

Kansas City Young Audiences Teacher Program Guide

Every Frame's a Picture: How a Movie's Made

Artist: Joel Jenkins

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Performance Description

It's more than just saying "action," that gets a movie made! Producer, Joel Jenkins, reveals in this performance that teamwork, inventiveness, and a few industry secrets are necessary to produce a movie.

Joel shows the audience that every motion picture begins with the power of words. The screenwriter's job is to create emotion in the audience through a well-written script.

The next step in the process is to *pitch* the story to *backers* in hopes of securing financing for the project. Joel relates how often times a writer will only have 30-seconds, the average time it takes to ride an

elevator from one floor to another, to sell their story. Once funding is secured, a production team is assembled. This group includes the director, producer, and the other professionals required to shoot the movie.



Joel concludes the performance with an exploration of how the film is edited and packaged for release. This process includes post-production, scoring, marketing, distribution, and how the studio accounts figure return-on-investment.

Though a movie requires hundreds of talented and inventive people to produce, every project begins with the power of one person's imagination.

Educational Objectives and Standards

Students will:

- Visualize and examine the complexity of creating a motion picture
- See that a movie requires organization, coordination, and cooperation to be completed

Behavioral Studies:

- Knows how a culture's art works and artifacts reflects its values and beliefs

Art Connections:

- Knows how visual, aural, oral, and kinetic elements are used in the various art forms

Special Points of Interest:

Twentieth Century Fox thought that *Star Wars* was going to be a financial disaster and almost sold the film off as a tax shelter.

Special REQUIREMENTS:

Chalkboard or dry erase board; large monitor (at least 20") with RCA video and audio inputs

Artist Bio: Joel Jenkins

Joel Jenkins, is a storyteller. He enjoys using his imagination to help people laugh, inspire learning, and look beyond their everyday lives.

As a producer and writer, Joel created *What's Your Story, Kid?*, an in-school residency that nurtures children's storytelling skills through filmmaking. This successful program has entertained and educated many students.

Parents have noted the improvement they've seen in their children's self-esteem as the students learn to focus their creativity into producing a video presentation.

Joel has worked with numerous clients including Lucasfilm and The White House. He studied *Producing Children's Television* at the Maine Workshops and has taught at UMKC and the Kansas City Art Institute.



Joel Jenkins

Vocabulary

Backer: investor(s) that provide financing for a movie project.

Best Boy: an assistant or apprentice, such as the assistant to the gaffer or the key grip.

Director: the person in charge of the actors and technicians.

Gate: another term for the box office or ticket sales a film makes, usually in the first weekend of theatrical showing.

Pitch: telling your story to a potential buyer.

Producer: The person exercising overall control over the production of a motion picture and holding ultimate responsibility for its success or failure.

Return-on-Investment (ROI): the amount of money made from a project after all expenses have been subtracted; profit.

Spec Script: The first draft of a screenplay, usually written without a commission.

Talent: A general, informal term for actors.

Post-Performance Activities

1. Develop two or three concepts for movie scripts that include characters, conflict, and resolution. Find inspiration for these concepts from newspaper stories, magazines, or other news sources. Ask these questions as you research the story: who were the characters involved? Why were they in that particular situation? How might they have resolved their situation if circumstances were different?
2. Condense your ideas into a three-to-five page synopsis. Have friends, teachers, and family read the synopsis. Is this a movie they'd spend money to see?
3. Practice pitching your story. Time yourself and see how quickly you can sell the concept to someone. Sometimes, you only have thirty-seconds to sell a producer your idea.

List of Resources

BOOKS

[Story: Substance, Structure, Style and The Principles of Screenwriting](#)

by Robert McKee

Regan Books; 1st edition

(December 17, 1997) ISBN: 0060391685

[In the Blink of an Eye](#) by Walter Murch

Silman-James Press; 2nd Rev edition

(August 1, 2001) ISBN: 1879505622

[Making Movies](#) by Sidney Lumet

Vintage Books USA; Reprint edition

(March 1, 1996) ISBN: 0679756604

[Careers for Film Buffs & Other Hollywood Types](#)

by Jaq Greenspon

McGraw-Hill; 2 edition

(March 26, 2003) ISBN: 0071405747

