



## **Gardner's Guide to Television Scriptwriting: The Writer's Road Map (Gardner's Guide series)**

*By Marilyn Webber*

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The writing exercises provided in this guide are designed to get teleplay ideas or episodes for an already existing series down on paper in the television industry format. The "Writer's Road Map" includes information on the different television genres, the basic four act structure, plot gimmicks, character types and motivations, scene construction, dialogue devices, themes, prose, and rewrite lists. Advice is also given on the proper format and how to pitch an idea once it is written.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"Expertly explaining and illustrating the mechanics and unfolding of a typical TV script, she gives beginning and intermediate screenwriters tools for creation of scripts and for analysis of TV programs. Besides the 'map' of a screenplay, the author discusses techniques and touches such as character 'tics' and 'plot gimmicks' which can make the difference between an outstanding script and a well-done, yet lackluster script. . . .

Aspiring screenwriters would find this an important guide and handbook." —*The Small Press Book Review*

#### About the Author

**Marilyn Webber** is a former scriptwriter for Saturday-morning cartoons and animation teleplays as well as for one-hour dramas for both daytime and prime-time television. She is the author of numerous screenplays, including *How To Kill Howie*, winner of Best Screenplay at the Texas Film Festival, *The Lawless Legion*, and *A Place Called Harmony*. She has been a freelance writer for networks such as ABC and CBS, and for studios such as Universal and Disney. She lives in Los Angeles.

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#### Introduction

Are you a confirmed couch potato who secretly yearns to write your own TV series or snag a job as a staff writer on a hit television show? If your answer is yes, this book is for you! Whether you're a novice writer or a writer looking for a new medium to stretch your literary muscles, everything you need to know to turn your script idea into a teleplay is right here. *Television Scriptwriting: The Writer's Road Map* will guide you through various exercises, helping you turn your story ideas into a TV series pilot script and/or a TV spec script for an existing series. In addition, this book will guide you in developing and pitching your TV series and/or episode ideas for a current series once you have completed your two one hour scripts. These two scripts will be your calling card.

Writing for television is not only a thrill, but it can be very lucrative as well. Not only do you get paid for the initial script, but every time your episode airs past the original run, you get a check called a (which is residual generally about half of your original pay for the script, and continues to decrease by half to a WGA set percentage). In addition, you get paid foreign residuals when your episode(s) appears overseas. These checks appear like free gifts because the work has long been done. Besides accumulating wealth and fame, there is one other added bonus: the next time your parent, spouse, or significant other complains about the TV time you're logging, you can defend all your viewing as research.

With more and more opportunities available for writers every year in television, why not give writing for TV a try? Television writers are actually respected; they even get to become producers of the series for which they write. Ergo, they have more say in how their script is produced, directed, cast, and edited. Screenwriters are often cut out of the process as soon as their script is sold, and don't see their "baby" again until it appears on screen. By then, it's usually been rewritten by numerous writers to the point that it may be unrecognizable to the original writer. This can be a very heart-breaking experience. In television, however, as a freelance writer, you work closely with the producers who are the top writers of the show. If you impress them, you can end up with a coveted staff job. That means you'll write for that one particular show, and you're on your way to making the big bucks! Each consecutive year, you'll advance up the literary ladder, moving from a

staff position to a story editor, then co-producer, producer, and finally to executive producer where you have the greatest control over your work (and also a huge paycheck per episode - think six figures and more on network TV).

All the networks and cable channels have more and more need for products. Each network and many of the cable channels develop almost two dozen episodes per series. That's a lot of scripts required. Now while most are written by staff writers, it is customary for these series to freelance at least two of its episodes per year, and that is where a new writer can get his/her foot into the door. All you need is two one-hour sample teleplays that prove your writing talents.

Through simple analogy, *Television Scriptwriting: The Writer's Road Map* includes everything you need to know to write a one hour TV spec or pilot. It depicts: distinctions between television genres, the basic four act structure, TV plot gimmicks, character types and motivations, scene construction, dialogue devices, themes, prose, and rewrite checklists. It also discusses the do's and don'ts in writing sample teleplays as well as showing how to create a television series and pilot script, and/or sample scripts that the reader (and hopefully future audience) will find appealing.

Once you've completed your one hour scripts, *Television Scriptwriting: The Writer's Road Map* will give helpful hints about how to get your scripts read by agents and producers, as well as how to pitch your series idea to the appropriate people.

Regardless of what your writing goals are, *Television Scriptwriting: The Writer's Road Map*, will zoom you onto the road of TV writing in an easy manner. So stop talking about that great idea and start putting it down on paper. By the time you finish Chapter One, you'll be on your way to a thrilling new career. Being a couch potato can actually pay off - at least in the wonderful world of television.

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Elmer Pereira:**

This Gardner's Guide to *Television Scriptwriting: The Writer's Road Map* (Gardner's Guide series) book is just not ordinary book, you have after that it the world is in your hands. The benefit you have by reading this book is information inside this publication incredible fresh, you will get information which is getting deeper an individual read a lot of information you will get. This specific Gardner's Guide to *Television Scriptwriting: The Writer's Road Map* (Gardner's Guide series) without we comprehend teach the one who reading through it become critical in imagining and analyzing. Don't always be worry Gardner's Guide to *Television Scriptwriting: The Writer's Road Map* (Gardner's Guide series) can bring if you are and not make your case space or bookshelves' grow to be full because you can have it in the lovely laptop even cellphone. This Gardner's Guide to *Television Scriptwriting: The Writer's Road Map* (Gardner's Guide series) having very good arrangement in word and also layout, so you will not truly feel uninterested in reading.

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