



DEVELOPING *a* SCREENPLAY *from* *a* BOOK

While *Good Will Hunting* was developed from an original screenplay, *Sense and Sensibility* was adapted from the classic novel of the same name by Jane Austen. Adaptations are original works in themselves, but they begin with the previously published material as their source. Adapting a work can be a challenge because the writer must not only create a story that is compelling in its own right, but he or she also must remain true to the original story. *Sense and Sensibility*, which, like *Good Will Hunting*, won an Academy Award for screenwriting (1995), is a good example of a successful adaptation. It is true enough to Jane Austen's original story to please readers, but it also captures viewers who have not read the book.

Compare the scene in the film and the passage in the book where Lucy surprises Elinor with the news that she has been engaged to Edward for four years. How does the scene in the book differ from the scene in the film?



Pick another film you would like to see that was adapted from a book, play, short story or magazine article. Read the book and then watch the film. Then, answer the questions below. Use the back of this sheet if you need additional space.

Title of original material: _____

Title of film: _____

List three specific ways in which the film and the book differed.

- _____
- _____
- _____

Why do you think the screenwriter made the changes he or she did? _____

Do you think the adaptation was successful? Why or why not?
