

Teachers' Notes

This study guide looks at how screenplays are constructed.

It is intended for use in the following curriculum areas:

- Students of GCSE and A Level English using screenplays for analytical and creative study
- Students of A Level Film Studies with particular reference to FS1 and F54 (Making Meaning I & II)
- Production modules of other Media courses

Focus Areas

What is a screenplay? Getting started - Creating your own story

Genre - Structure Writing a synopsis

Dialogue - Creating characters - Layout

Looking at scripts - Writing your extract from a screenplay -

Writing a supporting account of your screenplay -

Appendices

The screenplay of *The Full Monty* contains language which may be offensive. As with all classroom material. Teachers are advised to check the suitability of the script for use with individual groups

A screenplay, also known as a script is the written description of a film. It is created months, perhaps years before the film appears on screen and is used by all the film's crew as a blueprint for the finished film.

The screenplay is the responsibility of the film's writer and contains all the information required to realise the film -everything from characters, their dialogue and actions, to locations, props and camera angles

Rarely, however, will the writer create the entire screenplay alone. Rather, the screenplay will be the culmination of countless meetings between the writer, the film's producer, director, sometimes lead actors and occasionally other key personnel

The script is written and rewritten many times - each version being called a draft - as different ideas develop; bad scenes may be dropped, new characters introduced, rough dialogue improved upon. It can take any number of rewrites before a script is deemed ready for filming and even then, it is not finished. During shooting, the writer will often be called upon to rewrite sections of the script due to artistic second thoughts or technical impossibilities.

Getting Started

Looking at stories

How many different stories do you think have been told in films? Hundreds? Thousands? Tens of thousands? In fact, the answer is seven. Each of these seven stories has a source, an original story upon which the others are based. They are listed below, together with an example.

Research original stories and read them. What makes them so special that even today they are still used as 'templates' for film

Think of as many examples of each of the seven stories as you can.

Of course, the seven stories can be told in a variety of ways. Rocky is a Cinderella story as much as Strictly Ballroom. Many films also blend one or more of these stories; for example, Star Wars is a combination of Cinderella and Circe

List as many films as you can which are a combination of the following:

Achilles and Cinderella
Circe and Tristan
Orpheus and Faust

ACHILLES

The flawless person...well...almost flawless!

(Example: *SUPERMAN*)

CINDERELLA

The dream comes true.

(Example: *PRETTY WOMAN*)

CIRCE

The chase.

(Example: *THE MATRIX*)

FAUST

Selling your soul to the devil may bring riches but, eventually, you belong to him.

(Example: *BEDAZZLED*)

ORPHEUS

The loss of something personal.

(Example: *THE SIXTH SENSE*)

ROMEO and JULIET

foe love story.

(Example: *TITANIC*)

TRISTAN

Man loves woman...unfortunately; one or both are already spoken for.

(Example: *FATAL ATTRACTION*)

By far the most popular story to appear on screen is *Romeo and Juliet*. Why do you think that is? List five films that come under the banner *Romeo and Juliet*. Now, list five films in which *Romeo and Juliet* appear as a secondary story element.

Creating your own story

Like any other piece of creative writing, you are going to have to work on your script for a long time so it is really important that you choose a story that is interesting to you.

There are endless possibilities for stories.

What interests you? Is it football or love stories or leaving home, finding a dead body or the future? If you are searching for inspiration, try looking in the newspaper for an interesting story, or listen to people talking on the bus/in a queue. One way in which you can generate ideas is to start with a 'what if...' premise. Think about the time before you left home this morning; what if...

- ...you received a letter informing you that you had won a competition?
- ...your brother/mother announced they were leaving?
- ...you found something strange in the cereal?
- ...you realised you were the only person left in the world?
- ...you knew something that no one else did?

Any one of these would be the beginning of your basic plot.

Whatever you choose, you should try to write about what you know and use people you know as the basis for your inspiration for your characters, even if you set your story in a totally different time and place from where you are now.

Read the introduction to the screenplay of:

- a) The Full Monty by Simon Beaufoy**
- b) A Room for Romeo Brass by Shane Meadows**

(Appendix 1, pages 25/26) to see where the inspiration for these two stories came from.

Character driven or plot driven?

If you are interested in love for example, your story could be about finding someone and how that affects your life, or losing someone and how **that** affects your life. Or it may be about investigating a murder and now you uncover clues and piece them together to find an answer.

In these two examples the first - **the love story** - is what is called '**character driven**' which means it is about people and how the events in their lives affect them.

The second - **the murder story** - is called '**plot driven**' which means its focus is on the events, the things that happen and eventually end up making sense of the story. Obviously there are characters and events in every screen story, but it is the characters or the plot which are the most important to your story.

List examples of films that are

- a) character driven
- b) plot driven

Will your story be character or plot driven?

Conflicts

It may seem very obvious, but you have to **have a reason for** telling your story. There would be no point writing a screenplay where a young woman wants a boyfriend and then she gets one. This is not very interesting. The best way to address this is by introducing some conflict.

If a young woman wants a boyfriend but is not allowed to have one, because of cultural issues, or parental issues or feels she cannot get one because of self image issues, then you are able to set up a situation where there is conflict and your story follows the conflicts being resolved. Nor is it interesting to have a murder if the murderer confesses in the next scene and there is no reason to doubt that they have done it. Plots require conflict: for example, someone who wants to get away with it and someone who wants justice done.

Conflicts can be both internal (in the character's head) and external (culture, parents, friends, the law) and good stories have both.

Think of three films you know well. What are the conflicts in each story?

Are they internal or external?

What conflicts will your characters face?

Character growth

Whilst you are narrowing all this down you are beginning to get a sense of your main character, what their goal is, and what the obstacles are to and achieving that goal. Whether or not they do and achieve it will become your story. In the murder example, your main character can be the murderer who wants to get away with it, or the detective who wants to see justice done, or a relative of the victim who fights the cause alone. Each of these characters has a distinct goal, lots of obstacles, and it is up to you how it ends.

At this point you can begin to give your main character a name and a shape, a background and a sense of what motivates them: what makes them angry or happy, what really hurts them. Most important is to give a sense of who they are at the beginning of the film and how they change through what happens to them and what they do, and who they are at the end. This is called the character journey, or character arc, and this is the backbone' of the story.

The more dynamic the story is, or the bigger the change is in the character from the beginning to the end of the film, the more exciting the story is.

Outline details of your main character and their journey

Filling out your story

Cinema screens are big and they need filling. Now you have done the narrowing down you need to start expanding again. Who else is in the story? What are their goals? What are their backgrounds? How do they change? How do they relate to the main story and the main character?

Bit by bit you can start piecing these things together in the world that you have chosen.

Genre is a type of story. It is not a formula but more a way of understanding structures of story telling that has a profound and subconscious appeal to an audience. Genre, when applied to film and to film scripts, implies that the film will follow a set of conventions that govern its structure.

Genre is quite an abstract concept and it is easiest to explain **with examples. Some common genres include westerns, detective stories, thrillers, film noir. horror, love stories, comedies. biopics, rites of passage, science fiction, war films etc.**

You will be able to identify many others and in each one you can pick out key characteristics.

For example, westerns will invariably feature a lone figure, an outsider, who comes into an environment and shakes it up. The loner will have a moral code, they will be doing battle with a frontier, they will be skilled in fighting, horse riding etc. They will have impact on the lives of the town or village, and they will usually leave alone.

In the horror genre the central character is usually a victim, religion and belief are significant, conflict is often between good and evil, children are usually significant and have special powers or insight and the location is usually very important (perhaps a sacred site).

The comedy genre will almost always focus on either ordinary people in extraordinary circumstances or extraordinary people in ordinary circumstances.

It can be tempting to think that your story is original, that you have a new way of telling it, and that it has not been done before. Screen stories are not the best place to be experimental at the beginning of your career. Audiences have a set of expectations based on their familiarity with genre. If you do not deliver on these expectations, an audience will not be satisfied. For example, if you go to see a vampire film you probably expect that the 'good guys' will head up to the castle just as the sun is going down over the horizon to do battle with the vampire. Imagine if the good guys said, 'Hey, let's reconvene at 7am so the vampire will be asleep in his coffin and it will be easier to kill him.' You would probably want your money back.

Once you have formulated your story, start thinking about which genre it is best suited to. Consider other films you have seen in this genre. Think about how they work.

Some useful questions to consider in relation to genre:

What is the nature of the **protagonist** (the main character)? Are they dull at the beginning and then become interesting? Are they an adult or a teenager or a crud? Are they clever or a little stupid?

What is the nature of the antagonist (person that is most pitted against the main character)? Are they cruel or manipulating or are they actually more human than the main character?

What is the **catalytic event** that changes everything? In every screen story something will happen near the beginning of the film which changes everything. For example, someone gets shot, or a body is found, or a father forbids his daughter to see her boyfriend and son goes anyway. These events in screen stories are called catalytic because they cause the story to move in a new direction and there will be consequences from them which need resolving.

What is the **narrative shape** of the film? Is this an intense story so that the action happens over a short period of time or does it range over several generations?

Consider these five areas in relation to your story. Make notes on each

What is the **dramatic shape** of the film? the rise and fall of a gangster, the commission of a crime and its solving, a road movie which is both a completed physical journey and an emotional one? Is the action concentrated at the beginning, at the end or through the middle? Or is it consistently action packed? Or does it have a less frenzied pace, exploring the changes in the characters?

Structure

It may not seem very obvious, as films usually look so real, but screen stories are not about relating exactly how things happen in real life. As audience members we would find it very boring to watch each character get up, go to the bathroom, clean their teeth, eat breakfast etc., for each new day of the story. We know these things happen but we do not need to see them.

The process of structuring a story for the screen is about making **creative choices** about which actions, events and characters will be the best ones to tell your story. The premise, or the story, is the actual **content** of your film and the structure is the **form** or the way you tell the story of your film. Broadly speaking, most screen stories can be structured into three distinct 'Acts' that have the following features:

Act One - introduces the main characters and sets up the conflict that is the story of the film. The end of Act One is the catalytic moment, something significant that happens, which changes the course of the story.

Act Two - explores the consequences of the catalytic moment. What happens, what complications arise, how does it affect the characters, what are the possible outcomes?

Act Three - resolves the story and tells us the outcome. It must tie-up all the loose ends and should ensure that we understand what the story is about. Whilst we are watching the film we are seeing what happens and seeing the story unfold. By the end of the film the theme should be clear so that the audience understand that this story is thematically about 'love' or 'justice' etc. Sometimes this is clear right from the beginning, but often the real meaning of the story only comes out at the end. For example, *The Full Monty* starts as a piece of grim realism set in the north of England and turns into a comedy caper but ends with the audience understanding that this is about pride and self-respect and the idea of achieving your dreams.

Think of ten films you know well.
Try to identify where the 'Act' breaks are

How do you start making choices about which events, actions and characters are best to tell your story? Film tells stories in pictures (what we see on screen) and words (dialogue). A film script includes information about what we see and what we hear.

Think about your opening scenes: how are you going to introduce your character(s)? What characteristics are they going to need to show in order for the audience to get to know them? Are you going to show these through what they do or what they say and to whom, or through a combination? How are you going to introduce the 'worm' of the film? Think about describing where you are in every scene. At what point are you going to introduce the character's goal so that the audience become interested in this character and wants to know whether or not they achieve their goal? Or does something happen so the character is given their goal in the opening scenes? 'Act One' should end on a pivotal moment.

Think about how your plot and your characters develop. This means considering what happens as well as how the character needs to change to meet the challenges that have come about as a result of this significant pivotal moment. On they meet the challenge and resolve the problems so that they have changed by the end of the film?

A good way to understand these points is to consider examples of films you have seen recently. For example, in a film like *Speed* there is a long set-up establishing a man psychopath (Dennis Hopper) and a couple of cops won manage to defy his attempts to blow up an office block. The cops think the psycho is dead until a city bus is blown up and a call is received to say that another bus has a bomb on board which will be activated once the speed goes above 50mph. The pivotal moment is when the bus hits 51mph. Up to this point, everything could have been resolved. The cop could have stopped the bus and everyone could have gone home. Once the bus activates the bomb going over 50mph we start 'Act Two', which explores the consequences of this pivotal moment. 'Act Three' is the resolution.

In the example above, the bomb speed is defused, the people are saved and the crook is killed. Finally, the closing scenes show the beginnings of a romance between the Keanu Reeves/Sandra Bullock characters so that an extra bonus has come out of the action and anxiety.

Map out the structure defining the key scenes which end the first and second 'Acts' and start the process of selecting which events and actions will best develop the plot and the characters of your story.

Writing a Synopsis

Now you have been through the creative process of collecting your ideas together, the next step is to prepare a synopsis of your film. The synopsis should be about 200 words long and should give an outline of the plot, introducing major characters, and making mention of subplots. You should aim to be clear and concise. Try to keep your sentences short.

A brief synopsis of a film will often be read in the context of publicity material; the function of this type of synopsis is to tease an audience into wanting to see the whole film, and to this end, it will set the scene and introduce major characters but will not reveal later plot developments, the climax or the ending. In contrast, the purpose of your **synopsis** is to interest potential producers in your film and as such should give details of **all** the film action.

You should aim to adopt an upbeat tone, but do not be tempted to fill your synopsis with adjectives like 'exciting' and 'sensational', as if it were a review. The story and characters are what will interest a future producer, not your opinion on the film.

Your synopsis should give an indication of what genre your film is in order that a producer can assess its market value in the current cinema climate. It sometimes helps when trying to get your ideas across, to compare your ideas to another film, whether in the same genre, or following the format but transferred to another genre.

Read the synopses on the next page and answer the questions that follow.

GLADIATOR

Maximus, our hero, is a successful Roman General, who, after ten years of faithful service, is approached in secret by the aging Emperor to be his successor. Before his decision is made, the Emperor's jealous son, Commodus, kills his father and takes his crown. Maximus refuses to acknowledge him publicly and is ordered to be taken away and killed. Escaping, Maximus returns to his family home, only to find the new emperor has exacted his revenge and brutally murdered his wife and son.

Weak arm temporarily broken in spirit, Maximus is taken into slavery and made to perform as a gladiator. Through a series of battles, culminating in The Coliseum, he proves not only his fighting skills but also his courage, fairness and loyalty to what is right. These qualities make him well-liked amongst his fellow gladiators and he earns the love and support of the Roman people. Recognising the degeneration of Rome under Commodus' rule, elders of the Senate attempt to facilitate Maximus' escape to lead an opposing army on Rome, but the plot is foiled, despite the intervention of the love interest in the form of Commodus' sister.

In his final battle, he faces the evil Emperor in one-to-one combat, which one wins to tremendous applause. In death we see him reunited with his wife and son. This is the story of a man who retains his integrity against tremendous odds; the story of the true hero set against the backdrop of Ancient Rome.

THE SIXTH SENSE

Bruce Willis stars as an eminent child therapist, happily married with a fulfilled life and a brighter future. One evening a very disturbed young man, who was a former client, breaks into his house and shoots Bruce and then himself.

One year later, Bruce is making contact with his newest client, a young boy of 10, who is disturbed. Bruce wins his trust and eventually the child tells him that he sees dead people. This is verified through action in the screenplay and serves to show the building relationship between the child and Bruce. And then we have the shocking realisation that Bruce is dead, that he is known only to his 'client' and now he has helped the child, he can rest in peace. Suddenly we realise we really only connect with those two characters and although this is Bruce's story we are watching him through the eyes of the child.

This is a redemptive screenplay: the character that was violently and prematurely killed has laid his own ghost to rest and helped a child in the process. The screenplay lends something fresh and original to the horror genre, by having a realistic narrative that is disrupted.

Your main task as a screenwriter is to create a script captivates and hooks a reader in the first place. Make sure it is easy and enjoyable to read.

Here are some points that may help:

Consider what aspects of each film would sound attractive to a producer looking to buy and develop your synopsis - i.e. does the story outline make you want to know more about how the narrative develops? Is it a genre which will sell? Does it offer something new or has it been done many times before?

Choose three films that you know well and write synopsis for them

When you have written the synopsis for your own film read it aloud to the group and ask them to comment on the attractiveness and saleability of your idea

- **The person we know best is ourselves.** Each of us is a huge resource of experience that can be turned into material to use in a story. However, this is not the same as telling our own story. Brutal though it may sound, our lives are interesting to ourselves, our friends and our family but are probably boring to anyone who does not know us. If you want to draw on a personal experience for a story, ensure that it is a story, with a beginning, a catalytic moment, middle and an end. Identify the theme of your story and the genre best suited to the story. Use your own experience to build up a creative story, but do not write a film about what has happened to you.

- **Screenplays are dramatic.** They show things happening which excite or interest the audience. The best way to create drama is to have conflict so ensure that you have enough conflict in your story. Problems that are easy to overcome do not excite us. We like to see challenge and ingenuity. We like to see integrity being tested. We like to see despair and hopelessness overcome and we like to be entertained.

- **Make sure your story is well structured.** For this you need a clear 'journey' for your main character. Avoid lots of episodes that loosely fit together. The main story must start at the beginning of the script and finish at the end of the script. Also, ask yourself if the story is complex enough. Are there some subplots, which are also set up, explored and resolved in the course of the story?

- **You should aim to know everything about your characters,** including all the background information which may or may not be written into the story, as well as what happens to them after your script ends. As you develop your script you may need to draw on this information and start your story earlier or later and end it sooner or later.

- **Avoid giving lengthy descriptions of how the sunset or the city street looks.** This is boring and distracting to read. Also, avoid trying to do the job of the actors by giving too much indication of emotion or position. Let the story generate the emotion so that the words and scenes speak for themselves.
- **Dialogue must sound natural. Read it out loud as** you go along to see if your character sounds natural speaking the words you have written. Check to see if your characters are telling each other information that they should already know in order to inform the audience. For example, if a husband says to his wife 'You know when you had that accident which gave you nightmares... it is much better to say something like 'Are you having nightmares again?' and build the dialogue to reveal the information in a natural way.

Dialogue

The most common problem with dialogue in a screenplay is that there is too much of it. Film is visual medium and the emphasis must be kept on what we see, not what we hear.

In a novel or play, there is room for long speeches. In a film, the dialogue must be kept short, both for time reasons - your film will only last two hours or so - and more importantly, so the audience can take in the important features of it at one screening. If they miss something important, they cannot return to it for clarification, as they could in a book. There are two ways a script can be too wordy:

- the actual speech of a character might be too wordy and unwieldy.
- Conversation between characters might be excessively and unnaturally long.

When a character speaks, they should say only what is necessary to get across the point you wish to make. Think what they can say to convey the information needed for the plot. Make them say it in the simplest way possible. When we are having a conversation with someone in real life, we generally do not use sophisticated vocabulary and long sentences, because our focus is to communicate our thoughts as quickly and simply as possible. You may want to

use accent and register to create a certain impression of character, but the information must still be in a 'short and sweet' format. Unless you are writing a major speech, your character will probably say only one or two sentences when they speak - certainly no more than four. The number of exchanges between characters will also be short.

Choose a conversation from a novel and reduce the dialogue to make it suitable for a film script.

The most important thing to remember when writing dialogue is that every sentence has to be justified. After you have written a dialogue scene, cut off the beginning and cut off the end, and what you are left with will probably be far better.

Location

the location in which we first see a character is often reflective of their personality. Sets are carefully chosen or constructed and it is what the camera allows us to see that forms our impression. Small details take on added importance when the camera is directing our attention in this way, for instance the sticker on a mirror can say a lot about a character's beliefs.

Think about your bedroom as a possible location to reflect character. What would you choose for the camera to draw attention to? Create a room for a character:

- a) that wants to be a film star
- b) whose parents are concerned s/he studies too hard
- c) someone who is lonely

Names

Names are very important in terms of giving us an indication of **character**. Discuss what you associate with different names and why. Is it the sound of the words themselves, people you have known with these names or maybe the era in which the name was popular?

What do the following names suggest to you and why?

Elsie Peabody

Romeo Brass

Tiffany Swandown

Leroy Jay

James Hamilton-Smith

Rob Brown

Zoe Popcorn

Anna Reilly

Costume

Costume is an easily recognisable means of showing personality, class and occupation. The small details of dress can often be key indicators as to character - the smartly suited businessman who wears a friendship bracelet; the rebellious teenager who has 'Mum' tattooed on her arm, a style of hairband, a rucksack etc.

Your main character is a twelve-year-old girl. Suggest costume details for her that will express her personality to show her as:

- c) a tomboy
- b) rather young for her age-unwilling to grow up
- c) a bit of a show-off

Describe costume indicators for three of the characters from the names listed above, and explain your choices.

Voice

The way in which someone speaks will instantly categorise him or her in terms of class and character. When casting, regional accents may carry certain connotations.

Think of:

- a) three comedy characters
 - b) three heroines from films.
- What accents do they have?
Why do you think this is?
What personality traits do you associate with the following accents?
- c) Liverpudlian
 - b) 'BBC' ('received pronunciation')
 - c) Scottish

Although at first sight the layout of a film script may look complicated it is, in fact, very simple and clear. There are slight variations in layout (usually depending on the writer's taste), but all screenplays are written in the third person, present tense and usually run anywhere between 90 and 120 pages in length (roughly speaking, one page of screenplay equals one minute of screentime). Generally, a screenplay layout looks like this:

Key:

a) **Scene heading.** this is an at-a-glance guide to the scene containing four pieces of information - scene number, interior or exterior, location, day, night or evening.

b) The first time we see a character s/he is described: name (if known), age, appearance and, if necessary, physical description. Stewart and Louise are not so detailed because they have been introduced earlier in the script. Character names are always typed in capitals.

c) A brief description of the location.

d) When a character speaks, their name is centralised.

e) If you want to emphasise the way a line is delivered, it appears centralised and in brackets before the dialogue. Keep these notes to a minimum.

f) Dialogue begins at the end of a very wide (approx 2 inches) left-hand margin.

g) When referring to another character during dialogue, the character's name does not appear in capitals.

a) 10. INT. ALBERT'S LIVING ROOM. DAY

b) Seventy-year-old ALBERT JOHNSON is sitting in an armchair wearing worn but comfortable shoes. he is an amiable man out with a well -worn face exhibiting a lifetime of drudgery.

c) STEWART lies on the carpet colouring in a picture book. The room is well furnished and well maintained but the first thing to grab your attention is the tick-tock of a mantel piece clock. On top of the drinks cabinet there is an abundance of shining trophies for Albert's prized fishing catches.

LOUISE enters carrying a tray of food.

d) ALBERT

e) (sarcastic)

f) I told you no was no good for you.

LOUISE smiles and hands ALBERT the tray.

LOUISE

Dad, Jim's a good man. Now, eat your tea.

LOUISE picks up a ouster and tin of polish from a table and begins to clean the room.

LOUISE

How's your chest?

ALBERT

g) Not so bad since I started on the pills.
(to Stewart) Fuss, fuss, fuss.

STEWART

Fuss, fuss, fuss.

Looking at Scripts

The Opening Sequence of any film is particularly important. It establishes the genre, sets the tone, introduces the narrative and major characters, and most importantly, catches the audience's attention and engages their interest so that they want to see more . In this way it functions exactly like the opening scene of a play or paragraph of a book.

HIGH FIDELITY

Read the opening pages to the screenplay of *High Fidelity* (Appendix II, page 27) through once. then read it again in sections as shown below and answer the following questions in as much detail as possible.

SECTION 1 - SURBURBAN STREET

- What questions are raised by this opening scene?
- What information are we given as to the character of Ron (think both in terms of appearance and behaviour)? How are we given this information?
- Where is the action set? At what time of day? What is the weather like? Think carefully and about why these choices were made.
- What impression do they give of the story to follow?
- What comedy elements are in evidence? Why have these been included?
- What other films can you think of that begin with a chase sequence? What other ways can you think of to begin a film with intensive action?
- Storyboard this sequence.

SECTION 2 - ROB'S APARTMENT

- How is Ron's character conveyed by his surroundings?
- Suggest five stars who you feel would on suitable to play the part of Rob. Explain your choices.
- How are we given information visually and about the state of the relationship between Rob and Laura?
- the first dialogue of the film is between Rob and Laura. How does this give us information about their characters and the state of their relationship?
- Rob's voice-over gives us some backstory. How is our interest kept visually throughout this?

SECTION 3 - IN THE PARK

- The voice-over continues to convey information about Rob's character. What do we learn?
- How is the passing of time conveyed?
- How has the tone of the narrative changed? How has it been achieved?
- How does Rob's final voice-over in this section indicate the narrative to come?

SECTION 4 - THE RECORD STORE

- Read the description of the record store and underline the key words which convey the look and feel, think of five words that you would use to convey the look and feel of a large, commercial record store and compare your two lists.
- Why is the information about Rob's customers disclosed?
- What similes are used to describe Ron's attitude towards his store?
- How is the way he feels about his store presented visually? Can you think of another way to do this?
- What can you say about the similarities and differences between the characters of Rob and Dick and the relationship between them? What function is served by introducing the character of Dick at this point?

OVERALL

- how successfully has the audience's attention been engaged? How has this been attempted?
- Who are the main characters and what do we know about them so far?
- Can you say what the story will be about? Can you predict the ending? Can you say which of the seven basic story patterns it will follow?
- What are the themes and which will be the most important?
- What will the tone of the film be? Can you identify a genre?
- the screenplay of *High Fidelity* is adapted from the book by Nick Hornby. If you have access to a copy, read the opening pages to the book and comment on the changes that have been made for the screenplay.

POINTS TO CONSIDER

- The dialogue is kept short and to the point. It is realistic and indicates character in a short space of time.
- The voice-over is construction of longer sentences, showing a continuous train of thought. It must be broken by visuals and/or dialogue.
- Names are used as an indication of character.
- Description of location is used to convey atmosphere. the inclusion of key items is important.
- Character can be indicated by means of appearance, dialogue and behaviour.
- Notice that the vocabulary used for description is informal and is designed to convey information through common frames of reference. Similes can be a useful way of getting information across, rather than lengthy descriptions.

THE FULL MONTY

As we discussed before, the screenplay for a film is a working document, which may be changed at any stage of the production process. The finished film may be very different to the screenplay through from small changes in dialogue to whole scenes being re-ordered or even cut. The rights to a screenplay may have been bought by a publisher who needs to get the text into production to coincide with the release of the film and so the screenplay, which appears on the shelves of a bookshop, may be an early version, before the changes were made.

The Full Monty is an example of a film where changes were made to the screenplay in production and it is interesting to compare the finished film to the original text. Read the extract from the screenplay opening of *The Full Monty* (Appendix III, page 32). Then watch the opening of the film up to the point where Gaz, Dave and Nathan walk down the steps towards the workingmen's club (you may like to read the transcript of the voice-over and dialogue for these scenes as they appear in the film Appendix IV, page 38). Then answer the following questions in as much detail as possible.

THE VOICE-OVER

The voice-over, which introduces the action, is extended in the film:

- What themes are introduced in the longer version?
- What irony is present and how is this created?
- What is the tone of the voice-over? How is this created?
- Read the description of the visuals that accompany the voice-over in the screenplay. What impression is created and what are the key words that the writer uses to convey this? What are the differences between the two versions and why do you think the changes were made?
- What function does this section play? Consider the way in which the two versions move the action from the voice-over into the main body of the narrative. In your opinion, which is the most effective?

THE OPENING SCENES

CHARACTER

- Comment on the names of the major characters.
- Consider the character descriptions of Gaz, Dave, Nathan and Jean. For each one, suggest three actors/actresses who could play the parts, other than those chosen for the film. Explain your selections.
- How are the characters of Gas, Dave and Nathan established visually in the film?
- how is Dialogue used to establish character?
- What is the nature of the relationship between:
 - a) Gaz and Nathan
 - b) Gas and Daveand how is each of these established in each version?

PLOT

- What clues as to the narrative are present in this opening section?

TONE

- What genre is the film? List ALL the elements that have contributed to your analysis.
- Both the screenplay and film version begins with comedy. Why do you think the film omits the first three scenes?
- What themes are highlighted in the opening scenes of each of the two versions?
- Suggest reasons for the changes to language that could be seen as offensive between the two versions.

LOCATION

- How does the director keep our attention visually? Comment on the choice of location and on the camera framing/angles used.

KEEPING THE FAITH

Keeping the Faith tells the story of three childhood friends, Anna, Ben and Brian who part company when Anna's family move away while the three were in eighth grade. Ben becomes a rabbi, Brian a priest. We join the story as Anna re-enters their lives after a break of sixteen years. Read the screenplay of *Keeping the Faith* (Appendix V, page 40) and then answer the following questions in as much detail as possible:

- How are the audience's expectations of Anna built up before her entrance?
- Why do you think the line 'Eighth grade Anna Reilly?!' was included?
- Why do you think the airport location was chosen for the first meeting between Anna, Ben and Brian?
- ~ • How is the comedy conveyed through Ben and Brian, both visually and through dialogue?
- What clues are we given as to how the narrative will proceed?
- How is Anna's character revealed through:
 - a) description of appearance
 - b) dialogue
 - c) action?
- Comment on the length, style and content of Anna's speech in scene 51 ('Yeah, I skipped something.. other stuff'). Why has it been included?
- Sum up Anna's character in three words and suggest three stars that you would cast to play the part. Explain your choices.
- Describe the outfit that you, as the director, would want Anna to appear in at the airport. Explain your choice.
- How is the relationship between Anna, Ben and Brian emphasised visually in scenes 52 and 53?
- Compile a list of shot descriptions/draw a storyboard for scenes 50 and 51. Think carefully about whose point of view you will see the action from

Writing your extract from a screenplay

If you are aiming to write an extract from a screenplay for coursework, it is important that you choose and compose your extract carefully in order to enable you to display all the skills you have learnt.

Opening sequences are a good choice, as you have ample opportunity to show a range of scenes, set the tone/genre of the film, set up the narrative, introduce major characters and show that you are able to engage the interest and attention of the audience. The opening sequence is one area where you are able to really experiment with the film language without taking the attention away from the narrative or making your extract look overly 'arty', which may be off-putting to some sectors of the audience. Other choices of extract might be the pivotal scenes where the 'Acts' change over, or a particularly dramatic moment such as the entrance of a key character, major conflict or the climax of the film.

Before you begin to write your extract:

- Analyse the extracts from the three screenplays that appear in the appendices to this pack noting details of how they work.
- Choose an extract from a novel. Think carefully about how you would film it; what elements in particular will be difficult to film and how will you overcome this?

STEP 1 Visualise the extract in your head. 'Play it through' several times from start to finish, each time noticing as many of the details as possible. Write down the following headings: **Narrative, Genre, Character** and **Setting**. Under each of these headings, write down what you want to convey to your audience. Then write down how you are going to achieve this. The example *Never Talk to Strangers* on the following page may help.

- STEP 2** Break down your extract into scenes. For each one, make notes on:
- a) what you will see
 - b) what you will hear (a rough idea of the dialogue will not at this stage)
- STEP 3** Work out the dialogue for each scene, making sure that each sentence either moves the narrative on or displays character; preferably a combination of both. Check whether any of your dialogue could be replaced by visuals; for example, the reaction on a character's face could replace an answer to a question; the camera could direct our attention to a figure entering a room, unseen by the hero.
- STEP 4** Check that you are familiar with the layout of a screenplay (refer to page 15 for help). Write out your extract, following the conventions as shown.
- STEP 5** A screenwriter would not usually be asked to fill in camera shots, as this is usually worked out as the production progresses. However, students writing a screenplay are often doing so as an alternative to storyboarding and in order to ensure that you are keeping the focus on the visual, rather than just writing a playscript, it is helpful to include further information on camera framing and movement, music and sound effects. The best way to do this in the interests of clarity is to work on A3 paper, laying out your screenplay on the left-hand side of the page and adding your notes on camera direction and sound on the right-hand page in two further columns alongside the appropriate section of screenplay.

Information on camera framing can be found in **THE STORYBOARD** available to download at www.filmeducation.org

Information on all aspects of film language can be found in **FILM LANGUAGE**, a video study pack available for £19.99. Details on how to purchase are at www.filmeducation.org/printpacks

NEVER TALK TO STRANGERS

(working title)

NARRATIVE

WHAT: A girl is setting off by train for a job abroad. Her parents are anxious about her going. She meets a stranger in a passing incident on the train who will be a key character in leading her into danger later in the story.

HOW: We will see the girl being seen off at the station by her parents. The dialogue will explain where and why she is going and contain irony and clues as to the narrative ahead - do not talk to strangers etc. We will see the incident where she helps the stranger, who has collapsed.

CHARACTER: The main character is confident and very happy to be free of her old life. Her mother is overprotective. The stranger she meets will be old and frail and seem in need of help.

HOW: The girl will be dressed sensibly at the station but will change clothes on the train and throw some bags away. She will light up a cigarette on the train, standing at a window, looking out onto the ever widening landscape with a content expression. Her body language will be relaxed. She will speak with a slight West Country accent, using modern phrases. Her mother will be dressed traditionally, holding tight onto the girl's arm. She will cry. The dialogue between mother and daughter will make reference to her being careful, phoning etc. The stranger will be dressed all in purple, wearing an obvious wig and their body language will be that of an old person.

The camera will be used to suggest that the girl is stifled (close up shots with the family filling the frame) maybe even the girl being pulled back into frame by one of them as she leaves. The long shots of the train leaving the family behind and viewing the open fields will show a sense of freedom. The lighting will get brighter throughout and the music will begin when the train picks up speed, 00th elements contributing to the idea of freedom.

LOCATION

The railway station will be small and provincial. In contrast, the train will be a large intercity-type. The landscape will change through the train journey from a closed in feeling, tall trees etc., to open fields, then eventually to a big city.

GENRE - THRILLER

HOW: The music will be fast and modern but has an element of danger in it. The title graphics and credits will have an 'uncomfortable' feel. The dialogue will contain hints of danger in the world but these will be dismissed as the fears of a worried mother. Repeated point-of-view camera shots from the same position can be used to give the impression of someone watching the girl, although we do not see who.

Writing a supporting account of your screenplay

Writing a supporting account of your screenplay is a very valuable exercise even if you are not required to submit this by coursework requirements. Writing your account will give you the opportunity to reflect on what you have produced, making sure you can explain your reasons for each decision and allowing you to re-draft sections which do not quite work or which you could present differently to display your skills to better advantage.

The process, which you have gone through in the 'writing your extract from a screenplay' section of this study pack [page 20] will provide you with some of the detail you need in order to explain your choices to your audience. You will need to add to this; for example if you have produced an opening sequence you will need to say how you have attempted to engage your audience in the story - our example screenplay *Never Talk to Strangers* has someone setting off on a journey, which is always exciting and could lead the audience in many different directions. The main character is young - the target audience for the film will identify with her, and soon. If your screenplay extract is not the opening sequence, you may need to point out how you are using the conventions of the genre.

Wherever possible, you should look to reference your ideas to films you have studied on the course, or know well; for example, if you were inspired to use a swooping aerial shot into an open window by the beginning of Hitchcock's *Psycho*, then state this. This will display your knowledge of film; many films use shots which pay homage to other films and this adds another dimension to the audience's enjoyment of a film as they recognise the reference.

An important part of a supporting account is evaluating your product. Ask others, if possible those who are the intended target audience for your film, for their opinion; they should be specific about the positive and negative factors. Consider their answers; you may want to re-draft in the light of these or you may decide to continue with your original ideas. What **YOU** think of your work is most important and you should include your own opinion in your account. A last worn of advice try not to mention that tired old phrase ' ... if I had more time I would have...'. Everyone Knows that a student's time is tight but you should always plan your work so that every project has enough time to make it the best it could be, and you will not encourage a positive reception to your work by suggesting this was not the case.

Appendix I

THE FULL MONTY

INTRODUCTION

Some years ago I spent a lot of time in Sheffield visiting a girlfriend in hospital. In between visiting hours, I would wander the streets with the slow tread of those who have nowhere to go and a lot of time in which to get there. After a while I began to notice I wasn't the only one moon-walking around Sheffield's parks, streets and shops, trying to dredge up some enthusiasm for a Dixons mid-season sale. There were thousands of us, nearly all men, On the Wander.

Even the wanderers with dogs didn't behave like dog-walkers. Where was the chirrup of praise at the fouled playing field? The rewarding pat as another child was dispatched to hospital? Animal was as depressed as man, and a thrown stick would result merely in owner and dog looking dolefully at each other, as if acknowledging the utter pointlessness of stick-throwing in a godless universe.

And sharing companionable silences with these wanderers under the bandstand in the park as the rain came down, I got to thinking. Where were all the women? It appeared that, unlike the men, the women had jobs. Not perhaps good jobs: cashier, packing, shelf-stacking jobs in the monstrous Meadowhall Shopping Centre that replaced the steel-rolling mills. But jobs nevertheless. Which meant money. Which meant Friday nights down the pub with the... well, it used to be lads. But the lads were out walking their invisible dogs, wondering why people didn't want steel anymore, just shopping centres.

When, a few years later, Uberto Pasolini, the producer suggested a film about unemployed men becoming male strippers, all sorts of things clicked into place. Strange role-reversals were going on all around us. Men stripping, not women. Women going out to work, not men... Suddenly, it seemed, women had money in their pockets: money that bought independence and a desire to even out a few little discrepancies between men and women. Two thousand years of servitude, for instance. Women began to look at men in the same way that men had been looking at women - and new cars - for generations. And it wasn't a pretty sight. Which is where the male strippers

come in. Literally and metaphorically men were being told to shape up, get fit, get smart and get fit, get smart and get sexy. I can't think of a better way to sum up the socio-political gender shifts of the late twentieth century than to ask you this: ten years ago, would you, as a man, have given the purchase of underpants a second thought? Or even a first thought? Five years ago, would you have weighed up Calvin Klein thoughtfully against Jockey and finally forked out twenty-eight quid for a pair of pants? The days of the battle-scarred grunty had gone forever.

But there are a lot of puzzled-looking blokes left behind by this new world order. *The Full Monty* is a tribute to all those men who are trying, manfully, to catch up.

The Full Monty by Simon Beaufoy. Published by ScreenPress Books 1997

ROOM FOR ROMEO BRASS

INTRODUCTION

A Room For Romeo Brass was born in a very strange stable. Paul Fraser and I were writing a western because I was kicking against the feeling that people were beginning to see me as Ken Loach's nephew/Mike Leigh's cousin, working exclusively on working class and social-realist subjects. In a lot of ways a western was the wrong thing to do, but it did show me how far I was from what I should be doing. The reason I was making films about my own past, about things that I understood and things that were working class, was because that was where I was from and what was the closest to my heart at twenty-five years old.

For the first eighteen or nineteen years of my life I lived in Uttoxeter, where I was born, in the Midlands. How can you try and jump away from that? I haven't been through all those stories yet. There will come a point, obviously, when I move away, but I'll move away on the basis of the years that have happened since I left there and I shan't do that until I'm ready. *TwentyFourSeven* is a tiny piece of that whole experience and what we actually began talking about while writing a western was our past.

I went away with Paul Fraser to Stratford-upon-Avon. We stayed right opposite the theatre and we were there making short films. The only thing that was true about them, the only stuff that was really working was the stuff we weren't writing. We were having a laugh while we were there, and what actually came out of it was at night we started talking about when we were kids, because me and Fraser grew up together, liven next door to each other, like the two characters in *Romeo Brass*.

A Room for Romeo Brass by Shane Meadows. Published by ScreenPress Books 2000

APPENDIX II

HIGH FIDELITY

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - AFTERNOON

So darkened by weather that it is almost night, raining torrents and big sheets. In the distance a man runs toward us. As he gets to us we move with him down the street. He is ROB, boyishly handsome and early thirties is in a drenched black suit and running for his life. We hear the rain, and his ragged breath. Headlights backlight him, getting brighter as the sound of an engine gets louder. Rob takes a look over his shoulder, looks desperately left and right, and vaults himself over a small brick wall and into a flowerbed, landing on his back in the black wet earth. The big drops of rain splash mud on his face, and he burrows deeper into the dirt and flowers with his back, panting and staring up at the sky. Off-camera the car engine catches up, and a door opens and shuts. He sighs and shuts his eyes...

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. ROB'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

STEREO

Not a minisystem, not a matching set, but coveted audiophile clutter of McIntosh and Nakamichi, each component from a different era, bought piece by piece in various nanoseconds of being flush.

RECORDS

Big tom LPS. Fields of them. We move across them, slowly.. they seem to come to rest in an end of a few books... but then the CO's start, and go on, faster and faster, forever, then the singles, then the tapes... It seems the records, tapes and CO's will never end until... .a DEAD STOP into a group of bags huddled next to the door. Not the go-on-vacation set, but the clothes-to-coffee-maker moving out variety.

ROB V.O.

What came first? The music or the misery? People worry about kids playing with guns

and watching violent videos, we are scared that some sort of culture of violence will take them over. Nobody worries about kids listening to thousands - literally thousands - of songs about broken hearts and rejection and pain, misery and loss.

Did I listen to pop music because I was miserable, or was I miserable because I listened to pop music?

ROB, always a hair out of place, a face that grows on you. He sits in an oversized beanbag chair, his head gripped by a big pair of Boudokan headphones. We hear what he is hearing, something foreboding and upbeat at the same time. He stares at the bags, his face unreadable.

LAURA, Rob's girlfriend, enters the room, and he immediately pulls the headphones off. She clocks him for a moment, catching him in what seems to be an old and repeated moment of non-presence. She begins to heft the bags. Rob goes to her, a little tardy for his big goodbye. Laura begins to cry a bit.

LAURA

I don't really know what I'm doing.

He smiles, and she doesn't. he adjusts.

ROB (cont'd)

You don't have to go this second. You can stay until whenever.

LAURA

We've done the barn part now. I might as well, you know...

ROB

We'll stay for tonight, then.

Laura shakes her head, lifts the last small bag, and backs out the door. A strap catches on a handle and the two of them wrestle with it for a bit, while trying to keep the door open, until Laura awkwardly disappears from view and the door shuts behind Rob. He stays right there staring at the shut door for a long moment, listening to the fading sound of Laura and her dragging bags.

STEREO

Rob's left hand cranks the volume knob while his right switches the CD changer to something loud and adrenal.

ROB V.O.

My desert-island, all-time, top five most memorable break-ups, in chronological order are as follows: Alison Ashworth, Penny

Hardwick, Jackie Allen, Charlie Nicholson, Sarah Kendrew.

Rob moves around the apartment, seeming to expand physically, looking for change.

ROB V.0.

Those were the ones that really hurt. Can you see your name in that list, Laura? Maybe you'd sneak into the top ten, but there's no place for you in the top five. Those places are reserved for the kind of humiliations and heartbreaks that you're just not capable of delivering.

He adjusts the angle of the TV, stuffs a creepy family portrait into a drawer.

ROB V.0. (cont'd)

That probably sounds crueler than it is meant to, but the fact is, we're too old to make each other miserable. Unhappiness used to mean something. Now it's just a drag like a cold or having no money.

He moves through the living room to an open window facing the street. Looking down two storeys, he sees Laura emerge from the building and drag her bags toward her car across the street.

ROB V.0. (cont'd)

If you really wanted to mess me up, you should have got to me earlier.

C

CUT TO:

EXT. SUBURBAN PARK - AFTERNOON - 1980

A group of junior-high girls across the park, lazily dangling from swings and talking to each other.

ROB V.0.

One moment they weren't there, not in any form that interested us anyway, then the next you couldn't miss them, they were everywhere. They had grown breasts, and to accompany them, a new way of walking, arms folded over their chest, a posture that simultaneously disguised and drew attention to what had just happened. And then we wanted to.. actually, we didn't know what we

wanted next, but it was something, something interesting, disturbing even.
One of the girls, ALISON, looks back at us, breaks from the pack, and heads our way...

ROB V.0.

We were little animals, and metaphorically speaking, we had begun to sniff each other's bottoms, and we did not find the odour entirely repellent.

As she reaches us we turn to see her loop an arm through a very nervous YOUNG ROB's arm, and lead him away from his crew of young boys.

PARK BENCH - DUSK

Ron and ALISON sit on the bench, Kissing awkwardly.

ROB V.0. (month)

Which brings us to number one. Alison Ashworth.

PARK BENCH - DUSK

The same shot, the next night: new clothes, same clumsy make-out session.

ROB V.0. (cont'd)

My relationship with Alison Ashworth lasted six hours.

PARK BENCH - DUSK

Next night...

ROB V.0. (cont'd)

The two hours after school and before *The RockFord Files*, three days in a row. On the fourth afternoon...

SAME PARK BENCH.

And the fourth night...

ROB V.0. (month)

Kevin Bannister.

Alison and another boy, KEVIN BANNISTER. Kissing. In the background, Rob approaches and stops.

ROB V.0. (cont'd)

I stung and I blushed, I suddenly forgot how to walk without being aware of every single part of my body.

He affects a casual gait as he mopes away.

ROB V.0. (cont'd)

It would be nice to think that as I've gotten older, times have changed, relationships have become more sophisticated, females less cruel, skins thicker, but there still seems to be an element of that afternoon in everything that has happened to me since. All my other romantic stories seem to be a scrambled version of that first one.

CUT TO:

EXT. CLARK STREET - DAY

An old Chicago block of local merchants, on a busy street. Rob makes his way down the street, jangling a set of keys.

ROB V.0.

My store is called The Record Exchange. It's carefully placed to attract the bare minimum of window-shoppers.

Rob arrives at a storefront, and begins unlocking a rusty gate and beaten-down door.

ROB V.0. (cont'd)

I get by because of the people who make a special effort to shop here on Saturday - young men, always young men...

INT. RECORD STORE - DAY

In almost darkness. More light might penetrate the windows if there weren't so many record-release posters taped to them. A dusty narrow corridor clad in burlap and shag rug. On the walls are nagged 45's you will never hear unless you commit your life to the losing proposition of listening to every recording of Jab Wobble and Glen Glenn and other people you've never heard of.

ROB V.0.

...who spend a disproportionate amount of their time looking for deleted Smiths singles and 'original not re-released' Frank Zappa albums. The fetish properties are not unlike porn. I would feel guilty taking their money if I wasn't, kind of, well, one of them.

But as Rob opens the door, enters, and flips a switch causing the fluorescents to sputter, we see in his eyes the reverence and earnestness of a football coach gazing across an empty field or a priest drawn at midnight to his empty church.

As Rob walks one of the two slim aisles toward the back, he stops on a dime, steps back and pulls a CO from the sea and replaces it almost in the same position, out not quite - meticulousness and pride in this gesture...

After a moment, the door creaks open behind Rob, admitting DICK, a nervous, forlorn but sweet and intelligent discophile with long, greasy, black hair, a Sonic Youth T-shirt, a monstrous pair of headphones, and a canvas record bag emblazoned with a label logo.

ROB
'Morning, Dick.

DICK
Oh. hi. Hi, Rob.

ROB
Good weekend?

DICK
Yeah, OK. I found the first Licorice Comfits album at Vintage Vinyl. The one on Testament of Youth. Never released here. Japanese import only.

ROB
Great.

DICK
I'll tape it for you.

ROB
No, that's okay. Really.

DICK
'Cause you liken their second one, you said, *Pop, Girls*, etc. The one with Cheryl Ladd on the cover. You didn't see the cover though. You just had the tape I mane you.

ROB
Yeah, I haven't really absorbed that one.

DICK
Well. I'll just make it for you.

Appendix III

THE FULL MONTY

TITLE SEQUENCE

Distressed black and white film stock. Controlled by men in baggy 1950s overalls and caps, a stream of molten ore is being poured into pig-iron moulds. Sparks fly in the huge rolling mill. A clipped English accent accompanies the pictures.

MAN

(voice-over)

Sheffield: the beating heart of the industrial North. Never have men been so busy, working day and night to make the steel that is fuelling the recovery of our nation...

A wide shot shows the entire Sheffield Basin - mile upon mile of working steel mills. As the voice-over gradually fades, the picture mixes into a shot of the Basin as it is today - a desolate landscape only partially filled by a shopping centre with a gargantuan, empty car park. In place of the thump of machinery is the empty ring of a distant burglar alarm. Tiny in the frame, a Man and a Boy stand on a motorway footbridge staring at the view. A roller-blader speeds from one side of the frame to the other and away. The Man glances after him in disgust, throws his cigarette onto the ground. The Man and Boy both turn and walk away.

EXT. SHEFFIELD. DAY

A fine rain blankets the council estate. From somewhere can be heard the noise of a Hoover and a man singing in a confidently tuneless Yorkshire accent. Through the drizzle the Man and the Boy can be seen crouched behind a wall watching JEAN, a sturdy woman in her mid-thirties. She walks out of a council house, remembers something and shouts up at the open bedroom window from where the sound of hoovering is coming.

JEAN

Dave love? Dave!

No response. Jean gives up and walks off down the road.

TNT/EXT. DAVE'S HOUSE. DAY

A barrel-chested goliath in his mid-thirties is giving the upstairs bedroom an incongruously dainty Hoover. With a flowery pinafore stretched across his impressive stomach, DAVE hoovers up what looks like a pebble that has appeared on the carpet. He turns only to find that another, larger one has appeared. Assiduously he vacuums this one up too. It rattles alarmingly into the Hoover. A third pebble comes through the window, unseen by Dave until it lands. Becoming perplexed, Dave picks up this one, stops singing, takes off his glasses, snakes the Hoover, attributes it to one of nature's mysteries and carries on. Then a cowboy boot flies through the window and hits the opposite wall with a smack. Dave finally clicks and goes to the window.

Outside, amidst the remnants of a Ford Granada that constitute Dave's front garden, the Man and the Boy have come out of hiding: GAZ, a thirty-year-old magnet for trouble and NATHAN, his son, who at nine-years-old is the more mature of the two. Hunched in his ex-army parka, Gaz stands miserably on one leg using Nathan as a crutch.

GAZ

I'll put a grenade through next time, yeh deaf bastard.

DAVE

I were hoovering, weren't I? Alright, Nathan, long time no see, eh?

NATHAN

Alright, Dave.

GA 2

I need an hand.

DAVE

Can't Gaz. Told you, I'm 'hovering.

GAZ

You'll be staying in to wash your hair next, you.
Come on, Dave mate, there's a pint in it.

DAVE

(after a brief pause)

Aye, alright then. If you're quick. Hang on.

Dave disappears from the window. The rain drips from Nathan's hose.

NATHAN

(miserable)

Chart Show's on in ten minutes.

GAZ

Ah, it's crap that, Nath. You don't want to be watching that bollocks.

Dave reappears in the window again waving a letter.

DAVE

Here, Gaz, you soon this? 'Dear Mr Horsfall you are invited to attend the Job Club.'

That's not bad is it? I mean, personal invite, like -

GAZ

- we're all going.

DAVE

What, all of us?

GAZ

Yes

DAVE

(disappointed)

Oh. I thought it were just me. Never been a member of a club before, have I? You sure?

Gaz finally loses his patience and pulls his hood down.

GAZ

Dave, are you gonna play the prince in the chuffin' tower all day, or what? It's raining out here.

DAVE

Alright, alright. Wait on, Job Seekers, I'm there.

EXT. DAVE'S HOUSE. DAY

Dave joins Gaz and Nathan on the road outside the house. Ho is carrying a pack of Jacob's Cream Crackers. He offers them around with his usual undaunted cheerfulness. Neither Gaz nor Nathan bother even to take their hands out of their pockets.

DAVE

Cream cracker, anybody?

GAZ

What are you doing with *them*?

DAVE

On a diet, aren't I? You get used to 'em. You no. Well come or then.

Gaz gives Dave a look of pained patience.

GAZ

David.

DAVE

(returning the pained patience)
Garrold?

Gaz points to his feet, one of which is bootless.

Oh aye, sorry.

Dave trundles back inside.

INT. STEELWORKS. DAY

The quarter-mile-long rolling hill is deserted and crumbling. Hulks of machinery stand rusting in pools of water, dinosaurs from the days of heavy industry. Gas and Dave are carting some lengths of ornate cast-iron drainpipe along the gantry of the rolling mill. They stumble along above the steelworks' huge cauldron - now long cold.

GAZ

(whisper/up)

You used to melt your boots up 'era, it were that hot.
Now look.

NATHAN

Everyone else watches it. I never see it.

GAZ

Oh shut up about the bloody *Chart Show*.

DAVE

Shh. Listen.

The three stop.

GA/

What row?

DAVE

Music.

NATHAN

(brightening for the first time)
Yeah?

GAZ

Dave, don't start him off.

DAVE

No listen.

Faintly they can hear an insistent, rhythmic thumping. Slowly it gets louder, more menacing. Gaz, Dave and Nathan look at each other, panic-stricken.

What the hellfire's that?

NATHAN

Dad?

Way down the rolling mill, a phalanx of uniformed men swing into view, marching straight towards them.

GAZ

It's the Charge of the ***** Light Brigade.

DAVE

(panicking)

Hey now come on, we've only nicked some ***** pipes...

Gaz looks for somewhere to hide. Spotting the cauldron he leaps in and helps Nathan down. Dave piles in after them. As the army of men get nearer, the final sounds of a marching tune echo around the walls. With the works' banner unfurled, the Steelworks Brass Band marches right underneath the cauldron with only the doleful beat of the bass drum to keep them marching. At the entrance to the rolling mill they put down their instruments, get out the roll-ups and disappear into the rain. Peering over the edge of the cauldron the three watch the band go.

GAZ

Well you wanted music.

Nathan pulls a face at Gaz.

DAVE

(embarrassed laugh)

'Course I knew they were the works' band like...
Ey up, Security Penguin's Dank.

One of the cornet players breaks from the band formation and runs back to the rolling mill entrance. This is LOMPER: tall and skinny. Lomper gets into his car parked inside the mill, drives it out and then shuts the big gate behind him. Gaz, Nathan and Dave are locked in. Dave crunches a cream cracker pointedly.

GAZ

Lompy little bastard.

DAVE

Won't take a minute, he said, won't take a minute. Now what?

GAZ

Shut up, I'm thinking.

NATHAN

(to Dave)

Don't hold your breath.

EXT. CANAL. DAY

Dave and Gaz stand precariously on a long-abandoned car half sunk in the middle of the canal that runs along the edge of the steel mill. One end of the stolen drainpipe is nesting on the car's roof, the other end reaches the far Dank. Gaz is supporting the pipe while Nathan edges unhappily along it, just above the dirty water, balancing another length of pipe in his hands.

GAZ

Told you. Did it in the army, didn't we?
Initiative tests. Getting squaddies over
shark-infested custard an' that. Go on, kid.

NATHAN

Can't we do normal things sometimes?

GAZ

What's up with you? This is normal. Isn't it, Dave?

DAVE

Oh aye, everyday stuff, this. I think this bugger's sinking.

Nathan gets to the other side.

GAZ

Nice one Nath. Now leg it home with that 'on.

NATHAN

Dad.. What if I get caught? It's stealing.

GAZ

Liberating, love, liberating. Anyroad, you don't get a criminal record
'til you're sixteen. You got years yet. Just don't tell your mum.

Nathan tries to pull the heavy pipe onto the bank. Inevitably, he can't hold onto it and
the pipe drops into the canal.

You're useless, you. They're twenty quid each, them.
That were your bloody maintenance, were that.

Upset, Nathan trudges off down the towpath.

DAVE

(to Gaz)

Nice one.

GAZ

Nathan, Nathan...

Nathan stops and sits morosely on a dilapidated wall. Dave starts to move towards
the pipe on the roof of the car.

With the shift of Dave's weight, the car lurches dramatically, almost throwing Dave into the water. Gaz hurls himself forward as Dave scrambles back and the car swings violently the other way. The pipe rolls off the car and disappears into the water.

GAZ

Stay still!

Dave freezes and Gaz creeps backwards. The car gently swings back to a horizontal position. Frozen in motion, Gaz and Dave are like panic-stricken statues. They glare helplessly at each other.

DAVE

What's your 'initiative' got to say about this, then, bog-eyes?

GAZ

(after a hit more statue practice)

Ey up, someone's coming.

A dog walker approaches along the tow-path. This being Yorkshire, he expresses ho surprise at all.

DOG WALKER

Al right?

GAZ

Aye, not-so-had.

Without breaking step, the dog walker disappears. Dave is incredulous.

DAVE

'Not-so-bad?' 'Not-so-bad?' Not much of a ~ SOS, that, is it?

GAZ

Alright. alright, don't get a benny on, you'll have us both in. All we have to do is get the pipe -

DAVE

- what sodding pipe?

Gaz looks down and is struck dumb. The pipe has gone.

Appendix IV

THE FULL MONTY

Voice-over and dialogue as they appear in the film

Welcome to Sheffield, the beating heart of Britain's Industrial North. The jewel in Yorkshire's crown is home to over half a million people and thousands more flock here daily to shop and to work. All this is built on Sheffield's primary industry; steel. The city's rolling mills, forges and workshops employ some 90,000 men and state of the art machinery to make the world's finest steel - from high tensile girders to the stainless cutlery that ends up on your dining table.

But it's not all hard work for the people of Steel City. Tony can spend the day lounging by the pool, watching one of our top soccer teams or browsing in the shops. But when the sun goes down, the fun *really* starts, in the city's numerous nightclubs and discotheques. Yes, Yorkshire folk know how to have a good time. And it's goon times for the city's housing too! Sheffield leads the way in town planning.

Victorian slums have been cleared to make way for the houses of the future. Thanks to steel, Sheffield really is a city on the move.

DAVE

Ouch! Who's going to buy a rusty girder?

GAZ

Come on.

NATHAN

Dad, it's stealing.

GAZ

No it's liberating, love, liberating.

DAVE

Gas, hang on.

GAZ

Ten years we worked in here, now look.

NATHAN

Well what if we get caught?

GAZ

You can't get a criminal record 'til you're sixteen.
Just don't tell your mum!

DAVE

Eh listen, music.

NATHAN

Yeh

GAZ

Bloody hell!

DAVE

What they doin'?

NATHAN

It's the works band - they're still going, you know.

DAVE

'Bout the only thing 'round here that is.

GAZ

Ey up; Security guard's back.

DAVE

'Won't tek a minute', he says. 'Won't tek a minute.' Now what?

GAZ

Shurrrup - I'm thinking.

NATHAN

Can't we do normal things sometimes?

GAZ

What's up wi ' you? This is normal, innit Dave?

DAVE

Oh aye, everyday stuff this. I think this bugger's sinking.

GAZ

Right now, pick it up and try and slide it across Oh the other side. Oh.. hell, Nath! They're twenty quid each, them. That were your bloody maintenance, were that.

DAVE

Oh, nice one.

GAZ

Nath , Nathan. . . hell

DAVE

Come here, come here!

GAZ

Stay still , stay still , stay still! Al right?

DAVE

What's your initiative got to say about this then, bog-eyes?

GAZ
Ey up, someone's coming.

MAN
Al right?

GAZ
Aye, not so bad.

DAVE
Not so bad, not so bad. That's not much of a chuffin' SOS, is it?

GAZ
Al right, don't get t'benny on. Shit!

The Full Monty by Simon Beaufoy published by ScreenPress Books, 1997

Appendix V

KEEPING THE FAITH

BEN AND BRIAN RETREATING TO THE BLEACHERS - DAY 48

Yeah, well.. .watch out for next time.

They settle to watch the kids playing.

BRIAN

Hey, guess who I got a call from.

BEN

Woo?

BRIAN

Anna Reilly?! Eighth grade Anna Reilly?!

BRIAN

Yeah!

BEN

You're kidding!

BRIAN

No, it was amazing. We caught up on sixteen years in one hour, which is kind of cool and depressing at the same time.

BEN

So what's she doing now?

BRIAN

That's why she called. She's coming here for six months for her work.

BEN

Really?

BRIAN

Yeah! She's analysing synergies...or synergizing analogies...I don't know. She's this high-powered business...

BEN

...woman.

BRIAN

Yeah

BEN

That's amazing.

(beat)

So you told her about us?

BRIAN

Yeah, she flipped. In a good way.

BEN

When's she coming in?

BRIAN

Tomorrow night. I offered to pick her up at toe airport.
Come with me.

BEN

Wow.. Anna Reilly.

49 EXT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - DAY - ESTABLISHING

49

50 INT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - DAY

50

Ben and Brian stand in the terminal walkway facing a gate. Brian holds one of those limo signs saying 'ANNA BANANA'.

BEN

You look like an idiot with that thing.

BRIAN

Shut up.

(beat)

I wonder if she's changed.

BEN

No, I bet she still weighs 80 pounds and listens to
Leif Garrett.

They look at the disembarking passengers.

BRIAN

This is going to be awesome, huh? The gang all together again. I mean, I know she's gonna be real busy with work but still...it would be really great if we could. you know, hang out again and... I don't know, maybe I shouldn't expect too much...

BEN

Listen to you.

BRIAN

What?!

BEN

You sound like a nervous boyfriend.

BRIAN

Oh come on, she's like my long lost sister... Is that her?

The crowd parts and a tall, striking blond in shades emerges. She spots them grins and comes toward them. The girl has grown up.. .with a vengeance.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

So. You think she's changed?

BEN

Holy guacamole.

ANNA stops in front of them, lowers her shades and smiles.

ANNA

Hello, boys.

Ben and Brian smile, dumbstruck.

51 INT. BAGGAGE CLAIM - MINUTES LATER

51

The three stand at the crowded carousel waiting for her bags. Ben regards Anna closely.

BEN

Management consultant...

ANNA

You make it sound so exotic.

BEN

What is that?

ANNA

Well, I'm kind of like a handyman. But instead of fixing leaky roofs, I fix leaky corporations. Make 'em more efficient. I go in and kick a little ass, basically.

BRIAN

Wow, Anna Reilly, you're so grown up! Do we seem that grown up?

Anna puts her arm around Brian.

ANNA

Are you Kidding me!?! Look at my handsome holy rollers. this is blowing my mind!

She grabs Ben.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Ben Schram! How are you?! Who are you?!

Jon.. girls.. .news! Tell me everything.

BRIAN

Oh-oh. I already know his story. You go first. Job.. men.. news?

ANNA

Okay. Let me see, job's good. really good. News.. .my parents are happy and retired and.. no.. I'm taking yoga classes. Is that my bag?

BRIAN

Whoa, whoa, you skipped a little something.

ANNA

Yeah, I skipped something. The last eight years of social life to be precise. Guys, do you have any idea what it takes to get where I am? Seriously? I've only recently graduated from a hundred hours a week to sixty. Believe me working for Goo is a lot more civilised than working for people who think they're God. But I'll tell you something, if God had hired me as his consultant we could have made the world by Thursday and then we'd all have a three day weekend now and everybody would be giving thanks to THIS GIRL!

(Ben and Brian laugh)

Anyway, don't worry. I chose it, I'm great at it and I love it and some day I'll figure out how to work in the other stuff.

BRIAN

You never know, maybe the Big Apple will work its charms on you.

ANNA

Well my dirty little secret is this gig in New York is kind of a cakewalk, a reward for leading the firm in revenues - WOOD!

(she double high-fives thorn)

So until they figure out what they're going to do with precocious little me the three of us are going to be Carpe Diem like you read about!

(points)

Hey, Bri, grab my bag!

Brian SWINGS bag off the carousel and CREAMS a LITTLE BOY standing with his family.

52 EXT. LONG ISLAND EXPRESSWAY - DUSK 52

A taxi cruising down the highway, New York looming ahead.

53 INT. TAXI CAB - DUSK 53

Brian, Anna and Ben in the back seat. Anna in the middle.

ANNA

oh, oh, remember Ben insisting that the debate team be included in the pep rally?

BRIAN

All those football players with their helmets and you waving your affirmative argument folder.

ANNA and BRIAN howl

BEN

Hey, debate is still a varsity letter thanks so me. How about Cecille B Finn's home movie opus that we spent three weekends making only to have your dad tape over it with the Irish rugby finals.. .what was that called?

ANNA

The Laughing Tiger: A Chinese Epic of Love and Loss.
Remember how we did it? C'mon.

Ben covers his mouth and leans behind her. Anna does bad B-movie lip-synch and Ben provides toe stilted Fu Manchu voice.

BEN

'Once between our families there was peace now there
can only be bloodshed!'

BRIAN

Okay okay..

54 INT. RECTORY DINING ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

54

Ben, Brian and Anna sit at the table sharing a pint of ice-cream with three spoons

BEN

so Moses comes down off the mountain and stands in front of the people
and says 'I've got good news and bad news. The good news is I got 'em down
to ten, the bad news is adultery is still in...'

Anna and Brian laugh.

A Touchstone Pictures and Spyglass Entertainment production
