



# ELA Virtual Learning

# Creative Writing

May 7, 2020



## Creative Writing

### Lesson: Thurs., May 7

**Objective/Learning Target:** Students will practice “pitching” an idea for a television episode.



## Creative Writing

“What writer? We’re talkin’ about a sitcom.”  
-George Costanza

**Warm-up:** [Watch this clip](#) from *Seinfeld* where George and Jerry think about pitching an idea for a TV show to NBC.



## Creative Writing

**Lesson:** A *pitch* is a well-developed idea for a television show, usually delivered to the showrunner (or lead writer and producer) of an existing series. Many new series pitches today are already written before they reach an executive. (All ten scripts for *True Detective* at HBO, for example, were already written before it was pitched to them.)



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**Lesson (cont'd):** [Watch this interview](#) with Nina Tassler, an executive and CBS Entertainment, about “pitching season” and her role as an executive. In it, she discusses how different networks have different tastes. However, throughout the interview, she emphasizes *preparation* as the key to a successful pitch. Today, we’ll work to investigate further the form the preparation might take.



## Creative Writing

**Practice:** In yesterday's lesson ([see slides 7-8](#)), we mapped out an episode's act structure by breaking each part into individual scenes. Today, you'll brush with a little bit broader strokes. Using the same series, pitch an original episode for an existing series. Your pitch should consist of a logline (synopsis), major and minor conflict, and a breakdown of the major beats (or turning points).



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**Model:** *The Simpsons Pitch* (Mr. Gall's model)

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**Additional Practice:** We will continue to work on episodic television writing, and you'll have the opportunity to write a "speculative" episode of an existing TV show. In order to get the feel of that show and demonstrate your understanding of its pacing, style, and characters, practice is critical! Watch another episode of the show you've chosen, and break down each act by the number and length of its scenes. You'll start to notice that each show has its own "formula." 👍





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### **Additional Practice/Resources:**

[How to Become a Television Comedy Writer](#)

[Screenwriting Glossary](#)

[Screenplay Formatter Add-On for Google Docs](#)