

# Explorations Presentation

by

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FADE IN:

SLIDESHOW

UNKNOWN VOICE (O.S.)  
(mumbling and quiet)  
Hi everyone, my uh, my name is  
Akhand, uh, I'm a film junior, and  
uh, this is my explorations  
presentation on...

There is an explosion on the screen, and the slideshow is replaced with a shot of AKHAND sitting in a garden wearing sunglasses.

CLOSE UP ON - Akhand's face

AKHAND  
(excited voice SFX  
REVERB)  
SCREENWRITING!!!

An eagle CAWS (O.S.)

SLIDESHOW WITH VIDEO OVERLAY

AKHAND  
Screenwriting is the act of writing  
a screenplay. A screenplay, or  
script, is essentially the  
blueprint of a film. It outlines  
the project for everybody  
involved--directors, actors,  
producers, the crew; anybody that  
needs to know what's going on with  
the film.

The slide changes.

AKHAND  
I chose to study screenwriting for  
the Explorations unit for a couple  
reasons. First, it seemed pretty  
sensible to study something that I  
could do holed up at home. You  
know, what with all the-

CUT TO:

Newscasters appear in quick succession, each saying  
"Coronavirus".

CUT TO:

## SLIDESHOW WITH VIDEO OVERLAY

AKHAND

And second, I really like writing. I really enjoyed English class during the Narrative unit where we got to write short stories. That's why, for my Explorations production, I decided to adapt one of the shorts stories I wrote in English to a screenplay.

The slide changes.

AKHAND

I began my research by looking up what a screenwriter does. Basically, a screenwriter will start by writing "spec scripts", or submission scripts, which writers hope will be turned into films. These scripts are then sent to literary agencies, the middlemen between writers and producers. Finally, if the writer's script is selected, it is edited and rewritten into a "shooting script", which is the script that is used for production. The vast majority of scripts remain spec scripts, but a lucky--and talented--few make it big.

The slide changes.

AKHAND

Because scripts have to be understood by nearly everybody participating in the filmmaking process, formatting is key. These days, screenwriting softwares take care of most of the actualy formatting for you, such as margins, or indentation. But to write a screenplay, you still have to learn how to use all the different elements of a script. Elements are different types of text in a script, each with a different role.

The slide changes.

AKHAND

One such element is "action".  
Action is text that sets the scene,  
describes the setting, introduces  
characters, describes anything that  
characters do, or describes  
anything that happens. It's pretty  
general-purpose.

The slide changes.

AKHAND

Another element is dialogue.  
Dialogue is, as you all probably  
know, anything that a character  
says. Action and dialogue are the  
two most-used elements in  
screenwriting, but other ones are  
just as important.

The slide changes.

AKHAND

However, we aren't going to talk  
about them because that's boring.  
If you're interested-

The slide changes.

AKHAND

-I made this handy little guide  
that you can check out on my  
website.

The slide changes.

AKHAND

Next, I began to research how to  
screenwrite well. I learned a few  
general tips about the process that  
helped me out as a beginning  
screenwriter. First: make your  
characters 3-dimensional. Don't  
make their entire personality  
"perfect golden boy" or  
thoughtless, evil villain. Adding  
flaws or contradictions to  
characters is the easiest way to  
give your writing nuance.

The slide changes.

AKHAND

Second, only use dialogue when you need to. The entire year, we've had Mr. Greco and Mr. Taylor drilling it into our heads: show, don't tell. This isn't to say that you should barely use dialogue. All I'm saying is: reflect on your scenes, and see if the dialogue you have written-in is filler. If it is, think of more creative ways to communicate with your audience.

The slide changes.

AKHAND

And lastly, story is king! Make sure, when you're writing, you're taking several steps back to look at your entire story. Is your character's change believable and consistent throughout the film, or is it too sudden and ham-fisted? Did you write yourself into a hole anywhere? Are there any filler scenes? Outlining your script before diving in headfirst can help ensure that you don't make any of these mistakes.

The slide changes.

AKHAND

To put all my new knowledge to the test, I wrote my very own screenplay! Two, actually. The first is the screenplay I talked about at the beginning of the presentation, and the second one is actually what I'm using to make this presentation.

SFX "META" plays in the background.

AKHAND

I wrote the screenplay for this presentation to practice using a screenwriting software. I chose Trelby. It was actually really easy to learn and after the first 10-or-so minutes, I pretty much had the hang of it. So after-

Akhand's phone rings.

AKHAND

Sorry, let me take this one sec.

AKHAND

(into phone)

Yeah, I just plugged it. Yeah, I said it was great. Okay you'll have it in by Monday? Great. Sounds good. Thanks.

AKHAND

(looking above camera)

Alright, sorry, just cut that.

AKHAND

So after writing the script for this video as practice, I set to work adapting my English short story. The story is about a late-50s Indian couple, Ramesh and Reema, who are in the-

AKHAND

(pretentiously)

autumn of their marriage.

AKHAND

Reema gets involved in an extramarital relationship, and struggles with whether to tell Ramesh or not.

AKHAND

(to the side)

God, where did I think of this?

AKHAND

The script is, to put it gently, a first draft. I like the story on a macro level, but definitely have to rework the finer details. But I accomplished what I set out to do-I wrote a correctly formatted screenplay! Two, in fact. And, in the process, I discovered that I really like screenwriting. Sorry, mom and dad, you might have to get ready for another 18 years of this. This summer, seeing as I'm probably not going anywhere anytime soon, I've set myself a goal. I want to write 50 pages worth of screenplays, around half the length of a feature film. I'm saying this

(MORE)

AKHAND (cont'd)

because if I tell you guys about my goal, I'll feel more obligated to stick to it. I'll be putting my work up on my website and would love any and all feedback you guys have to offer me.