Cinesnaps Short Film Competition
Planning Document

You will be working to plan, film and edit your own short film. You can do this solo or as a part of a group of up to 6 production team members This film can be any genre and you're encourage to reflect the theme **SPACE**. The film can be a live action, animation or documentary and **no longer than 5 minutes**. Before you do anything else you must make sure you understand what your film will be judged on.

Criteria	What judges are looking for	What it's worth
Engagement to Theme	Story has clear, relevant and interesting use of the theme 'Space'.	**25%**
Narrative	Strong storyline with dramatic appeal, motivation, closure, point of view	**25%**
Innovation	Quality of acting & creative choices in design direction, cinematography, script & locations	**20%**
Application of Technology		
Audio	Appropriate music, quality of sound recording, sfx, ambient noise, voice over, post production sound levels	**10%**
Visuals	Camera work - focus, framing, composition, movement, mise en scene, continuity	**10%**
Editing	Order, cuts, duration, rhythm, continuity, montage, motifs	**10%**

SCHEDULING

> "I must govern the clock, not be governed by it"
> - Golda Meir

Stages of Filmmaking

1. <u>Preproduction</u>: Planning your film
   - Preproduction is one of the **MOST IMPORTANT** stages of the filmmaking process. This is where you make all of your decisions about the story, the characters, filming locations, props and costumes, shots you will film, music you may use or need to find. You should spend a good chunk of your time on this stage.
   - The more you plan and prepare at this stage, the easier and quicker the next 2 stages will be.
2. <u>Filming</u>: Shortest amount of time. Capturing all of your footage.
3. <u>Postproduction</u>: Editing – pulling all of the footage, sound and music together to create a final product that is then exported and presented.

So How Much Time Should I Spend On Each Part?

Breaking down your schedule – Here's a suggestion of how you should spend your time.
1. Preproduction = 40% of your time
2. Filming = 20% of your time
3. Postproduction = 40% time

Here's an example - 10 weeks to create projects = 4 weeks preproduction, 2 weeks filming, 4 weeks post production.

It's a good idea at this stage to break the project down so you have some clear production deadlines to work towards. Work out how many weeks you have to complete your production and start setting production timeline goals. *TIP* – If you can, make your due date 1 or 2 weeks earlier to give yourself some wiggle room to cover for any hiccups.

Overall Project Timeline

Week	Date	Stage of Production	Goal/Intentions: What task to have done
1	11 April	Preproduction	Reading and brainstorming ideas
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			

10			

Narrative Conventions

As an audience we have a set of expectations for films we view. These expectations are called conventions. Conventions are created and reinforced by society, and are seen as 'the norm'. When creating film, we need to adhere to the expectations, so we need to make sure we really understand them to know how to apply them properly to our own films. The basic narrative (story) conventions can be broken down into:

- Genre
- Characterisation
- Setting
- Plot
- Narrative Structure

Make sure you have a good understanding of each of these before beginning your film. Your teacher can help with understanding each convention in more detail.

SWAT Codes

While every story has standard narrative conventions (the norms that make a story a story), films use specific visual *Codes and Conventions* to help make their audience feel a certain way. These are generally known as the SWAT codes and understanding them will help influence your creative choices as you create, film and edit your short film entry together. Understand the effect you want to have on your audience and the emotions you want them to feel, then think about what choices you will make for each of the below Codes.

Symbolic Codes: anything that *symbolises or represents* something else. They can be colour, lighting, costume, the setting, body language and objects/props. *Example:* a red rose symbolises a love, while a sunflower symbolises friendship.	**W**ritten Codes: anything that is *written* in a visual text. This can be a title, handwriting, subtitles, speech bubbles or even signs. It may reveal important information about the narrative. *Example:* cursive handwriting may mean that the film is set in the past, or newspaper style headlines may symbolise a news style report.
Audio Codes: can be anything you hear. This can be dialogue, music, sound effects, voiceover, laugh tracks/applause and even silence. Used to create atmosphere and mood There is *diegetic sound*, the sound recorded 'live' alongside footage (raw, an actual sound such as dialogue).	**T**echnical Codes: are things such as camera distance, camera angles, camera movement, montage, juxtaposition, editing, equipment used, post-production, animation and lighting. There is a lot to consider, but try to think of technical codes on a smaller scale by considering *why* that was used and *what* was the purpose of doing it.

And there is *non diegetic* sound, audio added in post-production (laugh track or background music).	*Example:* a close up shot of a character being emotional with high key lighting, using a smaller lens camera, brings lots of detail to their face creating the illusion of drama.

"The most important thing to remember is you must know your audience"
- Lewis Howes

Think About Your Audience

When creating any text, we must always think about who we intend to view it. This is our audience. Short films are not purely made for the creator; it is made for a wider audience to tell a story or for entertainment. To engage our audience, you must know who they are and what defines them. You are an audience for the media you consume.

Things like:

- o Age
- o Gender
- o Location
- o Interests
- o Socioeconomic status

are all factors that will impact what an audience chooses to view. Think about who your audience is, and what will they enjoy. This will help you make creative decisions about your film moving forward.

FINALLY! Let's Get Started!

"The most important step of all is the first step. Start something".
- Blake Mycoskie

STEP 1: Idea Development
Step 1: Choose a genre and type of film

Type: Narrative   /   Documentary   /   Animation

Genre: _____

Step 2: Brainstorm potential storylines. Who is there (characters), what is happening to them (plot).

Brainstorm

Brainstorm 6 possible ideas you could create a short film for. *Note the story idea and the genre (eg: student racing to get ready for school but comes across some hidden space in the that reveals a secret, thriller)*

SHORT FILM
IDEAS
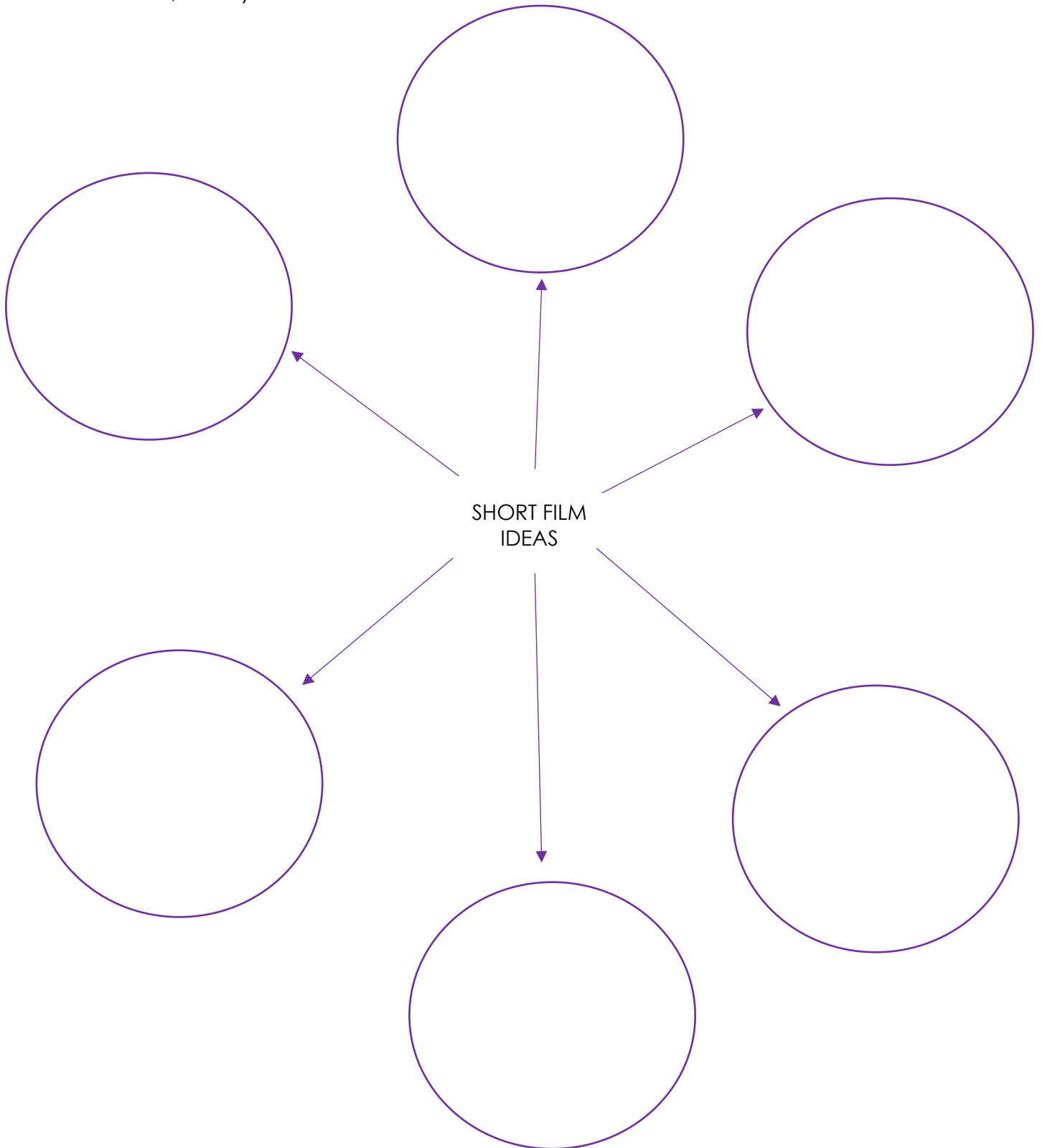
Chosen Idea: _____

Connection to SPACE: _____

Step Two: Scripting

1. Flesh out your idea. Create a simple plot (story) outline. Who is there and what is happening to them – Consider the three act structure (beginning middle and end). What happens first, what happens in the middle what happens at the end.
2. Develop your characters a little bit more. Give some more information about who your characters are, and what they're like. Remember, short films tend to have a smaller cast as you don't have much time to develop characterisation for too many characters.
3. Now expand further thinking about your key plot points and narrative structure. What happens at each key point to your characters?
   EG – Exposition: Andrew wakes up and see's he's late for school and panics because he hates getting in trouble.

Climax

Rising Action

Conflict

Falling Action

Exposition
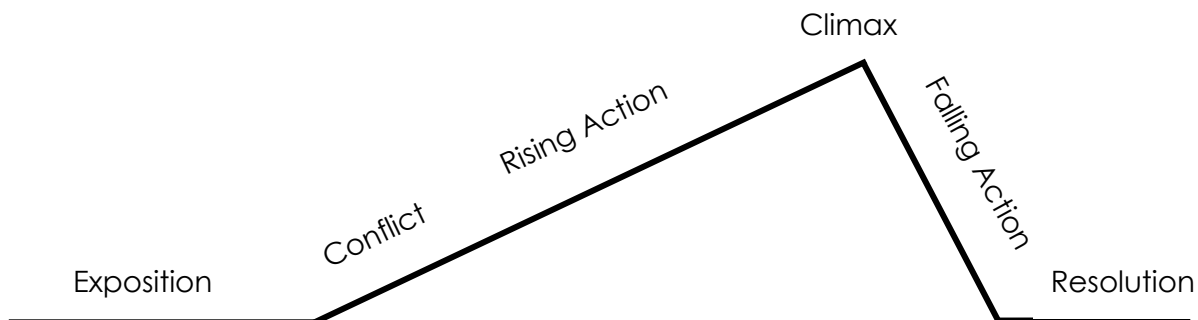
Resolution

Narrative Structure	What happens
Exposition	
Conflict	
Rising Action	
Climax	
Falling action	
Resolution	

Simple Script Outline

Voice Actors (Name & Initials): eg *Andrew Robson = AR* _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Time (How long does it go for)	Video	Audio
Eg: 0:15 seconds	*Eg: CU AR face then clock, then ARs face – panic and jumps up*	*Eg: AR: Damn it! I'm late!*

Script Short Film

Script writing is a key part of planning. By planning you reduce the amount of takes, actors speak more confidently, and sound convincing to your audience. Things such as sound effects, scene descriptions, audio tracks, actions and tone need to be included and getting it right here will help you save time in filming and in post-production.

"TITLE"

By

Author Name

Street Address
City, ST ZIP Code
Phone
Email

FADE IN:

SCENE NAME

Scene description/opening

                   CHARACTER NAME 1

       Dialogue

                   CHARACTER NAME 2

       Dialogue

                   CHARACTER NAME 3

       Dialogue

                   CHARACTER NAME 4

       Dialogue

                   CHARACTER NAME 5

       Dialogue

Scene description

                   CHARACTER NAME 1

       Dialogue

                   CHARACTER NAME 2

       Dialogue

                   CHARACTER NAME 3

       Dialogue

                    CHARACTER NAME 4

       Dialogue

            (Parenthetical information)

                    CHARACTER NAME 5

       Dialogue

                    CHARACTER NAME 6

       Dialogue

 Scene description

                                              FADE OUT:

                     THE END

Step Three: Storyboard

Create a storyboard visually demonstrating the basic outline of shots that your short film will be made up of. Shots are drawn to the best of your ability (stick figures are acceptable). Each thumbnail must include the shot number, time, description, symbolic codes, written codes, audio: codes, shot distance, camera angle and camera movement.

Master shots – Always include a master shot. This is usually a wide or medium shot that records the entire scene. Having a master shot means that you always have footage of a whole scene and this gives you a safety net in the editing process if any of your other shots don't work out for any reason.

Shot Number: _____ Time: _____ Description: _____ _____ Symbolic: _____ Written: _____ Audio: _____ _____ Shot distance: _____ Camera angle: _____ Camera movement: _____	Shot Number: _____ Time: _____ Description: _____ _____ Symbolic: _____ Written: _____ Audio: _____ _____ Shot distance: _____ Camera angle: _____ Camera movement: _____	Shot Number: _____ Time: _____ Description: _____ _____ Symbolic: _____ Written: _____ Audio: _____ _____ Shot distance: _____ Camera angle: _____ Camera movement: _____	Shot Number: _____ Time: _____ Description: _____ _____ Symbolic: _____ Written: _____ Audio: _____ _____ Shot distance: _____ Camera angle: _____ Camera movement: _____
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Step Four: Plan your filming

This sounds simple, but it's often left to the last minute…
Schedule what days you will film what, with who, where, and what will you need (props, set, costume etc First line is example for you)

Date (what day will you be filming?)	What (What scenes/shots are you filming. Refer to storyboard)	Location (where is filming happening)	Who (what people need to be there – cast and crew)	Need (what should be there that day – costumes, props, technical equipment)
Sat 8th May	Scene 1, shots 1 - 8	AR's house – bedroom	AR, Mary, Fred, Mike, Jane	Clock, PJs, Camera, mic, SD Card,

Step Five: Capture

Now it's (FINALLY) time to film! Capture the footage you need for your short film. Be sure to follow your storyboard and your schedule as this will help you to get through your filming as quickly and easily as possible each day, but should the story take you to 'another place', don't hesitate to follow it. Make sure you're thinking about your framing, your sound quality, and the lighting. Do more than 1 take for each shot because you may find little mistakes in a shot when you get to the edit suite that you didn't know were there on the day. Doing at least 3 takes if you can is always a good idea as it gives you a bit of choice when editing.

Step Six: Edit

Create a short film that is engaging, creative, original and is aesthetically pleasing. Make sure that it follows a narrative structure and the reflects storyboard. Include a title and credits – all people, and content used in your film must be credited. You MUST make sure your music is royalty free. Get feedback from others who haven't been involved in filming to pick up any little errors and get feedback from fresh eyes. It's very easy to miss mistakes when you've looked at something so many times!

Step Seven: Final Product & Export

Finalise your film and ensure you have saved the edited & exported version.
You will then upload your entry as per the instructions on the Cinesnaps Entry Pack

The Cinesnaps competition closes at 5pm on 30th June 2022. You will be notified in with 3 weeks if you are a finalist. Your film will then be screened on Thursday 25th August 2022 at the Cinesnaps Grand Finale!

Good Luck!