

Class level

Second class upwards

Learning objectives

The child will be enabled to:

- understand the structure and layout of a script
- understand the purpose of a script in film-making
- write the script for their class film

Methodologies

Whole-class and group work

Resources

Script: *I'm a Goner*

Time

This may take several classes, depending on the length of the storyline

Curriculum links

English: Developing cognitive abilities through language – Reading: *Comprehension strategies, understanding the story*. Writing: *Different genres of writing; scripts*

SPHE: Emotional and imaginative development through language – Creating stories for scripts

Drama: Exploring and making drama – Role-playing, character scripts, interviews with characters

Film portfolio

Samples of scripts

Note for teacher: It is recommended that you review Lessons 2, 4 and 6 before this lesson, or as part of it. (See “Note” below.)



Introduction

Discussion:

- Give each child a copy of the script, *I'm a Goner*.
- Perform a class reading.
- View *I'm a Goner*.



Development

Note: *I'm a Goner* serves as a good tool for helping with the revision of earlier lessons, demonstrating, as it does, elements of storytelling learnt by the children, for example, beginning, middle and end (Lesson 4), the elements of film, characters, plot, music, etc. (Lesson 2).

Screenplay

- The person who writes the script for a film is called the *screenwriter*.
- Film actors learn their lines from a *script* or *screenplay*.
- A director uses the screenplay to help plan how the film will be made.
- Each screenplay consists of scenes. A scene is where the action of the story takes place. For example, Sam is picked up from the classroom in the first scene of *I'm a Goner*; Sam and Mam driving in the car to the dentist is another scene.
- Each scene in the script begins with a heading telling us where things are happening, when they are happening, and whether it is inside or outside. Example: EXT. – MOUNTAIN – DAY. This means that the scene is happening on a mountain during the day. (EXT. is short for “exterior,” which means outside.) INT. – SHOP – NIGHT means it is an interior scene, happening in a shop at night.
- Each scene includes a description, details of characters’ actions, and details of the location.
- Scene headings and the characters’ names are in capital letters.
- Actions are given whenever anything physical happens, for example, “Mary walks towards the door.”

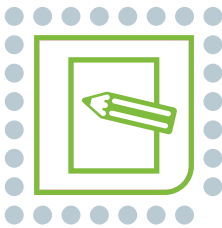
Discuss how information is presented in a script: that it is written in the present tense (here and now), visualisation, descriptions of what characters do (write what you see).

List the actions that are included in the descriptions, for example, “Children are talking away and working in the classroom,” “Sam has a look of horror on her face; she puts her hand to her chin.”

- Name all the characters – Sam, Aoife, all the children in the class, Mr Hurley, Sam’s mother (Mrs Maguire), the receptionist, the dentist.
- Where does the story take place? In the classroom, school corridor and stairs, school yard, dental surgery, and kitchen.
- What do you think is meant by INT. and EXT.?
- How do we know what is happening in the story when there is no dialogue?

The class has drafted an outline for its film at this stage. (See Lesson 13, “Creative writing for film.”)

The class works on the draft of its own storyline. Each group collaborates on the screenplay for its scene from the story. Each group is encouraged to write the screenplay in scriptwriting format. Each group nominates a spokesperson; it can also nominate two people to share the writing of their part of the script and possibly the typing also.



Further extension work

English: Report-writing

The children report on events similar to those they would hear on the news: a break-in at their school, a fire at a local hotel, a burglary at a local shop, the opening of a library. Read the reports to the class.

English: Interview-writing

The children choose a scenario in which an interview is taking place: for example, they interview other children about their hobbies. A child could pretend to be somebody famous, such as a singer, football star, actor, etc., and be interviewed as that person. In pairs or in groups, they write a list of suitable interview questions. They role-play an interview with two actors, one as the interviewer and the other as the interviewee.

Note for teacher: These ideas could be used as scenes for filming by the children. (See Lesson 9.)

English: Creative writing / SPHE

Brainstorm different ideas for a script based on issues in the school, such as bullying, playtime, sharing, making decisions, or safety.

English: Adaptation

Choose a story from your English reader to turn into a film script. Note that the descriptive passages in your story cannot be included in your script. You will have to include directions for your actors as well as dialogue.

ICT: Film scripts

Look at different scripts. Scripts can be downloaded from the internet:

<http://familyscreenscene.allinfoabout.com/>

I' m a Goner

INT. - CLASSROOM - DAY

Children are talking away and working in the classroom.

SAM:

So what did you do your project on?

AOIFE:

Well, I did my project on big seas.

SAM:

I did mine on Wales. There' s lots of interesting animals.

AOIFE:

I' m just adding the finishing touches to mine.

SAM:

Oh, I did that last night.

AOIFE:

Cool!

We see lots of children in the classroom playing around and throwing things at each other.

MR MAGUIRE:

Okay, children, put away your projects and take out your history books and copies, please.

THE WHOLE CLASS:

Aww. . .

INT. - SCHOOL CORRIDOR - DAY

Sam' s mother walks up to the classroom door and KNOCKS. Mr Maguire answers.

SAM' S MOTHER:

Excuse me, Mr Maguire, but can I take Sam out for a dental appointment?

MR MAGUIRE

Sure. - Sam!

INT. - CLASSROOM - DAY

Sam packs her bags and smiles as she leaves the classroom.

THE WHOLE CLASS:
Bye, Sam!

INT. - SCHOOL CORRIDOR AND STAIRS - DAY

Sam and her mother walk down the stairs.

EXT. - SCHOOL YARD - DAY

Sam and her mother walk across the yard and get into a car.

INT. - CAR - DAY

SAM'S MOTHER:
Oh, I hope we're not late for the dentist.

SAM:
I don't want to go to the dentist, Mum! (whining)

SAM'S MOTHER:
Oh, Sam, there's nothing to be worried about.

SAM:
Yeah, that's what you think.

CAPTION: MEANWHILE AT THE DENTAL SURGERY

INT. - DENTAL SURGERY RECEPTION - DAY

The receptionist is on the telephone.

RECEPTIONIST:
Okay... okay... Wednesday afternoon. Okay. Bye.

Receptionist writes down the booking on a piece of paper. We see the dentist looking through some files.

DENTIST:
I'm popping into the kitchen for a quick bite to eat.

RECEPTIONIST:
Okay, but don't be long. You have an appointment in a few moments.

Receptionist continues to write up the appointment and then begins to walk around the room cleaning up after the dentist.

KNOCK on door.

The receptionist opens the door.

SAM'S MOTHER:

Hi. We're here for the appointment at 1:30.

RECEPTIONIST:

Oh, yeah. Come on in.

Sam and her mother enter the room and sit down on the chairs.

INT. - KITCHEN - DAY

The dentist proceeds to make his lunch. He starts off by making himself a cup of soup.

DENTIST

Mmm! Smells good.

INT. - DENTAL RECEPTION - DAY

Sam has a look of horror on her face; she puts her hand to her chin.

INT. - KITCHEN - DAY

The dentist has a knife in his hand. He's talking to himself.

DENTIST:

At last your time has come!

INT. - DENTAL RECEPTION - DAY

Sam looks increasingly uneasy. She nudges her mother.

SAM:

D'you know what? My toothache is pretty much gone. You wouldn't want to waste your money on silly ol' me if I didn't have a toothache!

SAM'S MOTHER:

Sam, you're getting that tooth out today, that's that.

SAM:

But I'm terrified of the dentist.

SAM'S MOTHER:
Honestly, you'd swear the dentist was going to gobble you up or something. Settle down, for heaven's sake.

Sam puts her hand to her cheek once again.

INT. - KITCHEN - DAY

The dentist scoops out the meatballs from the soup can.

DENTIST:
Mmm, my favourite!

INT. - DENTAL RECEPTIONIST - DAY

Sam's mother shakes her head.

INT. - KITCHEN - DAY

The dentist scrapes the knives together to sharpen them before he eats the meatballs.

INT. - DENTAL RECEPTION - DAY

Sam is looking horrified.

INT. - KITCHEN - DAY

We hear the scrape of a knife.

DENTIST:
Mmm—the moment I've been waiting for!

INT. - DENTAL RECEPTION - DAY

Sam's face is looking worse with panic.

INT. - KITCHEN - DAY

The dentist is scoffing the meatballs.

DENTIST:
My favourite!

INT. - DENTAL RECEPTION - DAY

RECEPTIONIST:
Nothing to worry about! I'm sorry about the delay,
Mrs Maguire.

Sam is looking very depressed.

INT. - KITCHEN - DAY

The dentist turns on the tap and starts to spill the meatballs
down the drain.

INT. - DENTAL RECEPTION - DAY

Sam begins to rub her cheek really quickly; the sounds coming from
the kitchen are making her very nervous.

INT. - KITCHEN - DAY

The meatballs are still slopping into the kitchen sink.

INT. - DENTAL RECEPTION - DAY

Sam's face is changing from nervous to sheer panic.
The door opens, and in walks the dentists from the kitchen.
The dentist walks over to the receptionist.

DENTIST:
I'm ready for my next patient.

Sam stands up.

SAM:
I heard it all! I heard everything! You're a
monster, and I'm out of here!

Sam runs to the door and runs out of the building.

SAM'S MOTHER:
Sam!

The receptionist and the dentist look at each other with a
confused daze.