

WRITE AN ADAPTATION

An adaptation is a type of screenplay that is based on a story that has already been written. Adaptations are original works in themselves, but they begin with the previously published material as their source. Screenplays can be adapted from books, or from stage plays, or even from other screenplays.

Adapting a work can be a challenge because the writer must not only create a story that is compelling in its own right, but he or she also must remain true to the original story. Adapting a written story to a screenplay requires the screenwriter to adjust the **length** of the story, because a book may be too long for a typical movie length. Also, the screenwriter has to consider **spacing**, because while the reader of a story may take many breaks throughout the story, a film audience has to digest the whole story at once. Finally, when writing an adaptation, a screenwriter must find **visual** ways to share the information that is described in words in the original story.

To start writing an adaptation, a screenwriter pulls out the most important points of **plot**, **character**, **setting**, **dialogue**, and **action** from the source story. The writer also analyzes subplots, which are smaller plots that revolve around added conflicts, and considers whether they should be changed or removed from the film.

In this exercise, choose a short story, either something you wrote or work written by another author, and adapt it to a screenplay for a short film of 1-5 minutes. Type the screenplay using proper script formatting as demonstrated on [Worksheet B](#). Remember, a page of a screenplay is a minute of film, so your screenplay should be 1-5 pages long. It is recommended that you use the front and back of this page to analyze the original work before you begin writing your adaptation.

You are welcome to use a screenwriting program called Celtx to write this exercise. With your parents' permission, you can access the program at www.celtx.com.