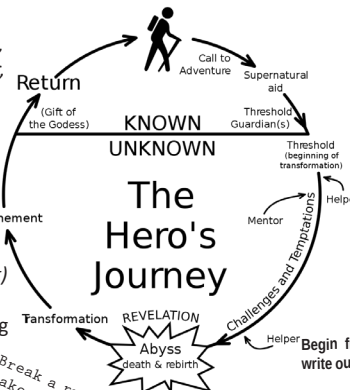


The Hero's Journey (Campbell)

Miraculous birth
Hero's ordinary home-
town (peaceful, waste-
land, or suburbia)
Dissatisfied ("I want")
Call to adventure
Refusal of call (or jumps)
Supernatural aid
(from mentor)
Crossing first threshold (or
down the rabbit hole)
Symbolic death
(Belly of the Whale)
Road of Trials: (shapeshift-

er, goddess, temptress,
atone ment with father,
leave-your-quest test)
Night sea voyage
A breather before...
Apotheosis
Fight against Big Bad
Ultimate Boon
Refusal of Return
The Return (Magic Flight)
Rescue from without
Return threshold crossing
Master of two worlds
Freedom to live



Big picture

Theme: implied statement about the human condition; moral
Structure: story architecture, e.g. three act, snowflake, branching
Motif: a recurring or dominant element or idea
Story Goals: inspire, inform, give insight

Polti's Thirty-Six Dramatic Situations [+ Schmidt]

- 1. Supplication [Benefaction]
- 2. Deliverance [Sojourn]
- 3. Vengeance for a crime [Rehabilitation]
- 4. Vengeance: kin upon kin
- 6. Disaster [Miracle]
- 7. Falls prey cruelty or misfortune [Becoming fortunate]
- 8. Revolt [Support]
- 9. Daring enterprise [Healing journey]
- 10. Abduction [Reunion]
- 11. The enigma [Invention]
- 12. Obtaining [Letting go]
- 13. Enmity of kin [Hero to kin]
- 14. Competition [Concession]
- 15. Murderous adultery
- 16. Madness [Genius]
- 17. Fatal imprudence
- 18. Involuntary crimes of love [Sacrifice for Love]
- 19. Slaying of kin unrecognized [Conviction]
- 20. Self-sacrifice for an ideal, for kin, 22. for passion
- 23. Sacrificing loved ones
- 24. Rivalry of superior vs inferior
- 25. Adultery Kill a character
- 26. Crimes of love
- 27. Dishonour of a loved one
- 28. Obstacles to love
- 29. An enemy loved In late, out early
- 30. Ambition
- 31. Conflict with a god
- 32. Mistaken jealousy
- 33. Erroneous judgement
- 34. Remorse [Empathy]
- 35. Recovery of a lost one
- 36. Loss of loved ones [Rescue of a loved one]
- [37.] Odd couple [Fish out of water]

Eleven Master Structures (Schmidt)

- Three Act
- 1. Roller coaster
- 2. Replay
- 3. Fate
- 4. Parallel
- 5. Episodic
- 6. Melodrama
- Structured content
- 7. Romance
- 8. Journey
- 9. Interactive fiction
- 10. Metafiction
- 11. Slice of life

Scene and Basic Sequence

- Sequel (Swain)
- Scene: 1. Goal
- 2. Conflict
- 3. Disaster
- 4. Reaction
- 5. Dilemma
- 6. Decision
- Rising Action
- Climax
- Falling Action
- Denouement

Styles (Duotrope)

Absurdist, Dark, Experimental, Humorous, Literary, Mainstream, Minimalist, Pulp, Quirky, Realist, Satirical, Surrealist

Work Backwards

... MC's situation inspires
→ Goal that creates
→ Problem, causes
→ Event, causes
→ Dialog, triggers
→ Search finds
→ Physical clue
→ Place, where
→ Final Reve
A pain, shock, surprise or
delight for the MC.

The Seven-Point Structure

- 0. Cold open, prologue
- 1. Hook (story's promise)
- 2. Plot Turn 1 (call to action)
- 3. Pinch 1 (what goes wrong? an attack; peace fails; new villain; forced to action)
- 4. Midpoint (move from reaction to action)
- 5. Pinch 2 (jaws of defeat; loss of mentor, everything)
- 6. Plot Turn 2 (snatch victory from jaws of defeat)
- 7. Resolution (start here)

Mythic or Fairy Tale Romance

Kidnapping (Persephone)
Taming of the savage male (Beauty and the Beast)
Transformation (Pygmalion)
Rags to Riches (Cinderella)
Awakening, emotional rebirth (Sleeping Beauty)

12 Steps to Intimacy

- 01. Eye to body
- 02. Eye to eye
- 03. Voice to voice
- 04. Hand to hand
- 05. Arm to shoulder
- 06. Arm to waist
- 07. Mouth to mouth
- 08. Hand to head
- 09. Hand to body
- 10. Mouth to breast
- 11. Hand to genitals

Eight Sequence Structure

Character flaw triggers
→ Conflict, triggers
→ Problem, triggers
→ Strategy
→ Emotional event
→ Major action
→ Misstep
→ Battle
→ Final challenge

Making Dialog Less Flat

Use questions; Add speakers;
Swap lines; Joke, flirt, lie, compli-
ment, threaten, confess, suspect

Propps Folktale Functions

- 0 Initial Situation
- 1 The Absentations
- 2 The Interdiction
- 3 Violation
- 4 Reconnaissance
- 5 Delivery
- 6 Trickery
- 7 Complicity
- 8 Villainy
- 9 Meditation
- 10 Beginning counteraction
- 11 Departure
- 12 First function of donor
- 13 Protagonist reaction
- 14 Acquisition of Magical Agent
- 15 Transference
- 16 Struggle
- 17 Branding
- 18 Victory
- 19 Liquidation
- 20 The Return
- 21 Pursuit
- 22 Rescue
- 23 Unrecognised
- 24 Unfounded Claims
- 25 Difficult Task
- 26 Solution
- 27 Recognition
- 28 Exposure
- 29 Transfiguration
- 30 Punishment
- 31 The Wedding

Relationship types (Pinker)

- Dominance (boss, authority)
- Communality (kin, spouse, friends)
- Reciprocity (business)
- Suppense (breathing)
- Reflection (why tell the story?)

Increasing Suspense & Tension

Stakes at the beginning
- high stakes (foresight)
- motivated villain
- show the danger is real
Sympathetic hero
- haunted by past failure
- confronts fears/phobias
From within hero's skin
- moment-by-moment
- recurring thoughts
- weave in atmosphere
- world briefly slow-mo
- use silence

Complicate matters

- apply pressure
- time constraints
- never make it easy
- drama before the crisis
- misdirection, red herrings
- dilemmas (lose-lose)
- circumstances beyond control
- unpredictable (roll the dice)
- reversals of fortune
- cliffhanger - final twist

Pacing & Nonlinear Devices

Deadline (time bomb);
In media res (cold start);
Backstory (eg flashbacks);
To-do list; Travel log;
Objective (main, secondary);
Montage; Walk-and-talk;
Flash forward; Periodically
return to an event (drag, masquerade, twins)

Still too slow?

Cut to action/interest
Have business during exposition
Switch viewpoint (to character in pain)
Introduce a new conflict, goal, thought
process, focus, romance, punchline,
mystery, setting, side-character,
sub-plot, parallel plot, suspense,
the narrator, dramatic irony, strange
bedfellows
Postpone exposition

Main Character:

who the story is about
Viewpoint Character:
who we empathize with
Protagonist: has an arc
Hero: moves story
Narrator: tells story

Art of Story Telling (Ira Glass)

Anecdote (this led to this)
Suspense (breathing)
Reflection (why tell the story?)
Show, don't tell.

Lovers Kept Apart by Baggage, by Internal Forces, or by Similarities

Inability to trust (the opposite sex)
Fear of commitment
Emotional detachment
Emotional scars (abuse, incident)
Blames lover for hurt
A secret that threatens love
Must first solve problem (find self)
Lied about something important
Can't forgive flaw
Lovers in a battle of wills
Only one lover can reach shared goal
Fear of abandonment
Sense of unworthiness
Lover feels doesn't belong, fit
Lovers engage in battle of wills

Classic Romantic Plots

"Love conquers all"
Lovers' differences keep them apart (social, religious, ethnic, opinions, loyalties, business competition, personalities, age)
Unrequited love
Enforced intimacy (hero protector; marriage of convenience; or arranged or forced or pretend; matchmaker setup; stranded; shared office/home)
Baby, pregnancy, adoption
Platonic friends fall in love
The healing/redemptive power of love
Mistaken/hidden identity
I am always doing that which I cannot do to do it." Pablo Picasso
in order to learn how to do it."

Three Act Structure

Act I: setting, conflict, characters, hook, promise, inciting incident, question posed, idea, major themes
End of Act I: cross threshold; have won (or lost) a battle, now fighting a war
Act II: confrontation; journey; conflict; explore and develop questions and theme; try obvious idea first; add subplots, supporting characters
Mid Act II: hopelessness; turning point; refocusing; from hunted to hunter
End of Act II: sees path to resolution
Act III: dramatic resolution; question answered; problem solved; dual; win!

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by @peter_halasz

PLOT

"We know we have reached the end of a story when we know how to feel about the events that make it up." Kieran EGan

Try writing with your eyes shut

Be a winner: write 2000 words each day

Secrets add subtext and reveal character imperfection

"Never blow the world up in the beginning of the scene or you'll have nowhere to go."

Ending a scene cliffhanger; decision; question; ah-hah moment; surprise, loaded look; transition (to next scene)

Conflict: Hero versus... 1. nature, a situation, or hostile environment 2. self, 3. other, 4. god 5. tech (machines) 6. others in conflict

20 Master Plots

- 01. Quest
- 02. Adventure
- 03. Pursuit
- 04. Rescue
- 05. Escape
- 06. Revenge
- 07. The Riddle
- 08. Rivalry
- 09. Underdog
- 10. Temptation
- 11. Metamorphosis
- 12. Transformation
- 13. Maturation
- 14. Love
- 15. Forbidden love
- 16. Sacrifice
- 17. Discovery
- 18. Wretched existence
- 19. Ascension
- 20. Descension

"The main character doesn't always have to change — as long as he changes the world around him." Pilar Alessandra

Play with scene order
"Every character should want something, even if it is only a glass of water." Kurt Vonnegut
Turn the environment into a character

Play with scene order

New friends bond over a common enemy
"What counts is not what is said, but the effect of what is meant" Sol Stein

Kick down a door

Awakening, emotional rebirth (Sleeping Beauty)

"Don't tell me that the moon is shining; show me the glint of light on broken glass." Anton Chekov

Relationship types (Pinker)

Have the protagonist want one thing but do another

Start a fight

Kick down a door

Fulfill the promise in an unexpected way.

Show, don't tell.

Sources: Inkalicious, Suite101, Writing Challenges Podcast, On The Page podcast, epiguide, Writing Excuses, Triumphal Writing, Writershelper, FilmScript-Writing, Ronald Tobias, Richard Harlan, Alan Fiske, Don Wells, Gail Goymer Martin, Writer's Guide To Character Traits (2nd Ed), Wikipedia, TV Tropes

Write without distractions

Write now, edit later

Write whichever scene interests you right now

Character Basics: Full Name, meaning, reason; Nicknames, who gave it, why? Birthdate, place of birth, origin, gender; Story goal; Ethnic group, background, class; Religion, degree of practice, philosophy, world view, catch-phrase, opinions, beliefs, attitude, dreams, fears, obsessions, belief in superstitions/fate/destiny; Politics, prejudices; Physical description (more below): distinctive feature; Career, job, profession, living, role, incoming level, socioeconomic status (now and growing up), education level, IQ; Hobbies, secret passions; Family (immediate, step, extended), friends, confidants, partner, love interest; Style of clothing, accessories; Home (more below); Pets or familiars; Strengths, talents, weaknesses; Favourite (and least fav): color, music [consider year of birth], hangouts, food, drink, literature, tv show; Annoyed by; Does for fun, when sad, under pressure

Physical appearance: Distinguishing or predominant feature(s), marks, scars, tattoos; Apparent age; Build, body shape, weight, height; General health, fitness; Chronic or current conditions, physical disorders; Eye color, glasses or contacts; Skin tone, skin type; Face shape; Dress (expensive, average, inexpensive, conservative, trendy and daring, casual, whatever's comfortable, shabby—why?): describe it; shoes; Dresses to be noticed? Jewelry, other accessories; Grooming (neat, average, clean but sloppy, unkempt); Hairstyle (long, short, crewcut, dreds, bangs, side-part, pony-tail, comb-over, etc), hair color (natural, current), hair texture (smooth, straight, wavy, curly, frizzy, poofy, coarse, balding, bald)

Home: Description, address, rent or own? Lives with who? Area (city, town, rural, other); Home decor (expensive, inexpensive, carefully planned, comfortable, neat, cluttered), appearance of rooms (bedroom, lounge, kitchen etc); Neighbourhood, neighbours

The Past: Childhood, schooling, grades; Significant trauma, emotional upheaval, events; Accident, abuse, illness, divorce, death of a friend—still affected?

First romantic love, first sexual experience; Changes to other characteristics listed; First memory, past jobs, past failure, police record (arrests, convictions, sentences served)

Partner/Spouse/Lover/Wife/Husband/S.O.: Name, pet name, time married, how met; Children (number, names, ages)? How do they act around lover? Everything else.

Speech, language, and communication
Pace (talks fast, average, slow), pitch (high, deep); Manner of speaking, voice, speech patterns, verbal ticks; Accent or dialect; Idioms, typical words, pet phrases, curse words, language/syntax choices, dialogue example; Tone (attitude to others); Laconic or lengthy; Mannerisms/demeanor (cool/confident, volatile/moody, nervous/fidgety/shy) Posture (stiff, rigid; slumped, defeated; slouchy, careless; relaxed) Gestures (infrequently; frequently; controlled; when excited/upset; wildly/weirdly); Body language

Soul searching: Dreams about; What's in their heart and mind? Greatest strength; Good characteristics; Would like to change about self; Short/long term goals; Plans; Works to gain or keep or protect; Proudest achievement; Greatest flaw; What do others like/dislike about MC? Reoccurring problems (romance, jealousy, financial...); Biggest mistake, biggest regret, feels guilty about, darkest secret—anyone else know? Influences, admires (secretly?), obsessions; Feelings about sex, intimacy, relationships, friends, love interest, children, family members, those more/less successful, boss, underlings, competitors, authority; Misunderstands what/who? Who misunderstands them? Self-description (paragraph)

Things: Most treasured possession—why? Work tools; Weapons; What do they carry on their person; Vehicles: bike, horse, truck, canoe, spaceship, battered pickup...; (Make, model, color, age...), Own/borrow/rent? What kind of journeys does he or she make? Does partner drive, or own a vehicle?

Personal Habits Early or late riser? Reads during breakfast? Feeds kids? How travels to

work, work day length, works hard or not; Work friends, rivals, enemies; Ideal and typical evening; Passes time how; Sleep habits; Diet, favourite foods, who cooks? eats out? fav restaurants; Unique and age-old routines, Finances (prudent, cautious, struggles, deligates, deep in debt) Public and private life; Addictions: smoking, drinking, exercise, gambling, food, sex/sexual, work, drugs (illegal, prescription, OTC, ethnopharma)

Personality and values: Personality type; Psychological issues, disorders; Fears (who, what, events); Optimist/pessimist; Value/priority (self, close family, extended family, lover, friends, community, country, work, money, success, natural environment, religion, humanity...) Vulnerability/soft spot, is it visible to others; Willing to die for who/what; Compassionate or self-involved

Expanding & adding detail: How long has this been so? Notable features/characteristics of...? How MC feels about...? Is it ideal? Would prefer what? Favourite/least fav part of ...? Impression when others see/learn of...? Repeat for other characters

Personality types (Myers-Briggs)

- ESTJ administrator director supervisor overseer (enforce)
- ENTJ executive pioneer fieldmarshal supporter (mobilize)
- ESFJ bonvivant enthusiast provider caregiver (supply)
- ENFJ mentor actor teacher giver (educate)
- ESTP legionnaire conqueror promoter doer (persuade)
- ESFP ambassador performer entertainer (demonstrate)
- ENTP seeker inventor explorer lawyer originator (devise)
- ENFP advocate psychologist reporter champion (inspire)
- ISTJ inspector pragmatist inspector examiner (certify)
- INTJ analyst mastermind strategist (entail upon)
- ISFJ conservator defender nurturer (secure)
- INFJ humanist empath counselor confidant (guide)
- ISTP artisan crafter mechanic (instrument)
- ISFP mediator peacemaker composer artist (synthesize)
- INTP critic observer architect engineer (design)
- INFP lyricist romantic healer dreamer idealist (conciliate)

Eight Male Archetypes: Beyond Alpha for Romance

- The Chief - Alpha male: tough, decisive, and goal-oriented
- The Bad Boy - Dangerous, fascinating, charismatic, street smart, hates rules
- The Best Friend - Beta hero: kind, decent, and responsible
- The Charmer - Smooth operator: Fun, irresistible, often unreliable
- The Lost Soul - Theta hero: Tortured, secretive; Vulnerable heart, discerning eyes
- The Professor - Logical, introverted, inflexible, genuine in feelings, faithful, honest
- The Swashbuckler - Action and adventure is his motto; physical, daring, mercurial
- The Warrior - Delta hero: Reluctant rescuer; dark, dangerous, driven, remote

Eight Female Archetypes: Beyond Cinderella for Romance (Tami Cowden, et al)

- The Boss - "Take Charge": outspoken and persuasive, confident and competitive
- The Seductress - "I Will Survive": mysterious and manipulative, distrusting, cynical
- The Spunky Kid - Spirited, loyal, reliable and supportive, a tomboy
- The Free Spirit - Genuine and fun-loving, impulsive, an original
- The Waif - "damsel in distress": Child-like innocence, naive and docile; endures
- The Librarian - Conscientious, orderly, bright; leads with her brain, not her looks
- The Crusader - Woman on a mission: tenacious, headstrong, courageous
- The Nurturer - Altruistic, calm, optimistic, a listener, pleasant, takes care of all

Big Five

- extroversion
- openness
- agreeableness
- conscientiousness
- neuroticism

Myers-Briggs

- = Extroversion v Introversion
- = iNtuative v Sensing
- = Feeling v Thinking
- = Judging v Perceiving
- = n/a

Great Character

a goal; an opposition; motivation; backstory; an attitude; a POV; revealing action; growing room; plausibility; details; research; strong supporting characters

16 Personality Factors

- A. Warmth
- B. Reasoning (IQ)
- C. Emotional Stability
- E. Dominance
- F. Liveliness
- G. Rule-Consciousness
- H. Social Boldness (extroversion)
- I. Sensitivity
- L. Vigilance
- M. Abstractedness
- N. Privatness
- O. Apprehension (neuroticism)
- Q1. Openness to change (neophilia)
- Q2. Self-Reliance
- Q3. Perfectionism
- Q4. Tension (stress)

Character is revealed by action

Six Virtues, with traits (Edelstein)
Wisdom, Knowledge
(creativity, curiosity, open mindedness, love of learning, perspective)
Courage
(bravery, persistence, integrity, vitality)
Humanity
(love, kindness, social intelligence)
Justice
(citizenship, fairness, leadership)
Transcendence
(forgiveness, humility, prudence, self-regulation)
Temperance
(appreciation of beauty and excellence, gratitude, hope, humor, spirituality)

Adult Personalities (Edelstein)

- Adventurer (excitement, boldness)
- Boss (limelight, control)
- Conformist (discipline, morality)
- Conventional (fear of change)
- Creator (impractical, internal)
- Dependent (submissive)
- Eccentric (different drum)
- Extrovert (friendly, superficial)
- Fall guy/girl (trusting)
- Fearful (withdrawn)
- Flamboyant (intense feelings)
- Hyper (excited, moody)
- Loner (directionless)
- Man's Man (masculinity)
- Manipulator (controlling)
- Passive-aggressive (sulky)
- Perfectionist (self-criticism)
- Personable (unruffled, calm)
- Problem Solver (resourceful)
- Resilient (happy, goals, friends)
- Show-off (expressive)
- Ultra-feminine (flirts)
- Victim type (proud of sacrifice)

Lit. Theory Archetypal Classes:

- Protagonist, Antagonist, Reason, Emotion, Sidekick, Skeptic, Guardian, Contagonist

Common phobias

- snakes
- spiders
- lice
- insects
- dogs
- heights
- agoraphobia,
- no-escape
- claustrophobia
- lightning & thunder
- injections
- social judgement
- flying
- germs & dirt
- dating
- authority
- public speaking
- performance (stage fright)
- exams
- public toilets
- vomit, vomiting
- the dead
- food (garcia effect)
- superstition

Personality Disorders

- Antisocial
- Avoidant
- Borderline
- Dependent
- Histrionic
- Narcissistic
- Obsessive—compulsive (OCPD)
- Paranoid
- Passive—aggressive
- Schizoid
- Schizotypal

Anxiety disorders

- Generalized anxiety
- Panic
- Agoraphobia
- Phobias
- Obsessive—compulsive (OCD)
- Post-traumatic stress
- Separation anxiety
- Childhood anxiety

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