*Here’s what we mean when we say, “look for the* *patterns in the text!”*

Patterns in the text are textual clues into character, relationship, motive, mission, arc, tone, function, and so on.

When you first consider a scene, you may think, “I could really go anywhere with this... where do I even start?” Well, the writer has given you a detailed roadmap of where he or she wants you to go. Your parameters are in the text – the rest is up to you. So... that page you’re holding? Use it! How? Here are some helpful hints that will ensure the choices you make and characters you build serve the text.

**Alliteration**

Two of the same letter in succession amount to alliteration. You might want to emphasize this (in a comedy) or just be aware of it (in a drama).

**Antitheticals**

an·ti·thet·i·cal  
Function: adjective  
1 : constituting or marked by antithesis  
2 : being in direct and unequivocal opposition synonyms see opposite  
— an·ti·thet·i·cal·ly \-ti-k(ə-)lē\ adverb

**Builds**

Build:  
Function: verb  
1 : to form by ordering and uniting materials by gradual means into a composite whole : construct  
2 : to progress toward a peak (as of intensity) <build to a climax> b  
: to develop in extent

**Discoveries**

Often, in real life, we do not know what’s coming next. We do not know what thought will spontaneously pop into our head, what light bulb  
will go off and make us say “holy cow!” or what the other person is  
going to say. A discovery is just that. A thought popping into your head. Realizing something for the first time. The light bulb finally

going off. “Ohhh. That’s what you mean.” You’ll see Sarah Jessica Parker, Matt LeBlanc and Debra Messing do it a lot.

**Imaging**

Imagine!  
“Very often, imagery experiences are understood by their subjects as echoes, copies, or reconstructions of actual perceptual experiences from their past; at other times they may seem to anticipate possible, often desired or feared, future experiences. Thus imagery has often been believed to play a very large, even pivotal, role in both memory and motivation.

**Parentheticals**

pa·ren·thet-i-cal  
Function:noun  
1 a : an amplifying or explanatory word, phrase, or sentence inserted in a passage from which it is usually set off by punctuation b : a remark or passage that departs from the theme of a discourse : digression  
2 : interlude, interval  
3 : one or both of the curved marks ( ) used in writing and printing  
to enclose a parenthetical expression or to group a symbolic unit in a logical or mathematical expression  
Reversals

**Re·ver·sal**

Function: noun  
1 : an act or the process of reversing  
2 : a conversion of a photographic positive into a negative or vice versa 3 : a change (as of fortune) often for the worse

**Rules of Three**

INT. Classroom, night.

Mel: You guys are really funny. You: I know.

Mel: You guys are really funny. You: I know

Mel: You guys are really -- You: Mel, I GET IT!

Threes are funny. Like the “ah, ah, choo!” of a sneeze. There’s something rhythmic and musical about them. What does this mean? Look for instances of threes in your text? This is when you have something happen once, the same thing happens again, and a reversal (or  
surprise) happen the third time. Make sense?

**Other Fundamentals**

Playing the Opposite. If you play the meaning of the line, you will  
be in a soap opera. Find the levels. Play against it. If you’re  
professing your love for someone, throw the line away and stare at the deck of playing cards you’re shuffling. If you’re asking for chocolate sprinkles instead of rainbow sprinkles on your ice cream, stare deeply into the person’s eyes & deliver it with much seriousness. Play the opposite.

**Call Backs.**

Referring to or reusing a joke that occurred earlier in the episode.