The Assignment:

→ INDIVIDUALLY write a screenplay for a 3-minute film (3ish pages)
  - Use Celtx* or try a Google Add-On** & see formatting notes below

→ A paper copy is due at the start of class on Monday, March 11.

Some general notes/reminders about writing screenplays:

1) Remember: **you don't have the luxury of giving background and explanations.**

-- You cannot write in a script what the audience can't see or hear
you can't write: "He thinks about his girlfriend…" in an ACTION line or "(thinking about yesterday)" in a PARENTHETICAL because we can't see or hear that

-- SHOW what you mean, don't explain it

2) The **"action" line** is written formally – meaning in complete sentences. This is where you are setting the scene: the who and the where. While not too lengthy, give all info you can that will help give insight/foreshadowing/general useful information about the characters/situation. Think props, proximity of characters, etc.

3) Meanwhile, when your characters are speaking, try to write with more **authentic dialog** – write how people actually talk.

-- Many of our sentences are not complete or we have a certain way of talking/certain repeat phrases, we always use contractions…

4) Your "**scene heading**" line (it will be gray when you are writing in Celtx – in "Screenplay Formatter" it is called Header) is just for **location and time** (and is all caps)

-- should begin with INT (for interior) or EXT. (for exterior) then location - time of day.

-- example: INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY – NIGHT

5) Break-up dialog with "action" lines...

    -- action lines are not necessarily for just action – they can describe the location/room, what your charters are physically doing, etc.

    -- this makes for better reading and with lets you give characteristics to your characters, it helps you tell your story even more through what is in the room, what the characters are physically like, the habits they may have, etc.

6) Unless it is very essential, **do NOT include camera angle or shot types**. So you may want to include an occasional "action" line indicating an ECU (extreme close-up), but do not continually dictate where the camera is/should be – that's the director's job.

7) **Character Names**: give all of your character's names; try to avoid things like *Man #1, Robber #1*, etc.
    -- it makes it harder for the reader to follow the different people... additionally, don't give them too similar names (ie: Bob, Rob, etc.)
    -- you don't want to waste the reader's time thinking about who's who, you want them to just keep reading your story

8) You must **edit your script** for grammar and punctuation.
    -- action lines AND dialog
    -- misspellings, missing caps & periods distract from your ideas: you don't want that

9) And to repeat #1 above – **only include in your script what the audience can see or hear** – avoid all else. Indeed, it's a whole different kind of storytelling. Don't include phrases like "We see..." etc. **Show, don't tell**.

Suggestions: Open one of these screenplays while you edit/write – it's good to have a visual:

The Martian
Black Panther
Lion
Stranger Things (season 1, episode 1)
Babel
The Birds
Chinatown
Hotel Rwanda
 Or look for a favorite here: Daily Scripts   Simply Scripts

note: you can only have 3 screenplays in the program now for free... you could "print/pdf" one of your older ones and save it to a folder that you could recover later if you want; then delete the screenplay from Celtx to create a new one

*** like "Screenplay Formatter" – but be sure you check on the formatting as you go by looking at some authentic screenplays like the ones above (on a quick look, the spacing seems to be off)*