

NARRATORA

SAMPLE OUTPUT

BLOG ARTICLE

What Script Coverage Actually Tells You

A long-form article generated from a coverage archive, written for filmmakers rather than for search engines.

LENGTH

~1,900 words

AUDIENCE

Writers, producers

SOURCE

Coverage archive

STATUS

Sample output

What Script Coverage Actually Tells You

Coverage has a reputation problem. Writers treat it as a verdict, producers treat it as a filter, and both are half wrong. A coverage report is neither a review nor a grade. It is a record of how one professional reader experienced a script under normal reading conditions — and read that way, it is one of the most useful documents a writer can get.

The three things coverage is genuinely good at

First, it tells you where comprehension broke. A reader who misunderstands your second act is not a careless reader; they are an early warning. If a professional who reads for a living lost the thread on page fifty-one, an audience will lose it too, and they will lose it with less patience.

Second, it tells you what the script looks like from outside your own intentions. You know what your protagonist wants. Coverage tells you whether that want is on the page, or whether it is in your head and you have been reading it into the text for months.

Third, it tells you where your script sits commercially — not whether it is good, but what shelf it belongs on. That is information you cannot generate yourself, because you are too close to it.

What coverage is bad at

- Predicting whether a film will work. Nobody can do this, and a report that claims to is overreaching.
- Judging voice. Distinctive voice reads as error to a reader who is scanning for convention.
- Assessing anything that lives in performance or in the cut rather than on the page.
- Telling you what to write. That was never the job.

How to read a coverage report without ruining your week

Separate the report into two categories on the first pass, and do not mix them. Category one: places where the reader was confused, bored, or lost. Treat these as facts. You do not get to argue with someone's experience of reading your script. Category two: the reader's suggestions for fixing those places. Treat these as opinion, because they are.

Most bad reactions to coverage come from collapsing those two categories together. A writer reads "the midpoint is unclear, consider moving the reveal earlier", disagrees with the suggestion, and therefore dismisses the observation. The observation was the valuable half.

The scorecard question

Numeric scores are the most argued-about part of any coverage report, and the least interesting. A score is a compression of a paragraph, and the paragraph is where the information is. The one thing scores are good for is relative comparison: if structure scores four and dialogue scores nine across three different readers, you now know which problem to work on first, regardless of whether you agree with either number.

What a good report looks like

- It states its verdict clearly and early, rather than hiding it in the last paragraph.

- It distinguishes what the script is trying to do from whether it succeeds.
- It cites page numbers. A note without a location is not actionable.
- It names the strongest element as specifically as the weakest one.
- It does not rewrite your film into the reader's preferred film.

The one use almost nobody makes of it

Get coverage twice. Once at the draft you think is nearly finished, and once after the revision. The second report is not for reassurance — it is for checking whether your revision solved the problem you thought it solved. Writers are extremely good at fixing a symptom and feeling like they fixed the cause. A second read is the cheapest way to find out which one you did.

In short

Coverage is not a judgement of your talent and it is not a prediction of your film's future. It is a map of where a careful reader's attention held and where it slipped. Take the map seriously and the directions with salt.

NARRATORA

Generated on Narratora

Transform your screenplay into coverage, pitch decks, and production breakdowns today at narratora.com.

Start free at narratora.com