

# Building a Story: The Basics

## Film Treatment

### Overview

This instructional video will be about starting the process of writing a story—novel or short form. It will address three major elements to writing a story: plot structure, character development, and worldbuilding.

I will explain general elements to a plot structure, like the exposition, inciting action, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution. I'll also introduce some general plot architectures that manipulate these elements in different ways—like Freytag's Pyramid and the Three-Act structure. I'll use *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* (with the disclaimer that I vehemently disagree with J.K. Rowling's current viewpoints) as a well-known example and walk the learner through the plot elements in this book.

Next, I'll explain some great ways to create characters, reiterating that the most important aspects are a character's goals, obstacles, and conflicts. The main character (and every relevant character, really) *must* want something. If it is the main character, they must want something, but we also must see what obstacles are in their way and what stakes they face if they don't achieve their goal—or even what stakes they face if they *do* achieve their goal. I will also discuss developing conflict in antagonists and developing backstories, personalities, physical mannerisms, etc.

Lastly, I'll ask some specific questions about worldbuilding that will encourage viewers to examine the details of their existing or future worldbuilding projects.

### Target Audience

My target audience will be any people who are interested in writing a story, especially fantasy and science fiction (I've found most people often have some idea or another), but who aren't sure where to start or how to apply their ideas.

### Objectives

After watching this video, I want the learner to be able to:

- Recognize the important features (e.g., inciting event, midpoint, climax) within plot structures.
- Apply story plot structures to common media/books.
- Describe literary elements that can make characters more dynamic.
- Organize their worldbuilding ideas into more concrete, detailed categories.

## **Strategies**

I want this video to be fun. One strategy I'll embark on is to talk directly to the learner, like a teacher giving a lesson. I'll be breaking the fourth wall here. But I don't want to just be a talking head—I plan on including additional footage of a library, close-ups of me drawing concepts out on a whiteboard, stock footage, and both graphics and simple animations.

## **Solution**

This won't necessarily be a "solution" to any story-writing woes, since I constantly struggle with those myself even after receiving a minor in literature/writing, but I want it to break through the initial barrier. An empty page can be the hardest thing to conquer, and this will hopefully give learners some ideas and structure on how to proceed to bring their ideas to life.