A *storyboard* from a script with a consistent cast

Turn a short script into six numbered storyboard panels with the same cast, props and screen direction, with the captions set in code.

PLAYBOOK

IN SHORT

- A six-panel pencil storyboard with the same cast, lantern and screen direction in every shot, captions set in code.
- Build two reference sheets and one shared prompt block first; each panel only adds its shot line.
- Nine image runs and about 3 minutes of waiting; once the sheets exist, each new panel is one run.

You need ✓ Any plan with credits ✓ A script broken into shots ✓ Python with Pillow, ImageMagick or any layout tool for the captions

SEE IT MADE

- Previs to Picture
- The Last Lantern

RUN IT IN SCENARIO

- Cinematic Grid
- Next Scene

A six-panel storyboard for a 20-second sequence of an animated feature: numbered pencil panels with the same two characters, lantern and screen direction throughout, each captioned with shot size, action and duration. For directors, storyboard artists and producers who need to agree on a sequence before production.

As of October 2026

The models, settings and screens in this article are the ones Scenario offered in October 2026. New models and updates arrive often, so check the app for newer options before you choose.



The finished board. Panels by GPT Image 2.5 Sunburst, captions set in code.

The brief

Field	Brief
Goal	A six-panel storyboard for a 20-second sequence, to agree on shots, order and timing before production
Script	1 workshop, Isa shows Master Oren her finished lantern. 2 they go down the steps to the punt. 3 Isa sets the lit lantern on the water on a cord. 4 insert, the knot slips. 5 over the shoulder, the lantern drifts toward the Great Bridge. 6 dusk, under the bridge, Isa holds it up
Format	16:9 panels, loose graphite pencil, captions outside the drawing
Fixed	The two characters, the lantern (round globe, exactly three brass bands, ring handle), the canal flowing left to right and the Great Bridge on the right in exterior shots
May vary	Pencil texture, background detail, exact poses

Field	Brief
Accept when	Every panel reads at thumbnail size; cast and lantern match the sheets; screen direction holds; each shot shows who the shot line names, and no one else; no stray text in the art

Isa, a 12-year-old glassblower's apprentice, and Master Oren live in Quillfern, an invented canal city of glass lanterns. The sheets made here can feed One scene, many angles.

Approach

1 **Shot list** — A language model drafts, you edit
2 **Cast sheet** — GPT Image 2.5 Sunburst, three views
3 **Prop sheet** — Sunburst, lantern with exactly three bands
4 **Panels** — Sunburst, both sheets, shared block
5 **Captions and board** — Python and Pillow

A storyboard fails when a character looks different from panel to panel, or when the camera crosses the line and the canal flows the other way. Both are solved before the first panel: continuity lives in two reference sheets and one shared prompt block, and each panel only adds its shot line.

- **Reference sheets first.** One cast sheet (both characters, three views, a few expressions) and one prop and location sheet, made in color because they serve every later stage. See Character reference sheet.
- **Give each reference a role.** The shared block says "Image 1 is the cast sheet" and "Image 2 is the prop and location sheet", and what to take from each (Give references a role).
- **State the continuity rule in words.** "In every exterior shot the canal flows from left to right and the Great Bridge is on the right side of the frame" (Decide what stays fixed).
- **Name only who is in the shot.** A shared block that describes both characters invites both into every panel. Panel 6 failed exactly that way.
- **Keep text out of the model.** Panel numbers, shot types and durations are set in code (Let code own what must be exact).

Models, as of October 2026:

- **Capabilities:** text to image, and image to image with two references.
- **Model used:** GPT Image 2.5 Sunburst at `high` quality for the sheets and the panels.
- **Alternative:** GPT Image 2.5 Flare. Compare both on two panels before committing to a whole board (Compare models on your brief).

Steps

1 **Break the script into shots.** One line per panel: number, shot size, angle, action with directions, duration in seconds (2 to 5). Let a language model draft the list (**Create** > **Text**, or Scenario Genie), then fix it by hand: the model proposes the cuts, you decide them.

Prompt

```
Break this script into a storyboard shot list. One line per shot: number,
shot size, camera angle, the action in one sentence, duration in seconds
(2 to 5). Keep screen direction consistent and say who is on the left and
who is on the right in every shot. Script: [paste the script]
```

2 **Make the cast sheet** (Lock a character sheet). **Create** > **Images**, **GPT Image 2.5 Sunburst**, **Dimensions** 2048x1152, **Quality** `high`, with Isa's approved portrait in **Reference Images**:

Prompt

```
Character reference sheet for an animated feature film. The reference
image is Isa: keep her face, freckles, wavy auburn hair tied back, brass
goggles on her forehead, cream shirt with rolled sleeves, soot-stained
brown leather apron, olive trousers and worn brown boots exactly as
shown. Plain warm light-grey background, no text, no labels.

Two characters, each shown full body in three views side by side: front,
three-quarter, back. Same scale, standing on one faint ground line, empty
hands.

Left group, ISA: the 12-year-old glassblower's apprentice from the
reference image.

Right group, MASTER OREN: a stout elderly glassblower, a head and a half
taller than Isa, bald with a thick white walrus mustache, round
leather-rimmed spectacles, rolled shirt sleeves showing strong forearms,
a long burn-marked dark leather apron over a faded blue shirt, grey
trousers, heavy boots.

Bottom row, small: four head close-ups of Isa (proud smile, surprised,
worried, determined) and two of Oren (warm smile, laughing).

Style: prestige painterly 3D feature animation, hand-painted textures,
expressive appealing shapes, soft volumetric light, rich color. Even soft
studio light. Clean gutters between figures.
```

3 **Make the prop and location sheet.** Same settings, with a city mood image as reference. The prompt describes the lantern part by part ("a round amber glass globe the size of a melon … held by exactly three thin brass bands that run from top to bottom, a small brass ring handle on top, a flat brass base"), then the Great Bridge ("one single wide stone arch"), Oren's workshop (round brick furnace, blue door, stone steps to the water) and the canal with a moored punt. Counting details is what keeps the lantern identical later.



Cast sheet.



Prop and location sheet.

4 **Write the shared block.** This text starts every panel prompt, unchanged:

Prompt

```
Storyboard panel for an animated feature film. Loose graphite pencil
sketch on plain white paper, quick confident lines, light grey shading
only, no color, no text, no numbers, no arrows, no panel border. Image 1
is the cast sheet: Isa, a 12-year-old girl with wavy hair tied back,
goggles on her forehead, rolled shirt sleeves, a long leather apron,
trousers and boots; Master Oren, stout and a head and a half taller,
bald, thick white walrus mustache, round spectacles, rolled sleeves, long
leather apron. Match their proportions, faces, hair and costume shapes.
Image 2 is the prop and location sheet: Isa's round glass globe lantern
with three brass bands and a ring handle on top, the single stone arch of
the Great Bridge hung with lanterns, Oren's canal-side workshop with its
round furnace and stone steps, and the canal between tall leaning houses.
In every exterior shot the canal flows from left to right and the Great
Bridge is on the right side of the frame.
```

5 **Generate each panel** (Batch from a template). **Reference Images** > **Select from Library**: the cast sheet first, then the prop sheet. **Dimensions** 1536x864. Append one shot line to the shared block, for example:

Prompt

```
Shot: 5. OVER THE SHOULDER, behind Isa standing in the punt. The lantern
floats away from her on the current, left to right, toward the Great
Bridge on the right side of the frame, getting smaller. Isa reaches one
arm out after it.
```

The six panels ran in parallel, about 45 to 55 seconds each.

6 **Inspect and retake.** Check each panel against the sheets and its shot line. Panel 6 ("Isa stands in the punt holding the lantern high") came back with Oren rowing beside her: he stayed on the steps in panels 3 to 5, and the shot line has Isa alone. The retake removed Oren and the continuity rule from the block for this panel and named the shot's limits:

Prompt

```
...Image 1 is the cast sheet: Isa, a 12-year-old girl with wavy hair tied
back, goggles on her forehead, rolled shirt sleeves, a long leather
apron, trousers and boots. Match her proportions, face, hair and costume
shapes. Image 2 is the prop and location sheet: Isa's round glass globe
lantern with three brass bands and a ring handle on top, and the single
stone arch of the Great Bridge hung with lanterns.

Shot: 6. WIDE, dusk, under the arch of the Great Bridge. Isa stands alone
in the punt holding the lantern high in both hands, its warm light
filling the underside of the arch and reflecting on the water; the
hanging lanterns of the parapet glow above. She is UNDER the only Great
Bridge in the story: no other bridge, arch or viaduct appears anywhere in
the frame, and the canal beyond the arch opens onto calm water and
rooftops only.
```

7 **Caption and assemble in code** (Typeset text, never generate it). This run used Python with Pillow: each panel scaled to 1152x648 with a dark outline, a cream strip underneath with the number in Georgia Bold (terracotta) and "shot | action | duration" in Georgia, then two columns on one board. The captions come from the same JSON file as the shot lines:

Python

```python
d.text((24, 703), str(p["n"]), font=georgia_bold_46, fill=(196, 101, 74), anchor="lm")
d.text((90, 703), f'{p["shot"]}  |  {p["action"]}  |  {p["secs"]} s',
       font=georgia_28, fill=(17, 17, 17), anchor="lm")
```

With the Scenario MCP: `model_run` on `model_openai-gpt-image-2-5-sunburst` with `referenceImages` set to the two sheet asset ids, `width: 1536`, `height: 864`, `quality: "high"`. Keep the shared block in a file and append each shot line in your script, so an agent cannot paraphrase it between panels.

Check the result

Check before you accept

Accept when

both characters keep their silhouettes (Oren's mustache and spectacles, Isa's goggles and apron); the lantern keeps its globe, bands and ring; the canal flows left to right and the Great Bridge sits on the right; each panel shows exactly who its shot line names; shot sizes differ visibly; the art contains no letters or numbers.

Reject when

a character appears where the script does not put them; a landmark is duplicated; the lantern changes shape; a character changes height or costume; the screen direction flips; the model writes captions or numbers into the drawing.



Oren is in the punt, although he stayed on the steps and the shot line has Isa alone.



Kept: the retake describes only Isa and says the bridge is the only one.

Three smaller deviations were accepted and written in the board notes:

- **More finished than "loose".** Every panel came back as a detailed pencil rendering. That reads well in a pitch; for a fast rough pass, ask for "thumbnail sketch, under 30 lines".
- **A thick rope in panel 4.** The shot line said "thin cord". The insert still reads as the knot slipping.
- **Distant bridges.** Panels 1, 2, 3 and 5 show smaller bridges far down the canal through the arch, as the location sheet does. The Great Bridge stays the largest and on the right, so they read as the city's other bridges.

Check yourself

2 questions

1 **Two takes of panel 6. The shot line: "Isa stands in the punt holding the lantern high." Oren stayed on the workshop steps in panels 3 to 5. Which take goes on the board?**



Take A



Take B

A Take A: the shared block names both characters, so Oren belongs in the shot

B Take B: only the people the shot line names, where the story left them

C Either one: a storyboard only needs to read at thumbnail size

Answer: B. A character the script did not put in the shot is a continuity break. The retake removed Oren from the block for this panel and wrote "Isa stands alone".

2 **Your pencil panels come back with the panel number and shot type written into the drawing. What is the fix?**

A Keep "no text, no numbers, no arrows" in the shared block and set every caption in code

B Add the exact caption text to each shot line so the model spells it right

C Accept the panels when the numbers are correct and legible

Answer: A. The art must contain no letters or numbers. Captions set in code are always correct and legible.

LEVEL 3 · A SYSTEM

Make it repeatable

- **Save the kit.** Put the two sheets, the shared block and the shot list in one collection. A new sequence with the same cast starts from the same kit (Organize your work).
- **Build it as a workflow** (Build your first workflow). In the **Node Editor** (**New Workflow**):
  - a **Text** node for the shot list, and **Split Text** to turn it into one line per panel;
  - a **Prompt Builder** that joins the shared block and the line;
  - an **Image Generator** on GPT Image 2.5 Sunburst with both sheets wired to **Reference Images**, inside a **Loop** over the lines;
  - an **Approval** node after the generator, so a reviewer can reject a panel before the board is assembled.
- **Keep the captions in code.** The caption script reads the same shot list, so captions always match the prompts.
- **Next stages.** The approved board feeds One scene, many angles and Long video from guided frames.

Runs and time

Step	Model	Runs	Kept	Wait
Cast sheet	GPT Image 2.5 Sunburst	1	1	about 45 s
Prop and location sheet	GPT Image 2.5 Sunburst	1	1	about 50 s
Six panels, in parallel	GPT Image 2.5 Sunburst	6	5	about 55 s
Panel 6 retake	GPT Image 2.5 Sunburst	1	1	about 45 s
Captions and board	Python and Pillow	0	n/a	seconds

Nine runs at about the same price each, so the board costs the number of panels plus two sheets and any retakes. The price shows on the **Generate** button before you run.

Variations

- **Brand and marketing:** a 30-second ad storyboard with a product sheet in place of the prop sheet; add the product's fixed details (label side, color) to the continuity rule.
- **Learning:** a training-video board where each panel is one step of a procedure, with the step text set in code under the panel.
- **Games:** a cutscene board; reuse the same shared block to generate the cinematic's key frames later.
- **Different look:** swap "graphite pencil" for "marker rough" or "gray-tone digital thumbnail" in the shared block; the sheets stay the same.

- **Animatic:** time each panel to its duration and add a scratch voice (Narration and speech).

If it breaks

- **A character appears in a shot they are not in.** Describe only the characters the shot names in that panel's block, and write "alone" when one character is alone.
- **A landmark appears twice.** Say there is only one ("the only Great Bridge in the story") and what lies beyond it.
- **Characters drift in pencil.** The color sheet carries cues a pencil panel cannot show. Repeat the shape details in words (goggles, walrus mustache, round spectacles).
- **Text or numbers appear in the drawing.** Keep "no text, no numbers, no arrows" in the shared block and set every caption in code.
- **All panels look like the same medium shot.** Name the shot size, the angle and a camera height in each line; vary them deliberately.

Related

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For Artist, Art director Page 11 of 26 in Use-case playbooks

Verified in Scenario on Oct 16, 2026.