Collaborative Writing Assignment
Inspired by Analyzing a Scene from *Raging Bull*

As you've seen from the clip of *Raging Bull*, and the role that actor, director and editor have in producing a film, not every creative project is an individual effort. For this assignment you and two to three partners will work together, taking on different jobs, with the ultimate goal of creating a piece of writing.

Your collaborative piece will be based on a myth, poem, scripture, or piece of artwork that you're already familiar with. You will all have different ideas on where to start, the important

Remember, just because this is an extended assignment doesn’t mean you shouldn’t start working on it as soon as you get your little brains going. Use your time wisely: There will be check-ins!

**Instructions**

1. **What you are creating:**
   For this collaborative project, you and your group will be adapting, or reimagining, a piece of scripture, a mythological work, a poem, or even a piece of artwork into a narrative. This does NOT need to be an entire, fleshed out story. Instead, think of the final work as a scene, like the one we watched from *Raging Bull*.

   While this means your group need not concern itself with the entire plot of your adaptation, the group will still need to carefully consider the elements that are included (characters, setting, etc.).

   Final drafts must be a minimum of **two-pages, double spaced, in 12 pt. font.**

2. **Roles:**
   While all group members will plan the plot of the scene together, one of the aspects of this assignment to keep in mind are the different jobs that you’ll spread among your group. Here are key roles to make sure you have covered as you start your creative process.

   a. **Character Sketcher:**
      Who are your characters? What are their personalities? How will they be described? This person will create rough outlines of the characters you’ll be using in your story.

   b. **Dialoguer:**
      What will the characters say? What kind of language will they use? *Should they use slang, or maybe are they overly formal?* This job will ask you to not only give the characters voice, but also decide how much of their personality comes through in their words.

   c. **Setting Expert:**
      Where is the story taking place? *Is it an urban setting? A rural one?* How does your setting help express the tone of the scene? The student in charge of setting will have to imagine where your adaptation is happening, focusing on the imagery of the piece.

   d. **Researcher:**
      What do you know about the work on which you’re basing your narrative? For what was it used? When was it written? The researcher will investigate the source of your group’s adaptation, making sure that the rest of the group is staying true to the tone and message of what you’re reimagining.
3. Process:

Day One—

_In Class:_ Once you’ve been assigned to your groups, each creative team will be responsible for deciding what work to adapt for the group’s collaborative project. Together, you will decide on three big ideas:

- **Plot**—What happens in your adaptation? What will your characters be doing? Why are they there?
- **Character**—How many characters are you going to have? Who are they?
- **Effect**—What is the tone of your selected work? How do you want the audience to feel while reading?

Once you’ve worked together to decide on these ideas, divide the above roles (#2) between group members. Remember, you won’t always agree with one another. It’s part of your job to work through these discussions amongst yourselves.

_Homework:_ Individually, each person will work on the narrative in accordance with his or her role. Brainstorm and bring back ideas for your team to discuss next class period. Try to refrain from sharing your decisions or findings until day two.

Day Two—

_In Class:_ You and your team will share ideas/findings from the previous day’s homework with the goal of assembling a rough draft of your narrative. Together, you’ll work on smoothing out the transitions and properly putting all of the parts together. This means that, for example, the character sketcher and the dialoguer will make sure characters are speaking in a fitting voice, the researcher will help add detail to the setting, etc.

_Homework:_ In a Google document, your group should start transferring the rough draft, adding on anything that you didn’t have time to do in class. **DO NOT** delete what your other teammates have written, instead assign a color to each person in order to illustrate what each teammate has added or suggested.

Day Three

_In Class:_ Groups will work on revising their now assembled draft—checking to see that the tone of the work suits the effect you planned on day one and making sure the work flows appropriately. Once those elements are in order, take time to edit the group’s piece, correcting any typos or errors in grammar, spelling, and mechanics as needed. By this point, you should be nearing a final draft.

_Homework:_ Finish the final draft at home. _Don’t forget to bring a printed copy on day four!_

Day Four—

_In Class:_ Groups will share their final drafts as a class in passing them around in a reading roulette. Groups will be asked to give other groups feedback in the form of annotations and margin suggestions.

Lastly, each group member will write an independent reflection about his or her experience. _How did the project change over the course of the three class days? Did you stick to your designated role, or did you give suggestions about things outside of your role? What kind of problems arose as you worked on the piece together? How did you compromise?_