

# STUDENT WORKSHEET 13

## WRITING FOR STAGE AND SCREEN

One of the early scenes in the stage musical, in Act 1, is when Marty meets Doc Brown in Twin Pines Mall Car Park. In this scene, he reveals the DeLorean Time Machine for the first time, and this leads to Marty travelling back in time to 1955.

In the following activities, you are going to explore how the Twin Pines Mall sequence was adapted and translated from the film version of **BACK TO THE FUTURE**, onto the stage.

### KEY VOCAB IN FOCUS - SIGHTLINES

A key consideration in theatre is sightlines. Sightlines means always taking into consideration the view of the audience, to ensure that they can see the actors, the main action and the set pieces at all times, regardless of where they are sitting in the auditorium.

### TASK 1

In the Twin Pines Mall scene from the film, Doc explains how to operate the time circuits to Marty. This dialogue takes place inside the DeLorean, with Doc sitting in the driver's seat and Marty filming.

Watch the same scene in the stage production:



### DISCUSSION:

1. Why does this scene need to be written and staged differently, compared to film?
2. Why are sightlines important to consider here?

## TASK 2

A script for a film is called a **'screenplay'**, whereas the script for the musical is known as the **'book'**. Bob Gale wrote both the screenplay and the book for the stage musical. Look carefully at the following extract from the screenplay, when Doc is showing Marty the time circuits for the first time. How do you think it differs from the book for the stage musical, in terms of content and format?



*Exterior location (outside)*      *Scene heading - describes location*      *Time of day*

EXT. TWIN PINES MALL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Brown motions Marty toward the DeLorean. ——— *Action - always written in the present tense*

BROWN ——— *Character name*

C'mon, I'll show you how it works. ——— *Dialogue*

Marty is a bit skeptical, uneasy. Brown is like a kid who wants to show off a new toy. Marty continues videotaping as Brown sits in the driver's seat, explaining.

BROWN (CONT'D)

First, you turn the time circuits on.

Brown turns a handle on the console. An array of indicator lights go on inside.

INSERT - TIME DISPLAYS ——— *An extreme close-up which can be filmed later*

Three colored time displays show the month, day, year and time.

*Action described*

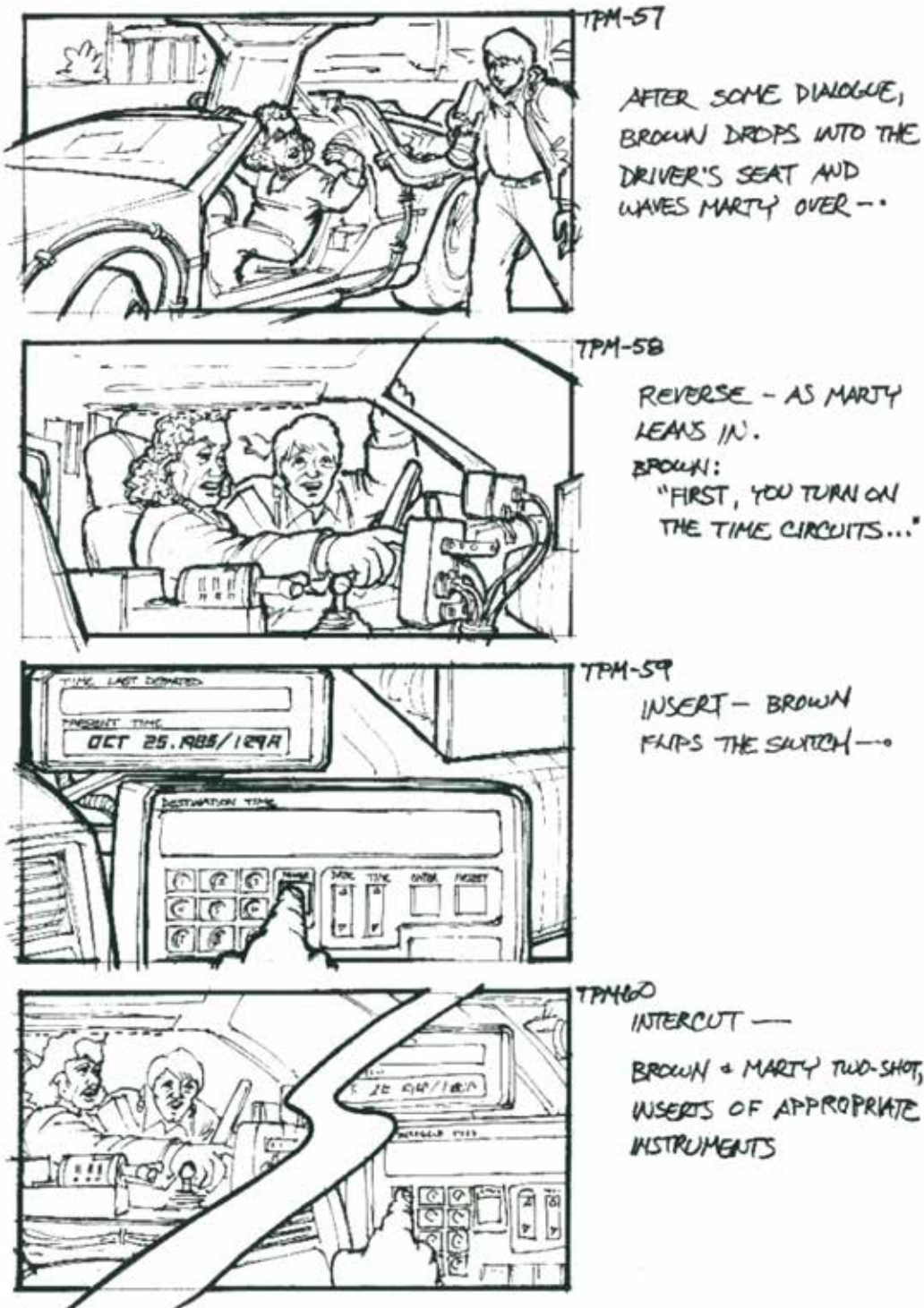


## KEY VOCAB IN FOCUS - STORYBOARDS

“Storyboards are a way to present the screenplay visually and are particularly important in complicated sequences with lots of action. They’re a way for everyone working on the movie to see what the director has in mind. They can also help in the budgeting process. Simple dialogue scenes are rarely storyboarded. Because the storyboards are drawn in advance of knowing what the location or set will look like, they may not look exactly like the finished film. That’s why one of the panels is blank with the description, ‘Camera Angles to be determined at location.’”

**BOB GALE**

Here’s one of the original storyboards from **BACK TO THE FUTURE**:





### **TASK 3: WRITE A SCREENPLAY**

1. Select a key moment from a play or novel you have studied.
2. Create a six-frame storyboard of the scene, with annotations.
3. Finally, create a one-page screenplay version of the scene. Ensure that you include all of the necessary details of a screenplay: Scene Heading, INT/EXT, Character Names, Dialogue, Action & INSERTs.
4. 'Pitch' your screenplay to your class and use your storyboard to present your ideas.
5. Work with actors to film your screenplay you have created!

