

Lights, Camera, Film Literacy!
Adapting a Book into a Screenplay
The Wonderful Wizard of Oz

How do screenwriters adapt a book into a script for a film?
You must pretend that YOU are the screenwriter who has been hired to adapt the book THE WONDERFUL WIZARD OF OZ by L. Frank Baum (Books of Wonder Harper Trophy version) as a family film and complete this step-by-step guide.

Chapter One

Page 11

Characters:

Main character: _____

Supporting character: _____

Supporting character: _____

Setting:

State: _____

Two words describing their home: _____

Page 12

The hole in the ground that had a trap door in the middle of the floor was called a _____

(You, the screenwriter, say to yourself, "Aha! Here is a bit of foreshadowing! The novelist is letting me know there will be a cyclone later in the story. Yikes! The budget on the film just went up!)

Pages 13 & 14 - a picture page.

Page 15

As Aunt Em has been described on pages 12 & 13, would you write funny lines or serious lines of dialogue for her?

Based on the novelist's descriptions of Aunt Em and Uncle Henry, who would get more lines of dialogue? _____

("Uh, oh...the director has to work with a dog.")

The story opens with the family worried about _____.

Pages 16, 17, 18

("Yep... The cyclone. ")

Look at your LCL! 3x3 Story Path Act I.

("Wait," you say. These steps have hardly been developed at all. In the script, I must add more. I'm not sure what yet, but as I read on, I will look for ideas.")

Chapter Two

Pages 19 & 20 - a picture page.

Pages 21 & 22

How does the new setting contrast the Kansas setting?

How many new characters does she meet? _____

What seems to be the most important common descriptor of these new characters? _____

Pages 23 & 24 - a picture page.

Pages 25 & 26 & 27

You are in Act I - Step 3. ..

Who is Dorothy's mentor? _____

Much is explained through the mentor's dialogue with Dorothy...

You are allowed to use any of the book's dialogue in your script, since the film rights to the book have been purchased by the production company that hired you. Will you choose to use all of the book's dialogue, some of the book's dialogue or write all new dialogue for this scene? _____

Pages 28 & 29

What color are the shoes? _____

("Hmmm. That color doesn't show up well on the screen. I'll change the shoes' color to _____.")

What is Dorothy's main goal? _____

Pages 30 & 31 & 32

To help Dorothy get home, the Munchkins send Dorothy off to find _____ in a city called _____ by following a road paved with _____ bricks.

("Hmmm... Very visual.")

Dorothy is setting out to overcome the first obstacle, which is to _____.

Chapter Three

Pages 33 & 34 - a picture page.

Pages 35 & 36

Dorothy goes into the house and decides what to wear. Will you keep this in your script? _____ Why or why not? _____

Pages 37 & 38 & 41 & 42 (Pages 39 & 40 - a picture page.)

Boq, the Munchkin made an inference that Dorothy was a great sorceress based on what three supports?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Would you make Boq a character in your script if he does not show up later in the book? Why or why not?

(Pages 43 & 44 - a picture page.)

Pages 45 & 46 & 47 & 48

What did the Scarecrow say that might be more foreshadowing?

Would you include the Scarecrow as a character in your script? Why or why not?

Chapter Four

Pages 48 & 49 - a picture page.

Pages 51 & 52

How does the paragraph at the top of page 52 ("*The farms were not nearly so well cared for...*") change the mood from the preceding page?

(Pages 53 & 54 - a picture page.)

Page 55

"Aha!" you say. "There is the theme, the main lesson of this story."

Dorothy says six words: _____

Pages 56 & 57 & 58 & 59 & 60

Would you include the Scarecrow's entire back story in your script?
Why or why not?

Chapters Five and Six

The Scarecrow wants the Wizard to give him a _____.

The Tin Woodman wants the Wizard to give him a _____.

The Lion wants the Wizard to give him _____.

"I see," you say. "There are three very different and interesting characters Dorothy finds along the way and each wants to get to the Wizard. I'll shorten each introduction so they can get to the next obstacle of Act II much faster."

Chapter Seven

Obstacles:

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

Will you keep any of these obstacles in your screenplay?
Which one(s)?

Chapter Eight

Will you keep the obstacle of the raft and the stork or the poppy field in your screenplay?

Why or why not?

Are any other possible obstacles coming to your mind?

If yes, list some of them:

Chapter Nine

Will you include the killing of the wildcat in your screenplay?

Why or why not?

Will you include the Queen of the Mice?

Why or why not?

Chapter Ten

How does the author tell you the mood has changed?

Would you include visiting the woman's house in your screenplay?

Why or why not?

Chapter Eleven

Would you keep the head, the lovely lady, the beast, and the ball of fire... all in your screenplay? Why or why not?

According to the LCL! 3x3 Story Path the main character should be confronted with the second big obstacle and feel that there is no turning back.

Has this happened? Explain.

Chapter Twelve

Would you include the wolves, the crows, the bees, the Winkies, the Winged Monkeys...all in your screenplay?

If you had to choose just one, which would you choose? _____

Why?

The witch's fear of _____ is another example of foreshadowing.

Chapters Thirteen & Fourteen

Would you include the story of the winged Monkeys and why they obey the Golden Cap in your screenplay?

Why or why not?

Chapters Fifteen, Sixteen & Seventeen

Very often in movies, just as the main characters are about to achieve their goal and the audiences are about to relax, the reward is suddenly taken away. How did this happen to Dorothy?

Would you keep this in your adapted screenplay?
Why or why not?

Chapters Eighteen, Nineteen, Twenty, Twenty-One, Twenty-Two

In your adaptation, would you now send Dorothy on another adventure with the fighting trees, the wall, the country made of china, the great spider, and the hammer-heads?

Why or why not?

Chapters Twenty-Three & Twenty-Four

What are examples of "The Magic Three" often used in storytelling?

3 _____

3 _____

3 _____

3 _____

Did you like the ending or would you change the ending of your screenplay in any way?