are working with
  - Include actors in the process
  - Be prepared and be flexible
  - Do not make actors wait
- i. Stress-Tolerant
  - Flexible
  - Positive Attitude
  - Uses Time Efficiently
  - Communicate effectively
  - Motivate and inspire
  - Understands the Filmmaking Fundamentals
  - Understands Real Human Behavior

## MODULE 5            FILM MAKING PROCESS

|        |                       |
|--------|-----------------------|
| Unit 1 | Pre-Production Stage  |
| Unit 2 | Production Stage      |
| Unit 3 | Post-Production Stage |

### UNIT 1            PRE-PRODUCTION STAGE

#### Unit Structure

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 1.3 Pre-Production Stage
- 1.4 Element of Pre-production Process In Film
- 1.5 Summary
- 1.6 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 1.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises



#### 1.1 Introduction

The lesson that precedes this talked about directing and the roles of director at every facet of the film production. It is interesting to note that film directing requires not only profound knowledge of film production, it also involves the application of technical know-how and other soft skills to make the film project a success. In this module, we are going to learn everything that is required to deliver quality film production. We will take out time to discuss the pre-production activities and every element that is considered important at this stage



#### 1.2 Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain pre-production
- differentiate the pre-production from other phases
- identify basic elements in pre-production.





### 1.3 Pre-Production Stage

Pre-production is everything that happens before you start shooting your feature film, TV series, animation, or anything else. It helps you get organised before you dive into the production process (Leighfield, 2021). At this stage, finalizing preparations for production go into effect (Wikipedia, 2022).

This stage involves finalizing the script, hiring the actors and crew, finding locations, determining what equipment you'll need, and figuring out the budget. Preproduction is the planning stage of a film, where you solidify all the details of your project before producing content (Master Class, 2021).

The preproduction phase in filmmaking allows you to organise everything you need before you start rolling the cameras. Preproduction is when you figure out what you need to make your film, how much it is going to cost, and who you can hire to help you. Effective pre-production can help you save time and money (the two most limited resources in filmmaking) when shooting your project. An outlined budget means you are less likely to waste resources (or run out of money), which can derail an entire project. Detailing the schedule is also integral to a smooth production process, as it gives the crew a set idea of where time should be allocated for an efficient shoot.

Pre-production immediately follows the "development stage," where the script is worked into a viable final draft. As soon as the screenplay is "locked," the process can begin in earnest. As you can see, there is a lot of work that goes into Pre-production. Let us look at it this way, the more work you put into this stage the likelihood that your production will go as smoothly as possible (Studiobinder, 2020).

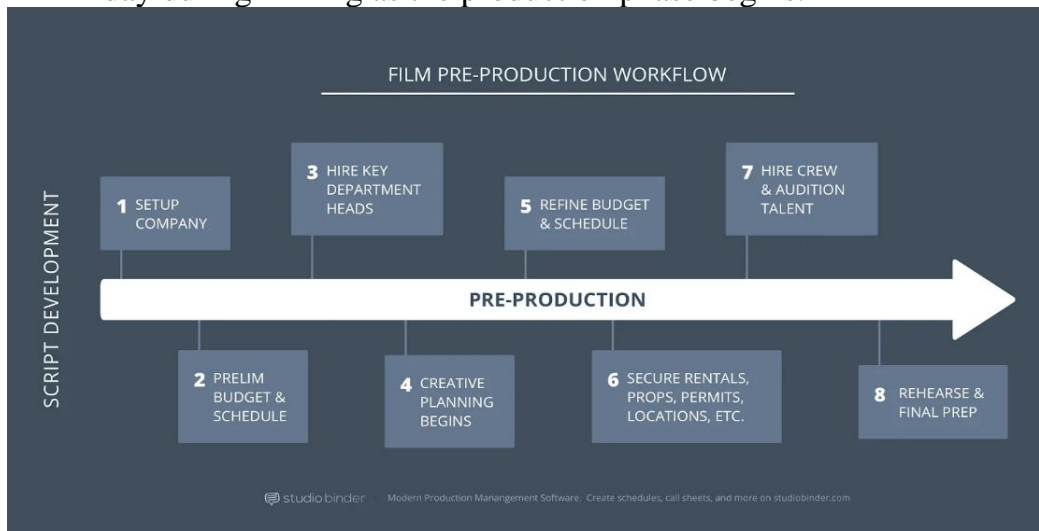


### 1.4 Elements of the Preproduction Process in Film

The stages of preproduction vary depending on the type of project you are filming (for instance, a 10-minute short film will have a significantly shorter and less involved pre-production period than a 90-minute movie). However, for most film production, the preproduction process follows similar steps (Master Class 2021):

1. **Script breakdown:** After a project is greenlit, there is a need to finalise the shooting script. Once the script is locked, the first AD will comb through the screenplay and create a breakdown of all the times of day, locations, characters, stunts, extras, special effects, props, vehicles, animals, sound effects, music cues, and costumes—everything that is significant on a logistical level. The more prepared you are, the fewer surprises you will encounter during shooting or postproduction.
2. **Budget:** At this stage, it is very important to factor all logistics and other costs involved in the whole production process in order to have a holistic budget. Whether you have a low budget or a high budget, you must determine how you can achieve the vision of the film with the resources you have. Research the costs of everything you will need to figure out which funds to allocate.
3. **Schedule:** The production schedule (or shooting schedule) will help figure out which scenes you shoot when, where you shoot them, and how many you shoot per day. Time is a valuable resource, especially if you have to deal with elements like daylight or weather.
4. **Crew:** Assemble the crew members and valuable department heads. Hire a director, a first assistant director, a production manager, a cinematographer (known as the director of photography), a casting director, a production designer, and a costume designer. As pre-production moves along, these departments will expand, filling out your crew.
5. **Planning:** Each department works with the line producer to break down what they need to properly execute the director's vision. The planning stage also includes location scouting and securing permits, creating a shot list and storyboard, and figuring out props and equipment. Once you establish those needs, the line producer (or production manager) will check and revise the budget to make sure everything fits within the established parameters. You may want to remove some settings or props—or even rewrite scenes—to fit within your budget.
6. **Talent:** The casting director auditions talent for all the roles according to your script breakdown and director's notes.
7. **Rehearsal:** At the concluding phase of the preproduction stage you must consider rehearsing with the cast, figuring out the emotional and physical logistics of each scene. Sometimes finding the perfect cast could make a filmmaker overconfident, leading them to put too much responsibility on their cast to be self-sufficient. Actors need their director just as much as the crew does, and working with them both one-on-one and as an ensemble is a vital part of the pre-production process (Picone, 2017). Meanwhile, your department heads will be heading into their final prepping stages, working with the production coordinator to ensure that all the pieces are in place.

When everything is ready, it's time to send out call sheets to the whole cast and crew, which outline the schedule for every shoot day during filming as the production phase begins.



Source: Studiobinder, (2020)

### Self-Assessment Exercises

- i. Briefly explain what you understand by pre-production.
- ii. Outline four important elements of preproduction.



### 1.5 Summary

We have seen in details what pre-production means and the basic composition of that phase of the film project. The lesson also covers some critical elements that makes pre-production phase successful. I advise that you pay close attention to all the details heighthed and also give keen examination to the diagram provided to help simplify the whole pre-production process. For your personal development, ensure you go through the cited sources for more details.



## 1.6 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

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### **1.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises**

- i. Outline four important elements of pre-production
  - Script breakdown
  - Budget
  - Schedule
  - Crew
- ii. Pre-production is everything that happens before you start shooting your feature film, TV series, animation, or anything else. It helps you get organised before you dive into the production process

## UNIT 2      PRODUCTION STAGE

### Unit Structure

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 2.3 The Production Stage
- 2.4 Production
- 2.5 Summary
- 2.6 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 2.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises



### 2.1 Introduction

It is good to have you all here today. The previous lesson dealt with the entire activities that are carried out during the pre-production stage in film project. In this unit we will extensively detail the whole activities involved in the actual production of film. Here you will learn peculiar roles of each crew member in a film production project and how a film director aligns with all these talents.



### 2.2 Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain what the actual film production entails
- list five crew members and their roles during film shooting.



### 2.3 The Production Stage

The production stage is the point where all the human and material resources for the film production are systematically harnessed by the director. The film production phase allows the director to utilize and work with the actual production plans and schedules earlier drawn at the preproduction stage. (Onabajo and Bayo, 2008).

Film production is a demanding process that requires maximum attention and effort. Filmmaking deals with different tasks at different times with superior coordination to give the best output. Looking at the end product, the film, or a short video, you may fail to understand what the filmmakers go through while making the film. Film production is a lengthy, multi-step process of making movies that can sometimes take years to complete.

Once pre-production has concluded, it's time to shoot! The goal is to stay on budget when planning everything related to the shoot. Communication is key during production, since schedules can be tight and even more people are getting involved. During this time, producers will need to hire a script supervisor, whose main concern is continuity, and a prop master, who will manage all the props in the film (Mack Sennett Studios, 2021).

Whether shooting on location or in a production studio, there is a shooting schedule to be followed. The Assistant Director (AD) manages this schedule among their other tasks, including being responsible for the health and safety of the crew. For the cinematographer to capture all the footage needed, they will work closely with the camera crew. The production coordinator oversees catering, equipment rentals, travel arrangements, and the like. A producer will also keep an eye on all the moving parts (iFilmthings, 2021).

Film production is characterized by close interaction of art and technology in the production process. It also requires high labour inputs; larger number of creative workers and technical use of complex technologies and expensive materials (Free Dictionary, nd).

Movie production involves financial funding, hiring the film crew, finding the locations, marketing, and distribution (Sandoval, 2021). This then implies that at the production stage that will create the most budgetary headaches. Unforeseen obstacles, issues with a location, having to reshoot various scenes, or other related problems, can all come up on film projects and cause problems for producers.



## 2.4 Production

Production is generally not considered a department as such, but rather as a series of functional groups. These include the film's producers and executive producers and production office staff such as the production manager, the production coordinator, and their assistants; the various assistant directors; the accounting staff and sometimes the locations manager and their assistants.

- a. **Producer:** A film producer creates the conditions for filmmaking. The producer initiates, coordinates, supervises, and controls matters such as fund raising, hiring key personnel, and arranging for distributors. The producer is involved throughout all phases of the film making process from development to completion of a project. There may be several producers on a film who may take a role in a number of areas, such as development, financing or production.

- b. **Executive producer:** An executive producer (EP) is a producer who was not involved in the technical aspects of the filmmaking process in the original definition, but has played a financial or creative role in ensuring that the project goes into production. Today, however, the title has become ambiguous, particularly in feature films. Since the 1980s, it has become increasingly common for the line producer to be given the title of executive producer, while the initiating producer takes the "produced by" credit. On other projects, the reverse happens, with the line producer taking the "produced by" credit. So, the two credits have become effectively interchangeable, with no precise definition.
- c. **Line producer:** The line producer is the liaison between the studio or producer and the production manager, responsible for managing the production budget. The title is associated with the idea that they are the person who is "on the line" on a day-to-day basis, and responsible for lining up the resources needed.
- d. **Production assistant:** Production assistants, referred to as PAs, assist in the production office or in various departments with general tasks, such as assisting the first assistant director with set operations.
- e. **Production manager:** The production manager supervises the physical aspects of the production (not the creative aspects) including personnel, technology, budget, and scheduling. It is the production manager's responsibility to make sure the filming stays on schedule and within its budget. The PM also helps manage the day-to-day budget by managing operating costs such as salaries, production costs, and everyday equipment rental costs. The PM often works under the supervision of a line producer and directly supervises the production coordinator.
- f. **Assistant production manager:** The assistant production manager is the assistant to the production manager (PM) and carries out various jobs for the PM. Normally only big budget Hollywood feature films have an assistant PM.
- g. **Production coordinator:** The production coordinator is the information nexus of the production, responsible for organising all the logistics from hiring crew, renting equipment, and booking talent. The PC is an integral part of film production.
- h. **First assistant director:** The first assistant director (1st AD) assists the production manager and director. The ultimate aim of



any 1st AD is to ensure the film comes in on schedule while maintaining a safe working environment in which the director, principal artists (actors) and crew can be focused on their work. They oversee day-to-day management of the cast and crew scheduling, equipment, script, and set. A 1st AD may also be responsible for directing background action for major shots or the entirety of relatively minor shots, at the director's discretion.

- i. Second assistant director:** The second assistant director (2nd AD) is the chief assistant of the 1st AD and helps carry out those tasks delegated to the 1st AD. The 2nd AD may also direct background action and extras in addition to helping the 1st AD with scheduling, booking, etc. The 2nd AD is responsible for creating call sheets that let the crew know the schedule and important details about the shooting day.
- j. Production accountant:** Production accountants manage the money and ensure the production comes in on budget and everyone gets paid. Production accountants are often assisted by assistant accountants, sometimes called clerks, responsible for accounts receivable, accounts payable and payroll.
- k. Location manager:** Oversees the locations department and its staff, typically reporting directly to the production manager or assistant director (or even director or executive producer). Location manager is responsible for final clearing (or guaranteeing permission to use) a location for filming and must often assist production and finance departments in maintaining budget management regarding actual location/permit fees as well as labor costs to production for the locations department at large.
- l. Assistant location manager:** Works with the location manager and the various departments in arranging technical scouts for the essential staff (grips, electric, camera, etc.) to see options which the location manager has selected for filming. The assistant location manager will be onset during the filming process to oversee the operation, whereas the location manager continues pre-production from elsewhere (generally an office) on the upcoming locations. (**Note:** On most location-based television shows, there will be two assistant location managers that alternate episodes, allowing one to prep an upcoming episode while the other is on set with the current one)
- m. Location scout:** Does much of the actual research, footwork and photography to document location possibilities. Often the

location manager will do some scouting themselves, as well as the assistant location manager.

- n. System administrator:** A system administrator or sysadmin, is a person employed to maintain and operate a computer system or network. This role is increasingly important for digital monitors on set, digital intermediate editing and post production, digital effects, digital sound, and sometimes for full digital production.
- o. Script supervisor:** Also known as the continuity person, the script supervisor keeps track of what parts of the script have been filmed and makes notes of any deviations between what was actually filmed and what appeared in the script. They make notes on every shot, and keep track of props, blocking, and other details to ensure continuity between shots and scenes. An important part of a script supervisor's job is to make sure that the actors' movements, the directions they are looking in a shot, particularly when speaking to or responding to another actor, plus the positions of props they are using and everything else matches from shot to shot. If there is an apparent mismatch, the director must be informed immediately so that it can be reshot before the lighting setup is changed or at least before the location is wrapped and the set is struck.
- p. Casting director:** The casting director chooses the actors for the characters of the movie. This usually involves inviting potential actors to read an excerpt from the script for an audition.
- q. Director of photography:** The director of photography (sometimes shortened to **DP** or **DoP**) is in charge of the look of the "frame" of the movie shots, hence the name "photography". They are the chief of the camera and lighting crew of the film. The DP makes decisions on lighting and framing of shots in conjunction with the film's director. Typically, the director tells the DP how they want a shot to look, and the DP chooses the correct lens, filter, lighting and composition to achieve the desired aesthetic effect. The term cinematographer is usually synonymous with director of photography, though some professionals insist this only applies when the director of photography and camera operator are the same person.
- r. Gaffer:** The gaffer is the head of the lighting department, responsible for the design of the lighting plan for a production. Sometimes the gaffer is credited as chief lighting technician.
- s. Production Sound Mixer:** The production sound mixer (or sound recordist) is the head of the sound department on location and is

responsible for the operation of the audio mixer and recorder(s) which receive feeds from the microphones on set.

- t. **Boom operator:** The boom operator, first assistant sound or "1st AS", is responsible for using microphones on the end of boom poles (lightweight telescopic poles made of aluminum, or more commonly, carbon fibre) held above actor's heads during a scene to capture dialogue.
- u. **The Art Department:** The art department proper, with its art director, set designers and draftsmen; set decoration, under the set decorator; props, under the props master/mistress; construction, headed by the construction coordinator; scenic, headed by the key scenic artist; and special effects.
- v. **Illustrator:** The illustrator draws or paints visual representations of the designs to communicate the ideas imagined by the production designer. Illustrators are sometimes credited as concept artists.
- w. **Graphic artist:** The graphic artist is responsible for the design and creation of all graphic elements, including: signs, billboards, posters, logos, nameplates, and automotive-wrapping that are created specifically for the film. They will often create several versions of a design, the preferred of which then being chosen by the production designer. On certain productions, they may also be employed, under the direction of the props master, in the creation of small, printed items, such as fliers, receipts, bills of sale, etc.
- x. **Scenic Artist:** The scenic artist (scenic charge) is responsible for the surface treatments of the sets. This includes special paint treatments such as aging and gilding, as well as simulating the appearance of wood, stone, brick, metal, stained glass—anything called for by the production designer.
- y. **Costume designer:** The costume designer is responsible for all the clothing and costumes worn by all the actors that appear on screen. They are also responsible for designing, planning, and organising the construction of the garments down to the fabric, colors, and sizes. The costume designer works closely with the director to understand and interpret "character", and counsels with the production designer to achieve an overall tone of the film. In large productions, the costume designer will usually have one or more assistant costume designers.

- z. Make-Up Artist:** The key makeup artist is the department head that answers directly to the director and production designer. They are responsible for planning makeup designs for all leading and supporting cast. Their department includes all cosmetic makeup, body makeup and if special effects are involved, the key make-up artist will consult with a special effects makeup team to create all prosthetics and SFX makeup in a production.
- aa. Special make-up effects artist (SFX makeup):** A special effects make-up artist works with live models or structures in the entertainment industry, applying make-up effects or prosthetics. May be a privately own company that answers directly to the director and production designer or reports to the Key make-up effects assistant. The SFX assistants carry out the instructions of the special effects supervisor, building set pieces like breakaway furniture and cities in miniature, lighting pyrotechnics, and setting up rigging equipment for stunts.

### Self-Assessment Exercises

- i. Briefly explain what you know about actual film production.  
ii. List five crew members useful in actual film production.



## 2.6 Summary

We have been able to explain the what the actual film production involves and the entire shooting processes that define the shooting or production process proper. We have also been able to detail all crew members and important talents and their responsibilities during film production. I urge you all to make effort to pick at least any eight crew members and master their essential duties in fil project.



## 2.7 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

Free dictionary (nd). Film production.  
<https://encyclopedia2.thefreedictionary.com/Film+Production>

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<https://macksennettstudios.net/what-does-production-mean-in-film/>

Onabajo, O. and Bayo, R.M (2008). *Fundamentals of home video production*. African Renaissance Book Incorporated.



## 2.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises

- i. The production stage is the point where all the human and material resources for the film production are systematically harnessed by the director. The film production phase allows the director to utilize and work with the actual production plans and schedules earlier drawn at the preproduction stage.
- ii. List 5 critical role players in the production stage
  - Director
  - Producer
  - Costume Designer
  - Director of photography
  - Casting director

## UNIT 3 POST-PRODUCTION STAGE

### Unit Structure

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 3.3 The Post Production Stage
- 3.4 The Post-Production Process
- 3.5 Editing Process
- 3.6 Summary
- 3.7 Glossaries
- 3.8 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 3.9 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 3.10 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises



### 3.1 Introduction

I welcome you all to this lesson. If you remember very well, we took out time to discuss the entire scope of the actual shooting and production in a film process. In this unit we will be discussing the concluding phase of the production process, the post-production. This unit deals with the post-production activities, and will extensively details what is involved and the roles of the post production crew in the final stage of film production.



### 3.2 Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain post-production
- state the critical things involved in post-production process
- mention what is involved in post-production editing.



### 3.3 The Post-Production Stage

Post-production is the third and final major phase of the film making process. It is often referred to simply as a post. The common tasks in post-production include: editing video footage, editing the soundtrack, adding sound effects, music, etc. it also involves adding titles and graphics, colour and exposure correction, adding special effects, re-shooting certain scenes if required - "pick-up" shots (PACC, 2020).

Post-production is fundamental to the filmmaking process, and in many ways, the most magical part of it. It is where the visuals are put into

sequential order, audio is included, and all the other cinematic bells and whistles are added before it goes out into the world as a distributed film. A movie is not a movie until it has gone through post-production. (Keizer, 2021).

Postproduction is the editing of audio and visual materials to create a film. An editor assembles footage shot by shot, adds music (either original or licensed), and incorporates other visual and sound effects. These elements are woven together to create a multisensory experience we call a movie.



### 3.4 The Postproduction Process

Postproduction is a well-orchestrated, collaborative process that can take anywhere from several months to a year, or more, depending on the scope and budget of a project. Master class (2021) highlighted some core tasks that take place during post-production:

1. **Edit:** The edit suite is the command center during post production. First, the footage is transferred to an editing system, like Avid or Final Cut Pro. The editor begins cutting the movie, guided by the vision of the director. Though most editors work in digital formats and no longer physically cut and splice film, the word ‘cut’ is still used in post production.
2. **Sound Edit:** Sound, some might argue, is just as important as the picture in creating an experience for the audience. Sound editors are responsible for assembling the audio tracks of a film, removing unwanted noise, and creating sound effects. Foley artists (sound artists) create or enhance on-camera sounds, like footsteps echoing off tile floors.
3. **Music:** Most theatrical films have an original score, highlighting the mood or action of a scene. If a director wants to license songs for the soundtrack, a music supervisor secures the recording and publishing rights.
4. **Visual Effects:** Artists and engineers make up the special effects team. They design the computer-generated visuals for a film.
5. **Sound Mix:** When all audio tracks are finished, sound mixers step in to adjust audio levels. This is an integral step, as the strength of sound can easily overwhelm a scene if the music is too loud while characters are speaking, or distract from the narrative if the sound is too low and the audience can’t hear what is happening.
6. **Color Correction:** When the picture is locked (meaning, no further edits or changes), a colorist goes through every shot to digitally adjust and refine the hues and light to create continuity and strike a mood.



7. Graphics: Title, credits, and graphics (such as a date stamp) are created and added.
8. Trailer: A new editing team takes over to cut the trailer, which is a two-and-a-half-minute preview meant to entice audiences to watch the movie when it hits the big, or small, screen.



### 3.5 Editing Process

There are two ways to edit in the post-production phase, and it depends on what the director wants to achieve.

- a. Continuity Editing: This consists of matched cuts, in which continuous actions flow from one shot to another and through cut-away, in which the action shown is not a portion of the previous shot. It is a continuous sequence or series of unmatched cuts, consisting of the various types of shots filmed from different angles. The event depicted in this case must appear as a continuous series of moving images. Whenever action continues, the player's movement, position and looks should match the shots sliced together, otherwise a mismatch caused by change in body position or a switch in directional look will result in a jump-cut. The best approach the editor can use in this regard is to use the cut-away. A cutaway may be used to distract the audience to cover directional changes or jump-cut, but this has to be carefully matched by the editor.
- b. Compilation Editing: This is particularly not used for movies, except for documentaries. It can however be slightly combined with a continuous editing process.

Click the link below to watch a shot clip on post production:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KfiOtpWL1LA&t=44s>

### Self-Assessment Exercises

- i. Explain what is involved in post-production of a film project.
- ii. Continuity editing and compilation editing are part of post-production editing. True or False?



### 3.7 Summary

So far, we have discussed everything required to successfully undertake the post-production in a film project. The lesson has provided practical knowledge of post-production stage of the film production phase. Well, all the phases are very crucial and must not be done haphazardly. The

post-production is also a critical stage where the director is mostly invested and where he deploys his skills mainly. The director works with other crew members like producers and cinematographers to actualize the film production objectives.

### 3.7 Glossaries

#### **Gaffer**

The gaffer is the head of the lighting department, responsible for the design of the lighting plan for a production.

**Schedule:** The production schedule is also called shooting schedule is a document which helps figure out which scenes to shoot when, where you shoot them, and how many you shoot per day.

**Talent:** This is any member of the creative crew involved in the actual film production or movie making



### 3.9 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

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### **3.10 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise**

- i. Post-production is fundamental to the filmmaking process, and in many ways, the most magical part of it. It is where the visuals are put into sequential order, audio is included, and all the other cinematic bells and whistles are added before it goes out into the world as a distributed film. A movie is not a movie until it has gone through post-production.
- ii. True

## MODULE 6      FILM BUDGETING

Unit 1      Film Budget and Budgeting

Unit 2      Challenges of Budgeting

### UNIT 1      FILM BUDGET AND BUDGETING

#### Unit Structure

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 1.3 Explaining Budget and Budgeting
- 1.4 Goals of the Budgeting Process
- 1.5 Tips for Creating Budget
- 1.7 Critical Considerations while Making Film Budget
- 1.8 Film Budgeting
- 1.4 Summary
- 1.5 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 1.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises



#### 1.1 Introduction

Welcome. In the previous module we dealt with film directing properly and we ensured that we exhaustively discussed what is involved in directing and the roles of the director in film production. In this lesson, we will learn how film budget and budgeting affect film production and how funds are utilized at every phase of the movie project. We are also going to see how important a film budget is to film production and how it may affect the quality of the project and talents. Some challenges of film budgeting are extensively discussed. It is my expectation that you will use the reading materials and references to broaden your knowledge in this regard.



#### 1.2 Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- recall, what film budgeting is
- explain various goals of budgeting in film production
- identify various principles applicable in budgeting.



### 1.3 Explaining Budget and Budgeting

A budget is an estimation of revenue and expenses over a specified future period of time and is usually compiled and re-evaluated on a periodic basis. Budgets can be made for a person, a group of people, a business, a government, or just about anything else that makes and spends money (Ganti, et al, 2021).

Budgeting is the tactical implementation of a business plan. To achieve the goals in a business's strategic plan, we need a detailed descriptive roadmap of the business plan that sets measures and indicators of performance. We can then make changes along the way to ensure that we arrive at the desired goals.



### 1.4 Goals of the Budgeting Process

Budgeting is a critical process for any business in several ways. Corporate finance Institute-CFI, (2021) outlines the following benefits:

- a. Aids in the planning of actual operations  
The process gets managers to consider how conditions may change and what steps they need to take, while also allowing managers to understand how to address problems when they arise.
- b. Coordinates the activities of the organisation  
Budgeting encourages managers to build relationships with the other parts of the operation and understand how the various departments and teams interact with each other and how they all support the overall organisation.
- c. Communicating plans to various managers  
Communicating plans to managers is an important social aspect of the process, which ensures that everyone gets a clear understanding of how they support the organisation. It encourages communication of individual goals, plans, and initiatives, which all roll up together to support the growth of the business. It also ensures appropriate individuals are made accountable for implementing the budget.
- d. Motivates managers to strive to achieve the budget goals  
Budgeting gets managers to focus on participation in the budget process. It provides a challenge or target for individuals and managers by linking their compensation and performance relative to the budget.
- e. Control activities  
Managers can compare actual spending with the budget to control financial activities.

- f. Evaluate the performance of managers  
Budgeting provides a means of informing managers of how well they are performing in meeting targets they have set.



## 1.5 Tips for Creating Budget

Budgeting can be a complicated process at first, but consider these tips by Indeed, (2021) to make it a little easier to create an effective budget:

- **Know industry standards**  
The best way to create a budget is to understand how much things cost in your industry. While every company can be different, there is usually a standard that you can start with, then adjust depending on your business needs and unique expenses and income.
- **Account for all income**  
To be able to form a well-constructed budget, you should account for all income. Having a process in place for assigning income to a budget category will ensure that everything you earn goes toward a specific part of the company. That way, it decreases the likelihood of your company spending more money than it should. If you find that your income is more than your expenses, that's great news. You may then not have a place to put the leftover funds, however, uncategorized income can go to an emergency fund.
- **Reevaluate your budget**  
Consider looking at your budget at the end of each month. That's the time to compare your actual numbers to what you anticipated and estimated when you first created the budget. You can see how your performance was and then revise as needed so you remain as accurate as possible.
- **Consider long-term needs**  
Many business owners know what they must pay for in the future, especially if it's a major expense. For example, if a company's goal is to secure a government contract in two years, you'll probably need to budget for a big hiring expense or the cost of equipment upgrades to keep up with demands. Account for this in your budget early so you don't end up having to go into debt to accommodate the expense or opting out of the opportunity altogether.
- **Invest in budgeting software**  
Budgeting software or expenses and income tools can help keep your budget free from human error. If you find the right software for your business, you may find it a lot easier to record business dollars and get a detailed report of how your budget is doing.
- **Overestimate expenses**  
There is no harm done if you overestimate expenses because doing so keeps you prepared for unanticipated expenses and doesn't

allow them to ruin your budget. Overestimating may also give you money back into the budget that you can place in your emergency fund or use it to pay yourself back for another month where expenses may have been higher than expected.

- **Break down your budget**

Depending on the size of the business, it may be more beneficial to break down the budget by department, providing each department with its own budget to follow. You can also break the budget down by month or quarter, which can be very helpful for those businesses that, as an example, bring in a large amount of money over the summer months and less during the rest of the year. By breaking down your budget, you will be in a better position to plan for the slower months and get your summer income to stretch further.



## 1.6 Film Budgeting

Film budgeting, of course, is one of the most crucial aspects of the film process (Epstein, 2019). Film budgeting refers to the process by which a line producer, unit production manager, or production accountant prepares a budget for a film production. This document may sometimes be very lengthy and bulky with detailed financial and cost breakdowns for pre-production and production of the film. Multiple drafts of the budget may be required to whittle down costs. A budget is typically divided into four sections: above the line (creative talent), below the line (direct production costs), post-production (editing, visual effects, etc.), and other (insurance, completion bond, etc.).

The budget excludes film promotion and marketing, which is the responsibility of the film distributor. Film financing can be acquired from a private investor, sponsor, product placement, film studio, entertainment company, and/or out-of-pocket funds (Wikipedia, 2022).

Film budgeting usually occurs in two different phases. The preliminary film budget is created to raise financing and it isn't generally detailed or extended. It often only provides the top sheet (TS) which totals the accounts and contains potential costs. The second film budget occurs once financing is secured. The costs are finalized and as a result are much more complex. The numbers are realistic because they can now be based on actual quotes and hires (Unitas, 2019).



## 1.7 Critical Considerations While making Film Budget

Knudsen (2021), enumerates the following:

### **Break down the script**

You might not have the production entirely planned out yet, but that is okay; you can still make a rather detailed and accurate film production budget through your script breakdown. To do a script breakdown, you first need to list all of your scenes. Next, the location you are planning to shoot them and together with a brief description of dialogue as well as the action taking place in each scene. Each shoot day translates to money. So, try to estimate how many days you will shoot.

Low budget movies will typically be able to do around 20 or more shots per day. In contrast, the high-quality movies usually only get 5-10. Having at least an idea of how many production days you need will help a great deal with your film budget planning.

### **Think in film budget categories**

Typically, a movie budget divides into four categories:

- Above-the-line
- Below-the-line
- Below-the-line (post)
- Below-the-line (other)

Each category represents a stage somewhere in pre-production, production, post-production and distribution.

#### Pre-production costs (Above-the-line)

This category includes development costs, talent, and crew involved in the development phase. Screenwriters, producers, director and DOP, are, for instance, included in this category. Depending on the film, story rights may also need to be obtained (for example, if you are making an adaptation of a book).

#### Production costs (Below-the-line)

All production costs, equipment and below-the-line labour are accounted for in this category. Almost everything is managed in this category: locations, permits, camera, grip, production design, costumes, catering, transport and accommodation, etc.

When thinking of hiring the rest of the crew, consider additional prep time for each role during pre-production. The size of your movie budget determines how big a team you can afford to have. Remember, the larger the crew, the slower the shooting days will become.



### Post-production costs (Below-the-line)

The post-production category includes everything related to the post-production process. During post-production, the costs will vary, depending on genre and if any computer effects are needed. Ideally, you hire your editor in advance, even during the pre-production stage. You need to calculate the amount of time and resources needed for post-production and editing. In general, it is reasonable to state that you can plan to budget three to five hours for rough editing of five pages of a script. Another three to five hours for revisions, colour, and minor effects – this is an overall estimate, however. Your movie might not need that much editing, or it might need even more.

### Distribution costs (Below-the-line)

This final category includes costs related to the advertising and distribution of the movie. In most film budget templates; the distribution costs of a film are not included. However, suppose you are an independent filmmaker; you do not want to be caught with your pants down when the bank comes knocking (neither literal nor figurative). So, having a distribution plan before making your film would be ideal.

### **Budget in cast wages**

It is up to you to decide (potentially negotiate) how many actors you need and how much you will pay them. Keep in mind that most actors will be getting paid by the recommended union rates, so you can also use these as guidelines. For big productions with a large film budget that intends to hire famous actors, their managers will most likely negotiate their rate.

### **Food, transport and accommodation**

Whether you're doing a large film budget or small, it's expected that you'd feed the crew, as there's usually no time for them to leave the set. Especially not if the actors are in costumes and makeup – Edward Scissorhands doesn't go out to get shawarma. Have drinks, snacks, meals, and potentially accommodation for your crew if you're filming some secluded place or somewhere where the staff can take a nap from time to time.

### **Renting or subscribing to equipment**

Camera equipment can quickly become one of the more expensive elements you include in your film budget. Luckily, there are cheaper options to acquire the camera equipment you need to ace your footage. Especially if your movie budget is limited, you can rent or subscribe to your needed camera equipment.

Depending on the size of your production, you will need a proportional amount of excellent equipment. Whether that is the best camera for cinema or you want to try out iPhone filmmaking, you need to start scouting proper camera equipment.

**Include art design in your film production budget**

Even low budget films need to set aside a certain amount of their film budget for art design. Try to go through each of your scenes, consider all of the props in each that you need to make, buy, rent, create in photoshop (however you want to do it). Then consider if any scenes need additional set design.

Think about makeup, costumes, hair and so on. Is there anything that needs special attention and more resources? Special effects such as blood or wounds entail more time on the makeup chair and more.

**Make room for overtime**

Overtime hours are usually billed double after you hit those 12 hours of work, and yes, they will most likely happen. If these overtime hours are not budgeted for, it can cause significant troubles for everyone involved. Still, there should be room for them, as overtime hours usually are cheaper than having to add a whole shooting day.

**Include a contingency reserve**

The contingency amount represents the financial, let's call it, padding. That you set aside for unknown issues, believe me, there will be things we cannot account for beforehand (we are only humans, after all).

| BUDGET TOPSHEET             |                            |                    |            |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|------------|
| <b>Production Co.</b>       |                            | <b>Producers</b>   |            |
| <b>Project Title</b>        |                            | <b>Union/Non</b>   |            |
| <b>Budget Date</b>          |                            | <b>Prepared by</b> |            |
| <b>Shoot Days</b>           |                            | <b>Locations</b>   |            |
| <b>ABOVE THE LINE</b>       |                            |                    |            |
| 10-00                       | Development Costs          | 1                  | \$0        |
| 11-00                       | Story & Rights             | 1                  | \$0        |
| 12-00                       | Producer Unit              | 1                  | \$0        |
| 13-00                       | Director & Staff           | 1                  | \$0        |
| 14-00                       | Cast                       | 1                  | \$0        |
| 15-00                       | Travel & Living            | 1                  | \$0        |
| <b>Total Above the Line</b> |                            |                    | <b>\$0</b> |
| <b>PRODUCTION EXPENSES</b>  |                            |                    |            |
| 20-00                       | Production Staff           | 2                  | \$0        |
| 21-00                       | Extra Talent               | 2                  | \$0        |
| 22-00                       | Set Design                 | 2                  | \$0        |
| 23-00                       | Set Construction           | 2                  | \$0        |
| 24-00                       | Set Pre-rig & Strike       | 2                  | \$0        |
| 25-00                       | Set Operations             | 2                  | \$0        |
| 26-00                       | Set Dressing               | 2                  | \$0        |
| 27-00                       | Property                   | 2                  | \$0        |
| 28-00                       | Wardrobe                   | 2                  | \$0        |
| 29-00                       | Electric                   | 2                  | \$0        |
| 30-00                       | Camera                     | 2                  | \$0        |
| 31-00                       | Production Sound           | 2                  | \$0        |
| 32-00                       | Make-up & Hair             | 2                  | \$0        |
| 33-00                       | Transportation             | 2                  | \$0        |
| 34-00                       | Locations                  | 2                  | \$0        |
| 35-00                       | Picture Vehicles & Animals | 2                  | \$0        |

Film budget Template-Source: Unitas, (2019)

**Self-Assessment Exercise**

- i. Explain clearly in your own word what you understand by film budgeting.
- ii. What are some tips of film budget?
- iii. Film budget categories involves....., ..... and .....



**1.9 Summary**

We have been able to clarify the essentials of film budgeting in film production. This explains how funds and finances are utilized in film

project. Also, we have discussed some critical considerations and important tips necessary for successful film budgeting. This unit contains a lot of cited materials and sources, I implore you to follow through with these, as well as the assessment questions.



### **1.10 References/Further Readings/Web Resources**

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<https://academy.wedio.com/film-budget/>

Unitas, A.J. (2019). Essential guide for crafting film budgets.  
<https://www.studiobinder.com/blog/the-essential-guide-for-crafting-film-budgets-with-free-film-budget-template/>

Wikipedia, (2022). Film budgeting.  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Film\\_budgeting](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Film_budgeting)



### **1.11 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises**

- i. Film budgeting refers to the process by which a line producer, unit production manager, or production accountant prepares a budget for a film production.
- ii. Know industry standards  
Account for all income  
Reevaluate your budget  
Consider long-term needs  
Overestimate expenses  
Break down your budget
- i. Above-the line, Below-the-line and Below-the-line (Post and Other).

## UNIT 2 CHALLENGES OF BUDGETING

### Unit Structure

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 2.3 Limitation of Film Budget
- 2.4 Summary
- 2.5 Self-Assessment Exercise
- 2.6 References
- 2.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises



### 2.1 Introduction

Good to see you, class, we have seen how important a film budget is to film production and how it may affect the quality of the project and talents. Now we are, going to discuss some challenges of film budgeting are extensively how such can be avoided. It is my expectation that you will use the reading materials and references to broaden your knowledge in this regard.



### 2.2 Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- identify some limitations of film budgeting
- clarify some elements that pose as drawbacks to film budget.



### 2.3 Limitations of Film Budget

Budgeting comes with its own problems. Some of these challenges can be as a result of some institutional impediments, while others can result from the budget itself. Here are some limitations of film budget:

- a. Scarcity of Funds: At times, a director can have a great plan to execute and produce a great movie, but one factor that could stall the progress of any movie production is lack of funds or shortage of funds. Having access to money or otherwise can have a significant effect on the film budget. In some instances, funds shortage can result in many bad outcomes such as under budgeting, inconsistencies in budget plans, and other dire consequences.

- b. Lack of Expertise in production: To make a good budget, one has to be grounded in movie production, or consult experts to help prepare the film budget. Productions have been badly impacted as a result of haphazard and shoddy budget planning that may not factor some crucial production tasks, anticipate problems or be totally oblivious of sensitive issues that should have been captured in the budget in the first place.
- a. Inflation: Economic anomalies like inflation and recession can also have a negative impact on the film budget plans. In today's volatile economy, it is very hard to predict certain economic strains (which may result from bad policies or sudden change in economic situations). The film budget for transportation, equipment procurement, purchase or software and license and exchange rates can be negatively affected.
- d. Unforeseen Events: These might also put a huge strain in a well-prepared budget. In some cases, there could be a major change in the story, the crew or in the overall management of the film. There are other issues that may result from market, sales, distribution and funding of the film production.
- e. Human Errors: These factors have been identified as one of the impediments of effective film budgeting. Human errors can occur not only in planning a deficient budget for the project but also in other aspects as when key decision makers' goals do not align for the film production. For instance, a producer could aim at producing a low budget movie, while a props manager could be aiming to use high-end equipment and props for the production.
- f. Lack of motivation: This factor has to do more with mental inducement. When any key member of the film crew loses motivation, it can affect a number of things and may extend to other areas, like impairment of judgment. The decision makers need to exercise sound judgment in planning and budgeting for film production, a slight lapse in judgement can impede on the quality of budget and the outright outcome of the film production.

### **Self-Assessment Exercises**

- i. List at least five limitations of film budgeting.
- ii. Lack of expertise in film budget is a concern in film production.

### **True or False?**



## 2.5 Summary

We have provided an exhaustive lesson on film budget and budgeting challenges for any production. We have also learnt some of the reasons learned the critical consideration film producers observe in making sure that a film project does not lack funds. This module has also discussed principles that may be employed in ensuring that the film production is successful. There are several constraints that have been identified and explained.



## 2.6 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

Epstein, M. (2019). Film budget planning: How to effectively budget a script breakdown. <https://www.studiobinder.com/blog/film-budget-planning-how-to-effectively-budget-a-script-breakdown/>

Unitas, A.J. (2019). Essential guide for crafting film budgets. <https://www.studiobinder.com/blog/the-essential-guide-for-crafting-film-budgets-with-free-film-budget-template/>





## 2.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises

- i. Lack of Expertise in production
  - Inflation
  - Unforeseen Events
  - Human Errors
  - Scarcity of fund
- ii. True

## **MODULE 7      ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS IN FILM MAKING**

|        |                         |
|--------|-------------------------|
| Unit 1 | Ethics in Film          |
| Unit 2 | Issues in Nigerian Film |

### **UNIT 1      ETHICS IN FILM**

#### **Unit Structure**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 1.3 Film Ethics
- 1.4 Ethical and Legal Consideration in Film Production
- 1.5 Summary
- 1.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises



#### **3.1 Introduction**

We have discussed some fundamentals of film production, directing and budgeting in the previous lessons. This lesson will deal extensively with ethical considerations that all film makers must adhere to. We will learn everything that concerns ethics and other ethical principles that guide film production, especially in Nigeria.



#### **1.2 Intended Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain what film ethics is
- identify some legal considerations that applies to film production.



#### **1.3 Film Ethics**

The word ethics was derived from the Greek word “ethos”, which means “way of living”, ethics is a branch of philosophy that is concerned with human conduct, more specifically the behaviour of individuals in society. Ethics examines the rational justification for our moral judgments; it studies what is morally right or wrong, just or unjust (Canada, 2015).

Ethics is based on well-founded principles/standards of right and wrong that prescribe what humans ought to do, usually in terms of rights, obligations, benefits to society, fairness, or specific virtues (Velasquez et al, 2010). Ethics deals with such questions at all levels. Its subject consists of the fundamental issues of practical decision making, and its major concerns include the nature of ultimate value and the standards by which human actions can be judged right or wrong (Britannica, nd).

One of the integral things that must be addressed when making a film is the ethics involved. Ethics are a constant issue that have to be carefully considered when filmmaking. This difficult decision-making is highly prevalent in that of documentaries, because of the difficulties associated in filming ‘real people’ or “social actors, (Nichols, 2001).

The importance of ethics when making a film is paramount. They exist in the filmmaking world to “govern the conduct [because] no hard and fast rules suffice, (Nichols, 2001). Ethics are a constant issue that are raised when embarking on a film production. It is most important to consider the subjects in the film and what content will be portrayed to the audience.



## **1.4 Ethical and Legal Considerations in Film Production**

### **a. Copyright**

Copyright is a legal protection granted to creators or originators of creative materials, whether Literary, Musical, Artistic or Cinematographic works or an adaptation of any of these eligible works. It confers an exclusive and assignable right to the original owner of the work, to solely profit, reproduce, remake and distribute his intellectual work in any way he wants or ways that favour him (Eke, 2019). It can be said that copyright has been infringed by any person who without the license or authorization of the owner of the copyright uses or causes the copyrighted work to be used. A copyright holder whose right has been infringed is entitled to damages or injunctions (Resolution Law Firm, 2021).

It is a fact that movie makers and film companies can be liable for copyright infringement if they fail to obtain required authorizations and license for any intellectual work they make use of or incorporate in their film production. Such can be songs, drawing, animation, instrumental, or any material that has been protected by the copyright law.

The copyright law in Nigeria provides for several categories and the duration of rights. The Resolution Law Firm (2021) outlined the provisions first schedule of the copyright act as follow:

- In the case of literary, musical or artistic works (photographs are not included), copyright will be given for a period of 70 years after the end of the year in which the author dies. Where the work is created by a body corporate then the copyright will last for 70 years after the end of the year in which the work was first published.
- In the case of cinematography, films, and photographs, the copyright will last for a period of 50 years after the end of the year in which the work was first published
- In the case of sound recordings, the copyright is given for a period of 50 years after the end of the year in which the recording was first made.
- Where it is a broadcast, the copyright will last 50 years after the end of the year in which the broadcast first took place.

b. Defamation

Defamation is the lowering of a person in the estimation of right-thinking members of the society. In other words, defamation is an abuse of someone's reputation by another person. It involves an expression that tends to lower the plaintiff in the estimation of right-thinking members of the society; or to expose him to hatred, contempt or ridicule; Or to cause other persons to shun or avoid him; or to discredit him in his office, trade or profession; or to injure his financial credit (Olaposi, 2021).

Three things must be involved before an expression can be considered defamatory. The statement must be untrue and it must be published. The second point is that the statement must be published. It does not matter how offensive or false the statement is, there can be no action for defamation if the statement is made only to the person about whom the allegation is being made. The statement must be communicated to at least one other person who can hear or read the statement and understand it (Ojoye, 2018).

Film producers and movie makers can fall prey to defamation if they allow themselves to be used to promote films and documentaries targeted at an individual, organisation or in misrepresenting an entity. Politicians, organisations and private individuals can use movies to deliberately cause harm and promote derogatory expression of people's reputation and image.

The two common categories of defamation are:

**Libel** (defamatory statements in permanent form, such as a written statement, a film, radio or television broadcast, and public performance of a stage play) and

**Slander** (is in transient or temporary form such as spoken word or physical gestures).

c. Obscenity and Indecency

This twin-concept is very in principle and in itself. This is due to the fact that it involves concepts that are in themselves divisive. Osinbajo and Fogam (1991) say that, “Any definition offered always seems to require some further clarifications.” While, it might difficult to ascertain the origin of Obscenity and pornography in our industry, it is must easier observe that it is gradually becoming a main stay in the Nigerian movie industry.

An indecent publication may be defined as a communication to another person (be it by distribution or projection, printing, making or manufacturing for distribution or projection) of any material which, having regard to all relevant circumstances, has a tendency to corrupt persons who are likely to read, see or hear it. This definition also applies to an ‘obscene publication’, except that the corrupting tendency here is much stronger than that required for an ‘indecent publication’ (Adeyemi, in Obi, 2008).

Adeyemi writes that:

in Lagos State, the statutory definition of obscenity is that the publication in question, taken as a whole, must be such that its effect is to tend to deprave and corrupt persons who are likely, having regard to all relevant circumstances, to read, see or hear the matter contained or embodied in it’ (Obscene Publications Act, 1961, Section 3(1)). He cites Lord Parker, C. J. as saying in *R. v. Stanley* that ‘the words indecent or obscene convey one idea, namely, offending against the recognised standards of propriety, indecent being at the lower end of the scale...As it seems to this Court, an indecent article is not necessarily obscene, whereas an obscene article almost certainly must be indecent

Thus, where a material is declared not to be obscene, it can still be held to be indecent. Therefore, it can be said that any object, show or performance which is obscene or indecent is one which tends to corrupt morals.

Obscenity and indecency mean that the material is disgusting to sense – abhorrent to morality or virtue; containing languages regarded as taboo in polite usage; repulsive by reason of moral or ethical principles. A material is deemed obscene if it has a tendency to deprave and corrupt those whose minds are open to immoral influence and into whose hand it might fall. In addition, if any part of the work, regardless of how small, met this definition, the entire work is regarded as obscene.

According to federal law, it is illegal to air obscene broadcasts at any time of the day, and to air indecent programs or to use profane languages at certain times of the day.

In movie production, an obscene material is seen as that which the average person would feel appeals to prurient interests; involving sexual actions in an obviously offensive manner. Indecent materials have contents that are offensive and not quite at the level of obscenity. However, they can be restricted and highly censored to protect children and minors.

The law protecting the audience of mass communication from obscene and indecent publication has been enacted in many countries and Nigeria is not an exemption. In Nigeria the Section 233D of Criminal Code of Nigeria prohibits publication of obscene matter S.233D (1) reads:

Subject to the provision of this chapter, any person who, whether for gain or not, distribute or projects any article deemed to be obscene for the purpose of this chapter, commits an offence punishable on conviction by a fine not exceeding four hundred thousand naira or by imprisonment for a term not exceeding three years or by both.

The current reality in Nigerian film industry is such stories of desperate young girls ready to take nude roles, unprofessional producers who only think about sexually demeaning as a way to get a huge breakthrough in the industry, and the antecedent demands for depraved and indecent if not utterly obscene and pornographic movie contents

d. Sedition

Sedition can be aptly defined as any act, speech or publication that is done with a seditious intention. Seditious intention has been defined by the provision of S. 50 (2) of the Criminal Code.

50 (2) A “seditious intention” is an intention:

- (a) To bring into hatred or contempt or excite disaffection against the person of the President or of the Governor of a State or the Government of the Federation; or
- (b) to excite the citizens or other inhabitants of Nigeria to attempt to procure the alteration, otherwise than by lawful means, of any other matter in Nigeria as by law established; or
- (c) To raise discontent or disaffection amongst the citizens or other inhabitants of Nigeria; or
- (d) To promote feelings of ill-will and hostility between different classes of the population of Nigeria

But an act, speech or publication is not seditious by reason only that it intends-

- to show that the President or the Governor of a State has been misled or mistaken in any measure in the Federation or a State, as the case may be; or
- (ii) to point out errors or defects in the Government or constitution of Nigeria, or of any State thereof, as by law established or in legislation or in the administration of justice with a view to the remedying of such errors or defects; or
- to persuade the citizens or other inhabitants of Nigeria to attempt to procure by lawful means the alteration of any matter in Nigeria as by law established; or
- To point out, with a view to their removal, any matters which are producing or have a tendency to produce feelings of ill-will and enmity between different classes of the population of Nigeria.

It is further provided for in S. 50 (3) that in determining whether an act was done with a seditious intention, such person would be deemed to intend the natural consequences that would flow from his actions.

#### The Punishment for Sedition

The Criminal Code in S. 51 provides for the punishment in the offence of sedition. The section states:

- (1) Any person who-
  - (a) Does or attempts to do, or makes any preparation to do, or conspires with any person to do, any act with a seditious intention;
  - (b) utters any seditious words;
  - (c) prints, publishes, sells, offers for sale, distributes or reproduces any seditious publication;
  - (d) imports any seditious publication, unless he has no reason to believe that it is seditious; shall be guilty of an offence and liable on conviction for a first offence to imprisonment for two years or to a fine of two hundred naira or to both such imprisonment and fine and for a subsequent offence to imprisonment for three years and any seditious publication shall be forfeited to the State.
- (2) Any person who without lawful excuse has in his possession any seditious publication shall be guilty of an offence and liable on conviction, for a first offence to imprisonment for one year or to a fine of one hundred naira or to both such imprisonment and fine, and for a subsequent offence to imprisonment for two years; and such publication shall be forfeited to the State (Olanrewaju, 2015).

## Self-Assessment Exercise 1

- i. Tell us what you know about film ethics.
- ii. List some legal and ethical issues that affect film production.



### 1.5 Summary

We have discussed film ethics extensively in the light of Nigerian situations and some of the applicable laws and regulations that affect film production in Nigeria. This unit has detailed critical areas that ethics can be applied and other relevant ethical standards that guide and regulate film quality and industry. Additionally, this lesson has exposed you to the legal implication of committing ethical infractions along with the possible consequences of such. Kindly avail yourself for further reading and practice to familiarise yourself with those salient issues.



### 1.6 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

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### **1.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises**

- i. The word ethics was derived from the Greek word “ethos”, which means “way of living”, ethics is a branch of philosophy that is concerned with human conduct, more specifically the behaviour of individuals in society.
- ii. Copyright, Sediton, Defamation, Obscenity and indecency

## UNIT 2 ISSUES IN NIGERIAN FILM

### Unit Structure

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Intended Learning Outcomes
- 2.3 Issues in Nigeria Film Industry
- 2.4 Nigeria Film Censorship
  - 2.4.1 Challenges of the National Film and Video Censor Board
  - 2.4.2 Relevant Associates and Guide
- 2.5 Summary
- 2.6 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 2.7 References/Further Readings/Web Resources
- 2.8 Possible Answers to the Self-Assessment Exercises



### 2.1 Introduction

We have discussed some fundamentals of film production, directing and budgeting in the previous lessons. This module will deal extensively with ethical considerations that all film makers must adhere to. We will learn about everything about ethics and other ethical principles that guide film production, especially in Nigeria. We are also going to understand some significant issues in film and film censorship in Nigeria.



### 2.2 Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- discuss the responsibilities of the Nigerian Film Censor Board
- state the peculiar issues confronting Nigerian film industry
- mention some relevant film organisations in Nigeria.



### 2.3 Issues in Nigerian Film Industry

There are several issues combating the Nigerian film industry. Hammed, (2018) identified some of them as follow:

#### **Piracy:**

The average cost of producing a movie in Nigeria ranges between the sums of 3.5 million naira – 5 million naira. When done with the production, the movies are made immediately available in DVDs at the price of 1,000 – 1,500 naira. That means for investors to successfully

recoup their money and make profit, about 4,000 – 5,000 units of DVDs need to be sold.

However, a recent study by the BBC revealed that 9 out of 10 copies are pirated. Consumers see the pirated ones as bargains and rush to purchase them. This usually leads to massive loss for producers, who will be left with lots of unsold DVDs, thereby leading to a loss for them.

### **Paying for Roles**

Although this practice may have been going on for a long time, it only became rampant recently with many young talents desperate for quick fame. These aspiring actors, who are not necessarily talented, get to star in movies while depriving real talent from getting the roles. Modern movie makers use this practice as a means of raising funds for their next project.

### **Lack of Funds**

As we all know, writers with good stories to tell and no funds to finance their dreams are as good as being unemployed. Many times, movie makers have to resort to unconventional means, such as requesting payment for roles and begging on social media, in order to get money for their movie.

Unfortunate implication is that good stories have had to be watered down in order for the budget to be met and many movie makers who do not want to compromise have had to travel out of the country where it is easy to get funds for movies.

### **Shortage of Seasoned producers and Talents**

The industry is filled with talentless individuals who mainly joined the industry for fame or money and not because they love the job. Some of them are so awful, it is better to watch paint dry than see them in movies. Currently, the Nigerian movie industry is saturated with substandard movies shot mostly by less talented producers.

### **Lack of Government Support**

The Nigerian film industry has been beset by this challenge for decades. The Nigerian government has not shown committed efforts and support to the talent industry. However, in 2010, former President Goodluck Jonathan released the sum of 200 million dollars in grant to the Nigeria movie industry for filmmakers to borrow from and make quality movies with. In March 2013, an additional 115 million dollars in grant, under the name “Project ACT Nollywood,” was dispersed into the industry by his administration.

During this period, the industry experienced significant change in terms of movie production and global reach. Movies such as *Half of a Yellow Sun* and *Flower Girl* were made from these funds. Sadly, many of these good policies have either been discontinued or have been totally scrapped.

### **Non-availability of Adequate Cinemas**

Currently, there are less than 50 cinemas in the whole country. That is, there's an average of 1 cinema to almost 4 million Nigerians. Many of these cinemas are concentrated in Lagos and other big cities (about 10 of those cinemas are in Lagos alone). This means there are perhaps states with just one cinema or worse still states without cinemas at all.

### **Lack of Quality Control**

The Nigerian movie industry is a scavenging ground for many non-professionals. This is because anyone can produce and act in the movie once they have the resources. The lawless nature of the business of film making in Nigeria is the reason for the low quality of a lot of Nollywood films. There is no quality control mechanism. This has resulted in loss of confidence by lots of people as most people prefer to watch Hollywood movies or even Bollywood movies to that of Nollywood.

### **Lack of Unity among Practitioners**

You may not know it from the outside but the Nigeria film industry is divided into three. Namely: The Yoruba sector, the Igbo sector and the Hausa sector (weirdly known as Kannywood). The Yoruba and Igbo faction are debating who originated filmmaking in the country while Kannywood set itself aside because it is conservative in nature. To worsen the situation, the Yoruba sector is divided into additional two to three factions all claiming to be the authentic one.

### **Lack of Umbrella Association**

The Nigerian film industry has no collective association they can point to. Instead, we have various associations claiming to represent different groups of actors. This has made it very difficult for anyone to see Nollywood as a family.

## **2.4 Nigerian Film Censorship**

The National Film and Video Censors Board (NFVCB), was established by Act 85 of 1993 as the official regulatory agency for the film and video sector of the Nigerian economy (NFVCB, 2017).

### **The Core Goals of the NFVCB**

1. To provide an enabling environment for the growth of the film industry through our activities.

2. To manage the classification system to time, cost, and quality standards.
3. To provide policy advice and services to governments.
4. To enhance confidence in (and utilization of) the NFVCB classification system among existing and potential clients.
5. To enhance community understanding, confidence, and usage in relation to classification systems and outcomes.
6. To continually empower NFVCB management and staff to meet its objectives by providing the requisite internal capacity in the areas of people, training, logistical support, information, financial resources, and leadership.

### **The Role of the NFVCB in the Nigerian Film Industry**

The National Film Video Censors Board is the regulatory body set up by Act No.85 of 1993 to regulate films and video industry in Nigeria. The Board is empowered by law to classify all films and videos whether imported or produced locally. It is also the duty of the Board to register all films and videos outlets across the country and to keep a register of such registered outlets among other functions.

The functions of the Board are:

1. To license a person to exhibit films and video works,
2. To license a premises for the purposes of exhibiting films and video works,
3. To censor and classify films and video works;
4. To regulate and prescribe safety precautions to be observed in licensed premises;
5. To regulate and prescribe safety precautions to be observed in licensed premises;
6. To regulate and control cinematographic exhibitions; and
7. To perform such other functions as are necessary or expedient for the full discharge of all or any of the functions conferred on it by this Decree. The establishment of the Board therefore empowers it to assess, classify and register films and video works and the film outlets across the country monitor the films and film outlets.

As priority intervention mechanisms, the Board has delineated additional action items to:

1. Organise training programmes focusing on new content development, aimed at institutionalising international best practices in film production.
2. Organise international conferences on film censorship/classification: impact on society and development.
3. Draft and successfully implement new national distribution policy to transform the industry and ensure increased independent productions get access to the market.

4. Launch new censorship and classification guidelines to aid filmmakers, and professionalize NFVCB operations.
5. To regulate and prescribe safety precautions to be observed in licensed premises;
6. Ensure wider community acceptance and confidence in our classification decisions.
7. Increase monitoring and enforcement activities to curb release of such movies into the market without NFVCB approval.
8. Institute stringent sanctions for such violations.
9. Institute reward mechanisms for the production of “positive” themed movies, such as advance production grants, lower censorship charges for advocacy movies, etc.

### **The NFVCB Involvement**

As the industry regulator, the NFVCB sees its role as complementary to the development of a viable film industry. To drive this assertion, the Board last year initiated the “Nigeria in the Movies” (NIM) is a definitive, flagship programme that addresses the deficiencies in the film industry, with forward looking initiatives based on the Board’s mandate and vision. The Board believes very strongly that Nigeria should define her identity, character, image and influence from the movies’ global window. The vision aligns strongly with the Heart of Africa Project, and the Rebranding Nigeria initiatives and comes across as the strongest force of global goodwill and influence for Nigeria. *Nigeria in the Movies* initiative address the salient issues of:

- Credibility,
- Authenticity, visibility and
- Marketability of the Nigerian film industry

Under the NIM initiative the Board has a four-pronged programme, chief of which is the reforms in the distribution system, with the launch of the new distribution guidelines.

The goal of reforms guidelines is to Corporatise the distribution segment of the industry, and stimulate the growth of the overall industry that embraces the international market, create support structures for the production of enduring culturally significant films that will advance our social and economic objectives.

The Ultimate goal of the Nigeria in the Movies initiative is to “Raise the industry profile of Nollywood, and the Nigerian film sector, as an industry of strategic national importance with global authentic influence for which the ultimate beneficiary is Nigeria.

It is without doubt that public policy has a role to play in strengthening the industry in order to generate substantial economic rewards and important cultural benefits, and the NFVCB due to its unique role in the

industry is well placed to play a leading role in the transformation of our much-cherished film industry.

### **2.4.1 Challenges of the National Film and Video Censor Board**

Aondofa et al (2020) identified some challenges that bedevil the activities of the NFVCB as follow:

Illegally Distributed Contents: This has continued to represent a genuine test to the board's activities. Ugor (2007), remarks that video films are often imported and exported illegally across the Nigerian borders.

Lack of Synergy with Relevant Agencies: There is no doubt that the board can hardly be in charge of the industry alone without proper support from complementing statutory bodies like; the Nigeria Police Force, Customs, Immigration and Copyright Commission. The offences that occur under the regulatory functions of the National Film and Video Censors Board Act, are criminal in nature, hence they fall under the statutory responsibilities of the Nigerian Police. The copyright commission ensures that copyrighted works are not pirated and hence get back to the Nigerian markets, etc.

Duplicate Functions of State's Censorship Boards: Even though the federal system of governance enshrined in the Nigerian Constitution provides the National Assembly and the state houses of assembly to establish censorship boards, the creation of these boards largely duplicates the functions of the NFVCB. If not properly managed this can result in multiple censorship and classification standards that could pose a challenge and limit the acceptance of Nigerian films abroad.

Lack of Proper Procedural Framework: As a matter of principle, the board does not involve itself with either the pre-production or postproduction activities of the filmmaker(s). Ugor (2007) quoting Mr. Rotimi Martins a member of the board says, "We do not always know the story... We don't go to location... When the job has been completed, you now bring it to us for censorship". This principle in this age and time seems flawed. It is also obviously not at par with other film cultures such as the United States where the rating board.

Inadequate Funding: Balogun (2010), notes that, the difficulties which the Board faced in 2009 was "due largely to scarcity of funds in implementing programmes." Statutorily, the NFVCB receives its funding through appropriation and internally generated revenue. However, the NFVCB has often suffered from underfunding and has sometimes found it difficult to meet its running costs. To carry out its role effectively, the Board requires adequate funds to pursue building projects or procure office



accommodation. The Board also needs sufficient funds to procure equipment and vehicles for extensive and intensive inspectorate, investigative and monitoring activities and to pursue vigorously, staff training and development programmes.

Lack of Proper Monitoring: Given the vastness and the geographical spread of Nigeria, it is without a doubt exceptionally difficult for the officers of NFVCB to establish a monitoring presence all over the country with its present structure. Accordingly, it is hard for the Board to uphold its laws on films/video; in this manner, endless movies that ought to have gone under the sledge of the Board actually flood the market and attract viewers. Moreover, because of this vacuum, the movie producers themselves additionally stunt and divert oversight authority of NFVCB by offering to the market an alternate rendition of their movies as opposed to the ones classified and affirmed by the Board. The NFVCB tries to guarantee that non endorsed films are not traded in the market and that only authorized wholesalers work in the market. It likewise seeks to guarantee that films/videos that are not censored nor classified are screened on broadcast stations or watched in film/video centers. The performance of these functions requires that it establishes a monitoring presence in all of the stated places. The implication of the lack of presence in these places is that another version of a film previewed and classified by the board can be marketed/exhibited or screened in the hinterland while only the censored version is sold or screened within the vicinity where the board's office is domiciled.

Drawbacks in the Enabling Laws: There is no doubt that the laws governing the performance of the board needs to be updated to meet the exigencies of the time. The absence of enabling laws to enhance the performance of the board is a serious challenge. The amendment of the Board's enabling law, which has been on the concurrent list since 1993 is yet to be passed into law according to the current Director-General. Ms. Bala further stated that, "the proposed amendment is with the Ministry of Justice and I hope that it would get to the National Assembly soon so the Board can be strengthened to act when the need arises".

#### **2.4.2 Relevant Associations and Guilds**

The Board in the cause of carrying out her duties interfaces with relevant guilds and associations in the film industry for an effective implementation of policies. These include but not limited to the following:

- 1) AGN: Actors Guild of Nigeria
- 2) AMP: Association of Movie Producers
- 3) ANMD: Association of Nigeria Movie Directors
- 4) AMPMAN: Active Movie Producers and Marketers Association

of Nigeria

- 5) AMPRAC: Association of Movie Practitioners
- 6) AMCOD: Association of Movie Content Owners and

Producers/Distributors of Nigeria

- 7) CDGN: Creative Designers Guilds of Nigeria
- 8) CEAN: Cinema Exhibitors Association of Nigeria
- 9) CSN: Cinematographers Society of Nigeria
- 10) DGN: Directors Guilds of Nigeria
- 11) FDAN: Film Distributors Association of Nigeria
- 12) FVPMAN: Film Video Producers and Marketers Association of Nigeria.
- 13) MOPPAN: Motion Pictures Practitioners Association of Nigeria
- 14) NANTAP: National Association of Nigeria Theatre Arts Practitioners
- 15) SWGN: Screenwriters Guild of Nigeria
- 16) TGMAN: The Golden Movies Ambassadors of Nigeria
- 17) TAMPAN: Theatre Arts and Motion Picture Practitioners Association of Nigeria.
- 18) ITPAN: Independent Television Producers Association of Nigeria Association of Nigeria

### Self-Assessment Exercise

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. What are some responsibilities of the Nigerian Film Censor Board?</li> <li>ii. List four peculiar issues confronting Nigerian film industry.</li> <li>iii. Mention some relevant film organisations in Nigeria.</li> </ol> |
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## 2.5 Summary

This lesson has sufficiently discussed issues and matters relating to local film regulations and censorship. We have been able to treat some relevant or peculiar challenges of the Nigerian film industry, and then we have explained the role of the Nigerian Film and Video Censor Board in regulating, monitoring and standardizing the Nigerian film industry. Also, we provided clarifications on the duties of some of the film bodies in Nigerian while we highlight the relevant film and guide associations in Nigerian film industry.



## 2.6 References/Further Readings/Web Resources

Aondofa *et al* (2020). Video censorship and classification in Nigeria: Challenges and prospects of National Film and Video Censors Board. *KIU Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(4): 245–254

Hammed, F. (2018). 10 challenges facing the Nigerian film industry and possible solutions. <https://infoguidenigeria.com/nigerian-film-industry/>

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## 2.7 Possible Answers to the Self-Assessment Exercises

List 5 issues affecting the Nigerian film industry

Lack of Unity among Practitioners

Lack of Quality Control

Lack of Government Support

Shortage of Seasoned producers and Talents

Lack of Funds

To license a person to exhibit films and video works,

To license a premises for the purposes of exhibiting films and video works,

To censor and classify films and video works;

To regulate and prescribe safety precautions to be observed in licensed premises

AGN: Actors Guild of Nigeria

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