



PAERANGI

VIDEO 3 – STORY ELEMENTS

HOMework

Choose a story idea from the Video 2 homework, and work on it further.

Answer these questions:

- Who is the protagonist?
- Who is the antagonist?
- What is the genre?
- What is the theme?
- Describe the tone and world

WATCH LIST

[Ross and Beth](#)

Short film, 2014, 15'00

Writer/Director - Hamish Bennett

Producer - Orlando Stewart

[Creamerie](#)

Web series, 2021, 6 x 22-26mins

Writers – Roseanne Liang, Dan Musgrove, Kirsty Fisher, Shoshana McCallum

Director – Roseanne Liang

Producer – Bronwynn Bakker

READING LIST

Ross and Beth script

Marina Alofagia McCartney's notes

Film and Series Genre glossary

WRITING EXERCISES

Set by screenwriter Sophie Henderson in Video 3

Character Exercise

With a piece of paper and a pen, write non-stop about your character for five minutes.

Write about:

- Their childhood, their hobbies, their relationship, their age, their flaws, their weaknesses, their strengths. What shoes do they wear? Where do they go to school? Write everything that you can think of that you already know about them.
- When you run out of things you know about the character you will have to start making things up. Some of that will be terrible, and that's okay, but the main thing is you're not allowed to stop writing.

Once you've finished, read back over your writing and circle:

- The things you've discovered about that character
- The things that make the character similar to you

Notes from Sophie about this exercise and what she hopes you will take away from it:

“This story is coming from you. You can't help but put your own voice and your own opinions into it. I think the more of yourself you pour into your character, the more vulnerable you can be about your own opinions, your own fears, your own choices, things that hurt you, that make you want to cry, the better. The more you put of yourself into your script, the more your script can only be written by you, and that's what will make it stand out.”

Genre Exercise

With a piece of paper and pen, write down 20 films that inspire you.

It doesn't matter what their genre is - different genres are good.

After you've written the list:

- Write the genre of the film next to each title. Be specific: is it a romantic comedy? human comedy? psychological thriller? domestic thriller?
- Read through the list of genres you've ended up with. What are the elements of those genres that you are most drawn to?
- Think about all the genres that could work for your story. What if you chose a different genre, what would that do to the story? How would that push the story into a new place, change it up, or give it some kind of edge?
- Once you've decided on the genre for your concept, research the genre and find out all the conventions and tropes that make up that genre. What does that genre always promise to the audience?

TIPS FOR A STRONG WEB SERIES CONCEPT

Given by screenwriter Shoshana McCallum in Video 3

1. **Keep it short.** People usually watch web series on smaller devices in pockets of free time. They're not looking for the *Titanic*, they want something sharp and clever and usually funny.
2. **Keep it simple.** Because web series are often shorter in duration, there usually isn't time to delve into complicated plots and confusing characters in a satisfying way.
3. **Keep it going.** The structure needs to be doing two things at any point in time—be entertaining in its own right and drive the story forward in a meaningful way. If it's not doing both, take another look at it.

GLOSSARY

Genre convention – Elements like character archetypes, settings and story arcs that are typically found in that genre. They can define the viewer's expectations of the story.

Trope – Devices used in stories many times e.g. character tropes like the mentor figure being an old man with a long white beard (subverting the trope would be the mentor figure looking very different to this) or situations e.g. the 'hanging by the fingers' trope where a character finds themselves holding onto a ledge by their fingers, each finger losing their grip one by one, or someone is peeling their fingers off the ledge. This trope usually ends in the character surviving. Subverting the trope would be that the character does not survive.