



# What Film Can Tell Writers About Storytelling

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Presented to Florida Writers Association

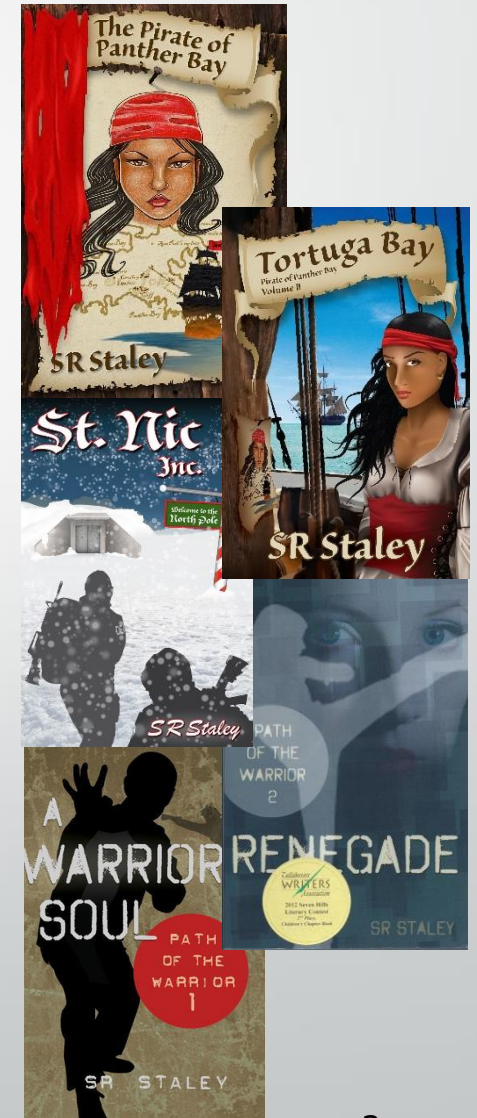
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# A little more about me...

Novel	Genre(s)	Subgenre
The Pirate of Panther Bay (2004/2014)	Action/Adventure Young Adult/New Adult	Historical Fiction Romance
Tortuga Bay (2015)	Action/Adventure Young Adult/New Adult\ Mainstream/Literary	Historical Fiction Romance
St. Nic, Inc. (2014)	Action/Adventure Mainstream/Literary	Contemporary Near Science Fiction
Renegade (2012)	Middle Grade	Contemporary Urban
A Warrior's Soul (2011)	Middle Grade	Contemporary

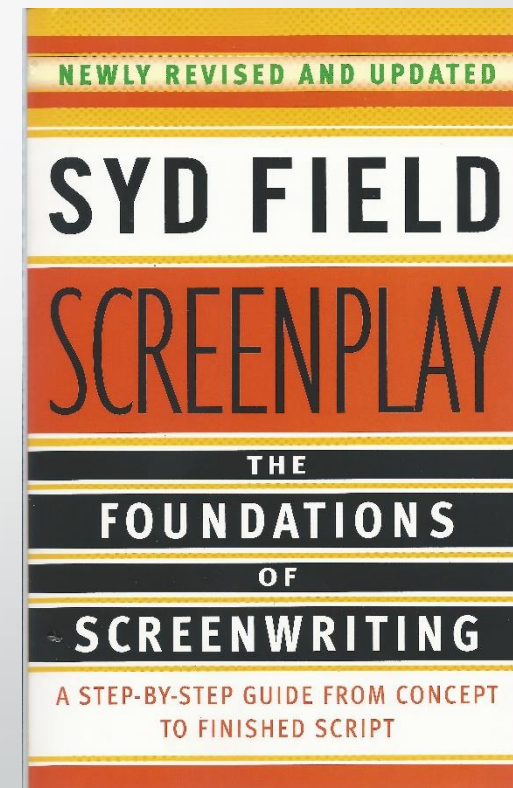
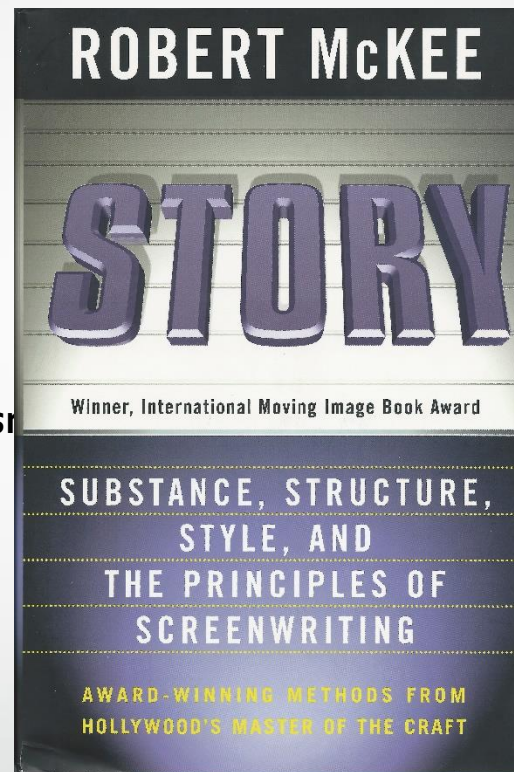


## Plus...

- **A film critic for the Independent Institute (Oakland, California)**
  - Publish film reviews weekly since 2016
  - Archive on [www.srstaley.com](http://www.srstaley.com)
- **Author of *Contemporary Film and Economics* (Routledge, forthcoming, 2018)**
- **Blog focused on the craft of writing, with a focus on storytelling and character development**
  - <http://blog.srstaley.com>

# Why film?

- Film is "visual storytelling"
- "The way you drive your story forward is by focusing on the *actions* of the *character* and the dramatic choices he or she makes during the narrative story line." Syd Field, *Screenplay*, pp. 46-7



# Is there a difference?

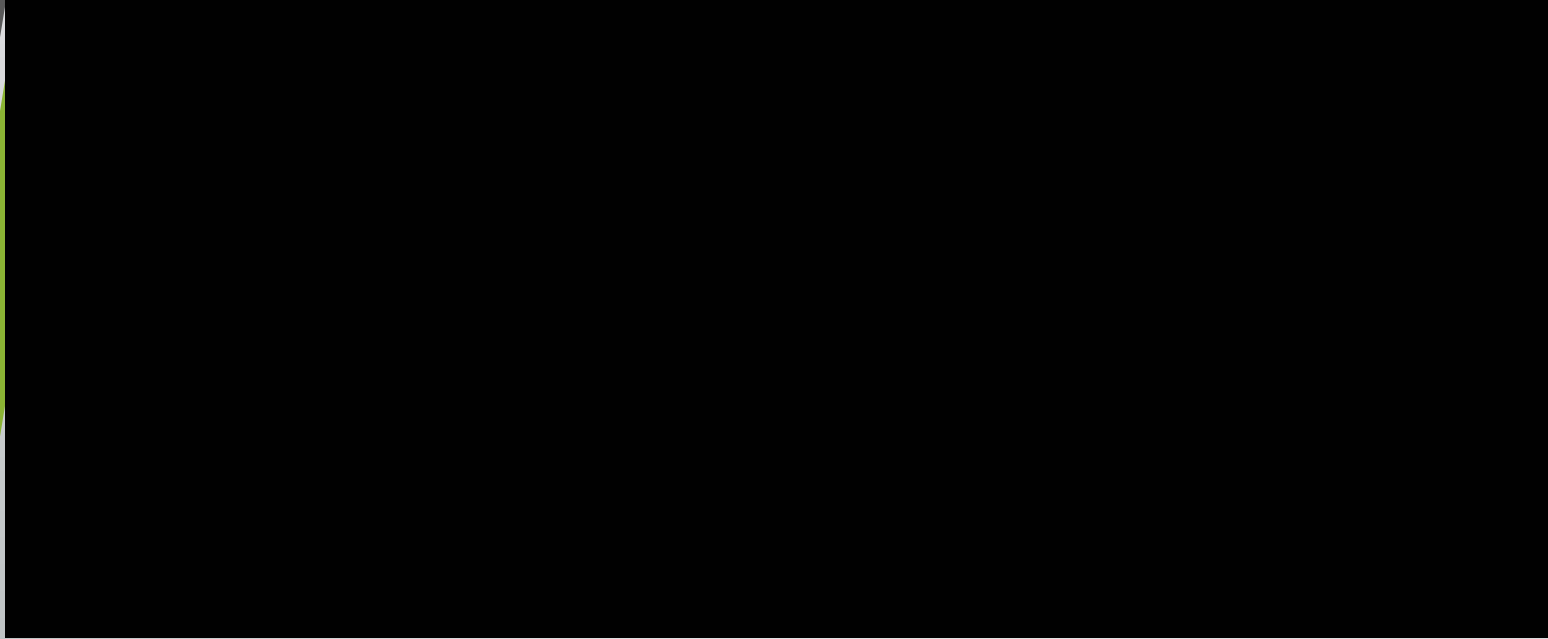
## Common Elements

- **Conflict drives story**
- **Characters**
- **Plot**
- **Setting**

## Major Differences

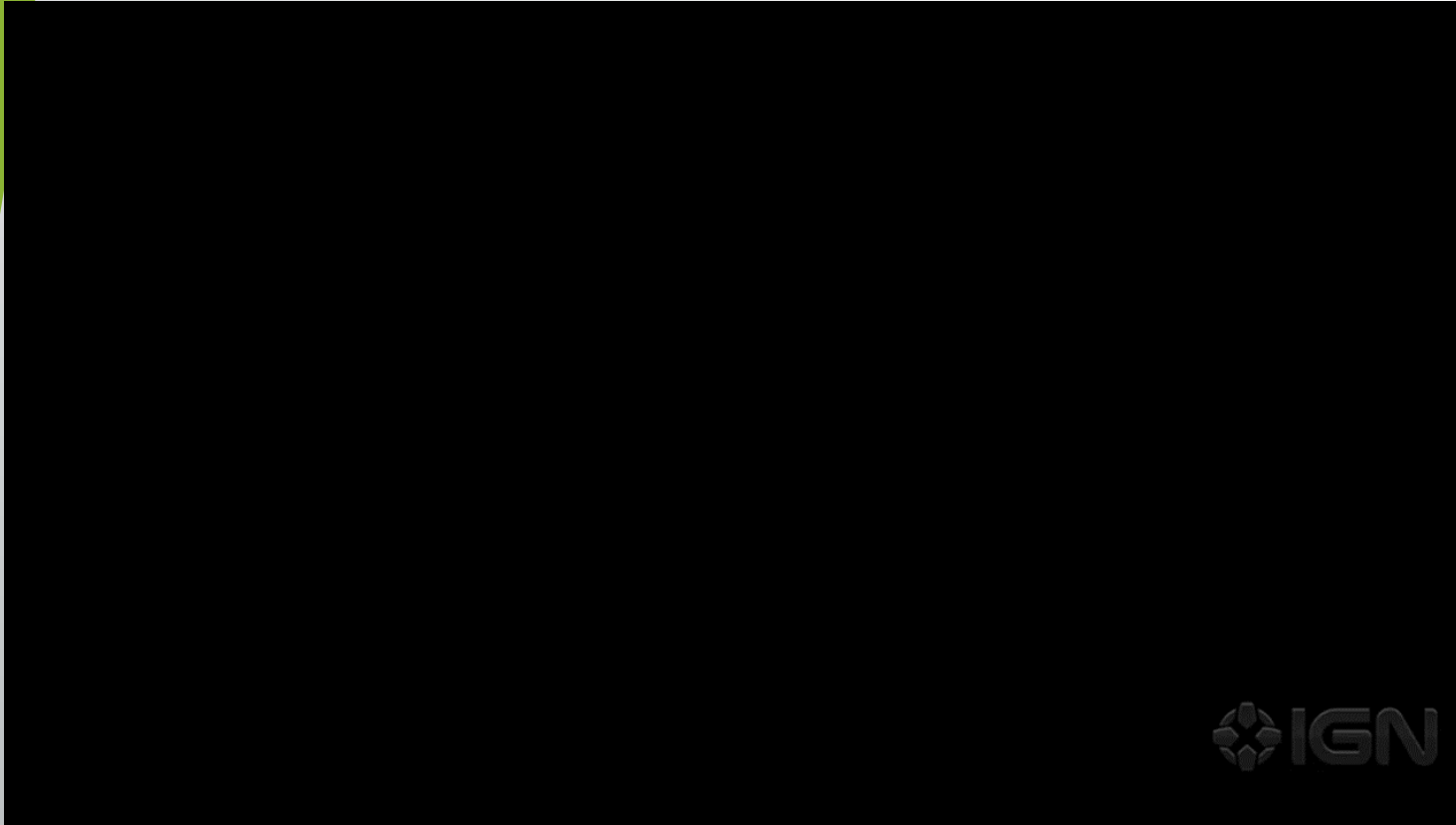
- **Film: Visual, sound**
  - Intuitive, implicit interpretation
  - Trust the viewer
- **Novels: Potential for all five senses**
  - Explicit
  - Controls the narrative

## Deepwater Horizon (2016)



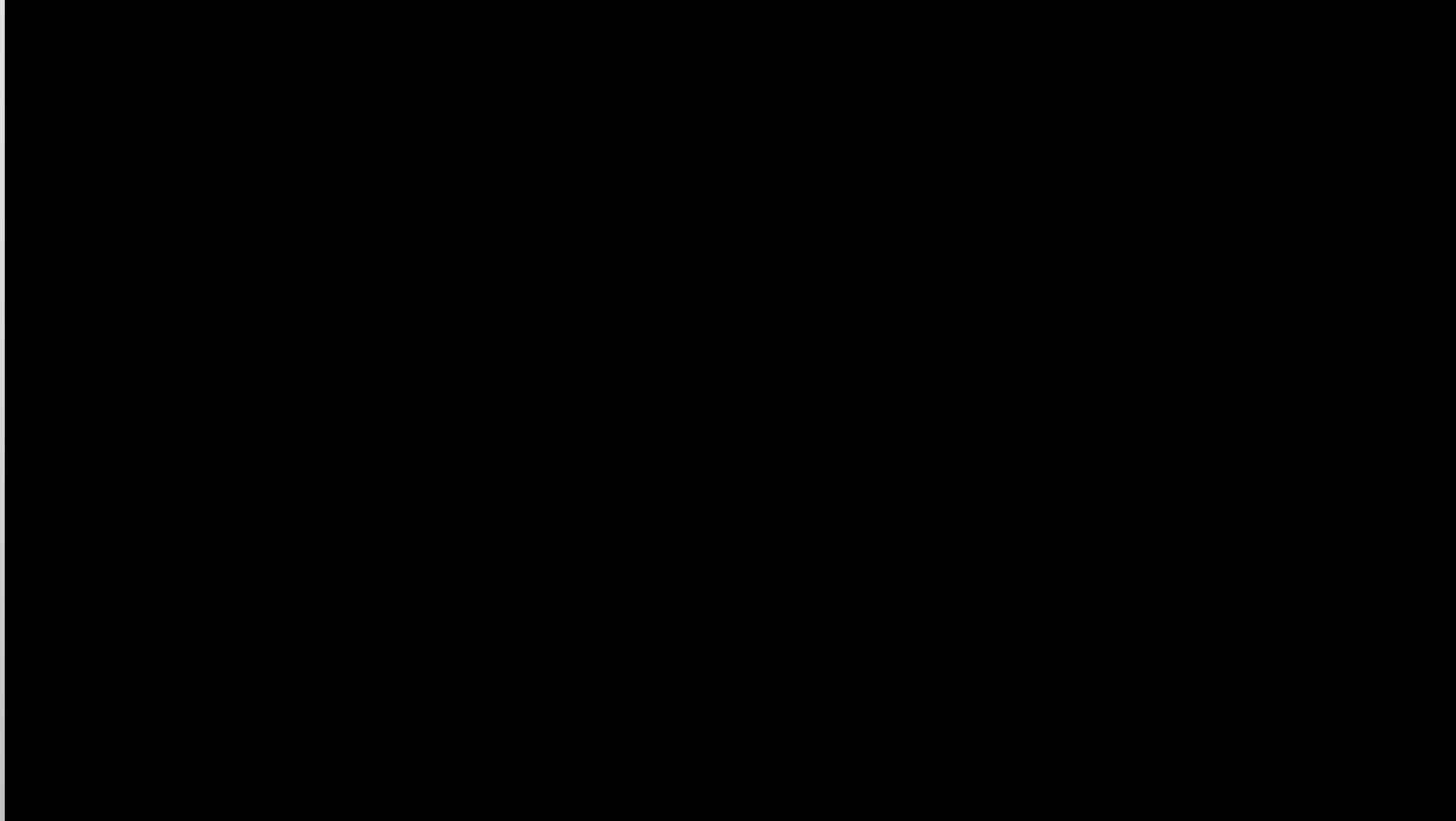
- What do viewers see?
- What does the daughter say?
- What does this scene say about the story?

# Jason Bourne (2016)



- **Worksheet**
  - What do we learn about character?
  - What do we learn about story?
- **Scene 1 (start: 1:23)**
- **Scene 2: 3:23**
- **Scene 3: 4:25**

## Baby Driver (2017)



- 0:18
- 0:55
- 1:44
- 2:07
- 3:40 (stop)



## Book of Henry (2017)

### Structure of Film

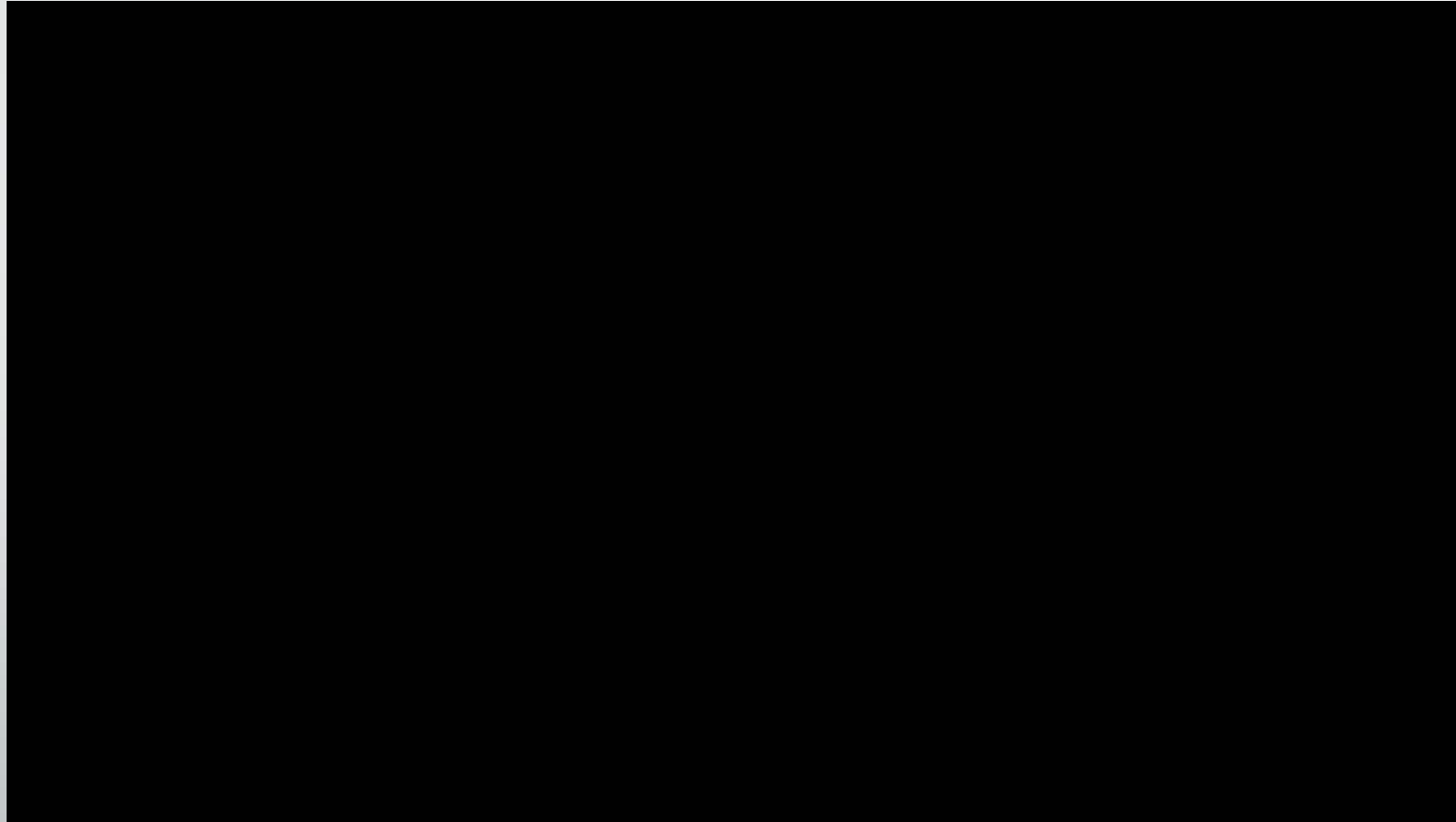
- Plot clock
- Story told in 3 acts
- Genre driven
- Most critics panned the film-Why?

### Breaking Conventions

- Character driven
- Two films in sequential order
  - Tragedy/Drama
  - Hitchcock  
Suspense/Coming of Age
- Point of view shifts

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# War Dogs (2016)



# Closing thoughts

- **Storytelling is the core of both film and fiction writing**
- **Visual storytelling allows writers to access new descriptive tools and techniques**
- **Films allows writers to use a comparative approach to story telling and deepen our appreciation for alternative mediums**
- **This comparative approach can help shape and sharpen a writer's voice.**

