2021 Scene-Writing Challenge

[Scott Myers](#)

Write some scenes. Win a great prize.

Every September, we run a [Zero Draft Thirty Challenge](#) in which the goal for participants is to pound out a draft of a feature film screenplay or original TV pilot script. However, not everyone has the time to take on that challenge. So here's **another** way you can up your writing chops this month… **and win a free prize!**

Every Monday-Friday this month, I will post a **scene-writing prompt.** Each day, write a scene per those guidelines. Upload your scene here in the response section of the original post. That way you can critique others' pages and receive feedback on your scene as well.

Why scene-writing? If the average scene is 1 1/2 to 2 pages long and a script is 100–120 pages, then a screenwriter writes between 50–80 scenes per screenplay. Thus in a very real way, screenwriting is *scene*-writing. The better we get at writing scenes, it stands to reason the better we get as a screenwriter.

To provide extra motivation for this series — to get people to WRITE PAGES — **I am giving away some of my Core classes to Scene-Writing Challenge participants.**

That's right: For free!

I cover pretty much everything you need to know about screenwriting theory in this unique curriculum. It's based on eight principles: Plot, Concept, Character, Style, Dialogue, Scene, Theme, Time.

CORE I: PLOT — A one-week class which begins with the principle *Plot = Structure* and explores the inner workings of the Screenplay Universe: Plotline and Themeline. Start date: **[Already run / available to Core Package users]**

CORE II: CONCEPT — A one-week class which begins with the principle *Concept = Hook* and examines multiple strategies to generate, develop and assess story ideas. Start date: **September 20.**

CORE III: CHARACTER — A one-week class which begins with the principle *Character = Function* and delves into archetypes: Protagonist, Nemesis, Attractor, Mentor, and Trickster. Start date: **October 4.**

CORE IV: STYLE — A one-week class which begins with the principle *Style = Voice* and surfaces keys to developing a distinctive writer's personality on the page. Start date: **October 18**.

CORE V: DIALOGUE — A one-week class which begins with the principle *Dialogue = Purpose* and probes a variety of ways to write effective, entertaining dialogue. Start date: **November 1**.

CORE VI: SCENE — A one-week class which begins with the principle *Scene = Point* and provides six essential questions to ask when crafting and writing any scene. Start date: **November 15**.

CORE VII: THEME — A one-week class which begins with the principle *Theme = Meaning* and gives writers a concrete take on theme which can elevate the depth of any story. Start date: **November 29**.

CORE VIII: TIME — A one-week class which begins with the principle *Time = Present* and studies Present, Present-Past, Present-Future and time management in writing. Start date: **December 13**.

Each is a 1-week online class featuring 6 lectures written by me, lots of screenwriting insider tips, logline workshops, optional writing exercises, 24/7 message board conversations, teleconferences with course participants and myself to discuss anything related to the craft of scriptwriting.

NOTE: I provide feedback and am actively involved in our online chats. That includes a live 90-minute Zoom call for each Core class.

A popular option is the **Core Package** which gives you access to the content in all eight Craft classes which you can go through on your own time and at your own pace, plus automatic enrollment in each 1-week online course — all for nearly 50% the price of each individual class. If you

sign up now, you can have immediate access to all of the Core content.

> *"I'm a huge fan of Scott's classes, and I signed up for his Core Package, which I cannot speak highly enough about. If anyone wants to take a serious look at improving their writing, there is more than enough material to keep you busy for a few... dare I say, lifetimes? He's the best. No bones about it."*
>
> *~ Heather Farlinger*

To qualify to take one of my Craft classes for free, write and submit **ten [10] Scene-Writing Challenge posts**, then **provide feedback on ten [10] posts from other writers**. The former to get you writing, the latter to work your critical-analytical skills.

A chance to take any of my eight Core classes, interface with me online along with the usual stellar group of writers who take Screenwriting Master Class courses, while using writing exercises and feedback to upgrade your skill at writing and analyzing scenes?

ISN'T THAT AN AWESOME IDEA?!!!

That's what I'm prepared to do to encourage you to write pages.

A couple of logistical notes:

- Limit your scenes to 2 pages. First, most scenes are 2

pages or less in length. Second, out of fairness to everyone participating in the public scene-writing workshop, let's not abuse anyone's patience or time with really long scenes.

- Don't be concerned about proper script format when you copy/paste your scene, rather the content and execution are the important thing. So as a default mode, do this: (1) Don't worry about right-hand margins on scene description or dialogue, just keep typing until it manually shifts each line. (2) Don't worry about character name position, rather do this:

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SCARLETT: Rhett, Rhett... Rhett, if you go, where
RHETT: Frankly, my dear, I don't give a damn.
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Today's prompt: A dream.

Instead of a dream with a coherent beginning, middle, and end — which is not typical of dreams — write something more atmospheric and mysterious. Perhaps a series of images which convey something, but not in a rational 'awake' way.

The obvious path here is they get into an argument, but there are other angles. A boasting contest about their children. How about one parent trying to pick up another parent.

Write a 1–2 page scene, then copy/paste in comments.

FEEDBACK TIP: Make suggestions which make the dream even *dreamier*, more chaotic, yet have some theme at work at its core.

If you are interested in qualifying for 1 free Core class with me, please note in each post you submit the number of scenes you have written. If today is your first effort, note that it is Scene 1. The next one, Scene 2. And so forth.

Also when you provide feedback on someone's scene, please note in each reply the number of comments you have uploaded. So if today is your first response, Feedback 1. The next one, Feedback 2.

You are on an honor system, as I don't have time to check every post, so do the right thing!

Remember: In order to qualify for one of my free Core classes, you need to submit **ten [10] Scene-Writing Challenge posts**, then **provide feedback on ten [10] posts from other writers. One post and one feedback per scene prompt.**

Once you have written 10 scenes and provided feedback on 10 scenes, **email me** (GITSblog@gmail.com) and let me know which Core class you'd like, and I'll enroll you in that class — my gift to you for winning the challenge!

It's the 2021 Scene-Writing Challenge! Give a jolt to your creative and writing muscles… **and win one free online class with yours truly.**

Here are the previous challenge prompts:

[Day 1 prompt: Elevator ride](#)
[Day 2 prompt: A chase scene without cars](#)
[Day 3 prompt: Someone talking to a gravestone](#)
[Day 4 prompt: A scene with just one word of dialogue](#)
[Day 5 prompt: Leaving a voicemail](#)
[Day 6 prompt: A bar. A bartender. A patron… getting drunk](#)
[Day 7 prompt: Conversation while dancing](#)
[Day 8 prompt: A scene between a senior citizen and a child](#)
[Day 9 prompt: A scene involving a medicine cabinet](#)
[Day 10 prompt: A scene that features a monologue](#)
[Day 11 prompt: A scene in which characters whisper](#)
[Day 12 prompt: A parent-teacher conference](#)
[Day 13 prompt: Interruption](#)

If you have what you think is a good suggestion for a scene-writing prompt, please post that as well.

Onward!