

The **June 2025 Sundance Collab Script Club** will discuss the award-winning screenplay for *The Kids are All Right*, written by Lisa Cholodenko and Stuart Blumberg.

Directed by Lisa Cholodenko, this heartfelt comedy-drama premiered at the 2010 Sundance Film Festival, went on to win the Golden Globe for Best Motion Picture - Musical or Comedy, and was nominated for four Academy Awards, including Best Original Screenplay.

Read the [screenplay](#), watch the [film](#), and see the [trailer](#).

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## Screenplay and Film Discussion:

### Act One: Character Introductions, Catalyst, World, Problem Stated

1. Discuss character introductions:
  - What is your first impression of this family? What actions or dialogue give clues to how it operates?
  - How are Nic and Jules different, what roles do they serve as parents?
  - How are the children similar and different? What motivates Laser to want to learn more about his biological father? What does this ask say about him, his age, and identity? Why do you think Joni hesitates? What does this say about her identity and her relationship to her parents?
  - What is your impression of Paul? What is your interpretation of how each character responds to him?
2. Which point in the first act do you think is the inciting incident, the event that triggers the main story conflict and sets the characters into motion? How do the screenwriters plant seeds for future drama through each of the characters' responses to this event?
3. How would you define the world portrayed in *The Kids Are All Right*? How might the story be different if set in a different socioeconomic context?

### Act Two: Conflict, B-Story Relationships, Midpoint, Raising Stakes

1. Discuss the subtext presented at the midpoint:
  - How is the motorcycle symbolic? What does the ride represent to Joni, Paul, Nic, and Jules?
  - In the next scene, we see Jules in the garden. How do Cholodenko and Blumberg use the garden/landscaping work as both plot device and metaphor?
  - How is each character navigating rebellion and control? Why?

2. Nic and Jules begin to fully unravel in the second act. How does dialogue and action serve to showcase the dysfunction of their relationship? What are their stated goals vs. what they actually want or need; how is this expressed? What are your notes about the craftsmanship of this script and/or film as portrayed by these characters?
3. Paul could have been written as a villain or a savior but is portrayed as morally complex:
  - Do you sympathize with him in any way?
  - How much of the family's dysfunction existed before Paul's arrival?
  - What does this family's arrival represent to him? What does he (really) want from his children, what do they want from him?
  - Why did you think the screenwriters choose to have a sperm donor be the catalyst for their family crisis rather than some other external force?

### **Act Three: Climax, Descending Action, Finale**

1. This film was groundbreaking for its portrayal of an LGBTQ+ family. How does the focus on universal family dynamics serve the story and give insight into the overarching themes of this film? What do you think those themes are?
2. Compare and contrast the final two dinner scenes:
  - What are your thoughts about the dinner at Paul's house? What is the subtext beneath each character's actions?
  - What about the final dinner when Paul shows up at the family home the night before Joni goes away to college? Why was this confrontation necessary/unnecessary in driving the story forward for each character?
  - What do you think happens to Paul next, does he continue to have relationships with members of this family? Do we care as an audience?
3. What are your thoughts on the ending?
  - How does the ending balance closure with realistic complexity?
  - How do each of the characters evolve by the end of the film?
  - What did you like or dislike about the ending? If you were to rewrite the final act, what would you change?

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**Please see the #scriptclub channel on the [Sundance Collab Discord](#) for continued discussion.** This community forum is a great place to connect with fellow filmmakers.

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### **Recommended Resources for *The Kids Are All Right* :**

- [Vulture: Director Lisa Cholodenko on The Kids Are All Right](#)
- [Film Independent: Lisa Cholodenko Discusses \*The Kids Are All Right\*](#)
- [American Film Institute: Annette Bening Talks to Lisa Cholodenko](#)
- [Save the Cat: The Kids Are All Right Beat Sheet](#)
- [Variety: 'The Kids Are All Right' Turns 10: The Untold History of the Queer Family Classic](#)

## Related Sundance Collab Resources and Courses:

- [Screenwriting Course: Core Elements](#)
  - [Screenwriting Course: From Outline to First Draft of Your Screenplay](#)
  - [Crafting Your Short Screenplay](#)
  - [Directing: Core Elements](#)
  - [Master Class: Finding Your Screenplay's Story with David Schwab, Mira Nair, Tamara Jenkins and Destin Daniel Cretton](#)
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## Sundance Collab Summer 2025 Community Challenge

**Create a mood board for a story that is inspired by the works of celebrated filmmaker David Lynch.** Your story can be for a feature film, short film, or television series.

The mood board should be a single image that showcases visceral, visual storytelling. Steps:

1. Create a mood board (in Canva, Google Slides, PowerPoint, Keynote, or another image-maker/slide-designer of your choice);
2. Download or screenshot the mood board as one image in the formats of PNG or JPG;
3. Post the image to the #challenges channel on the [Sundance Collab Community Discord](#) with a title and a single sentence story description (or logline).

Limit three (3) entries per person. Community feedback and improvement are encouraged; entries can be edited before the September 22, 2025 deadline. All entries must comply with our Community Guidelines.

Two prizes will be given: (1) Best mood board as selected by Sundance Collab community leaders and staff; and (2) best feedback given to the person who meaningfully contributes to the improvement of others' work through constructive comments on Discord.

See these resources to help you create your Lynchian-inspired mood board:

- [What Does Lynchian Mean — David Lynch's Cinematic Style](#)
- [The Artists That Inspire David Lynch's Unique Visual Style](#)
- [How to Make a Film Mood Board — Setting, Colors & Characters](#)
- [The Definitive Guide to Creating a Film and TV Mood Board](#)
- [David Lynch Filmography IMDb](#)