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Pillars of Story Structure

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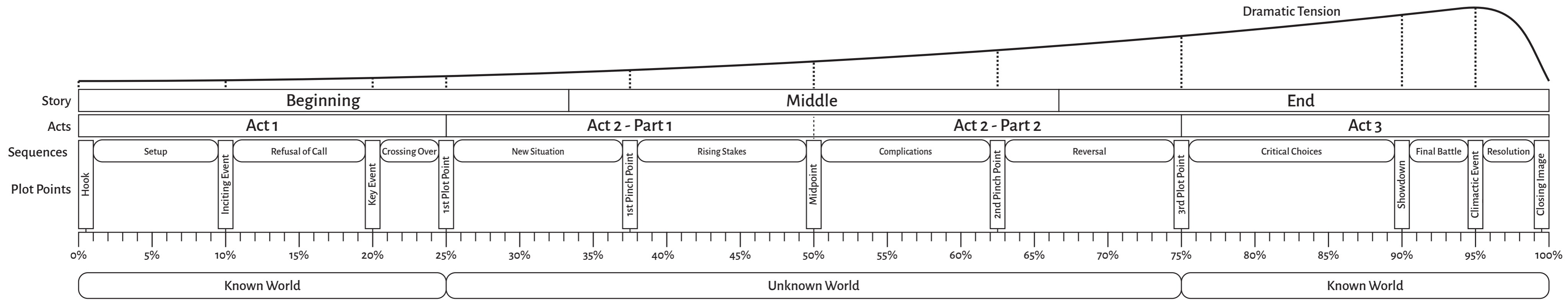
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Pillars of Story Structure

Narrative Arc, Plot Structure & Character Journey Archetypes



Character Journey Archetypes

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
The protagonist lives their "ordinary" life (whatever "ordinary" is for that character), largely unaware of their own weaknesses and flaws. The audience begins to see elements of the protagonist's back story, weaknesses, flaws, fears, inner demons, and aspects that hold the character back. The audience also begins to see the desires, wants, and needs of the protagonist. When something forces the protagonist out of their ordinary life, this stage has set up the evolution the protagonist must go through in the following stages of the character arc.	After the protagonist is forced to leave their familiar life behind, they face a new and unknown world with a dramatically new or changed set of problems, challenges, obstacles, and needs (often created by an antagonist) that require a response. Mistakes, flaws, fears, and weaknesses hamper the protagonist's ability to respond effectively. Often, the protagonist fails to fully comprehend the nature of antagonistic forces they face, which also hampers their response. As a series of obstacles are thrown at the protagonist, they begin to learn more about both themselves and the antagonistic forces.	The protagonist begins to understand the nature of the antagonistic forces and starts to respond proactively rather than reactively to the antagonist's moves. This begins to shift the balance of power away from the antagonist and gives the protagonist a fighting chance (although the protagonist's victory is not yet certain). The protagonist (and the audience) also comes to recognize and understand the flaws, weaknesses, and fears that have hindered the protagonist not just in fighting the antagonist, but in the protagonist's "ordinary" life. The protagonist's strengths also begin to emerge at this stage.	The protagonist makes a critical, often difficult, choice in the fight against the antagonist. The choice the protagonist makes determines whether the flaws, weaknesses, and fears that hindered them have been conquered and the protagonist can handle whatever the antagonist throws at them in the final showdown. If the protagonist has evolved enough, they will prevail at the climax and emerge as a better person (a "happy ending" story). The protagonist has failed to evolve enough, they will emerge from the climax as a more damaged person (a "tragic ending" story). Even if they have prevailed over the antagonist, it is a hollow victory.

Story Circle (based on Dan Harmon)	Character	Needs/Wants	Go	Search	Find	Take	Return	Change
	The protagonist is in a zone of comfort...	...but they want something.	They enter an unfamiliar situation...	...and adapt to it.	They get what they want...	...but there is a heavy price to pay.	They return to their familiar situation...	...having changed.

Hero's Journey (based on Joseph Campbell)	Call to Adventure	Refusal of Call	Supernatural Aid	Crossing the Threshold	Belly of the Whale	Road of Trials	Meeting with Goddess	Woman as Temptress	Atonement with the Father	Apotheosis	The Ultimate Boon	Refusal of the Return	The Magic Flight	Rescue from Without	Crossing Return Threshold	Master of Both Worlds	Freedom to Live

Heroine's Journey (based on Maureen Murdock)	Separation from the Feminine	Identification with the Masculine	Gathering of Allies	Road of Trials	Illusory Boon of Success	Awakening to Feelings of Spiritual Aridity & Death	Initiation & Descent to the Goddess	Yearning to Reconnect with the Feminine	Healing the Mother/Daughter Split	Healing the Wounded Masculine	Integration of Masculine & Feminine

Outer Journey (based on Chris Vogler)	Ordinary World	Call to Adventure	Refusal of Call	Meeting the Mentor	Allies	Crossing the First Threshold	Road of Trials	Approach to Innermost Cave	The Ordeal	Reward	The Road Back	Resurrection	Return with the Elixir

Inner Journey (based on Chris Vogler)	Limited Awareness of Problem	Increased Awareness	Fear & Resistance	Overcoming Fear	New Relationships	Commit to Change	Experimenting with New Conditions	Preparing for Major Changes	Big Change with Feeling of Life or Death	Accept Consequences of New Life	New Challenges & Rededication	Final Acceptance & Last Minute Danger	Mastery of New Life

Feminine Journey (based on Victoria Schmidt)	Illusion of the Perfect World	Betrayal & Disillusionment	The Awakening - Preparing for the Journey	The Descent - Passing the Gates of Judgment	The Eye of the Storm	Death - All is Lost	Support	Rebirth - The Moment of Truth	Full Circle - Return to the Perfect World

Masculine Journey (based on Victoria Schmidt)	The Perfect World	Friends & Enemies	The Call	Small Success	Invitations	Trials	Death - A Fork in the Road	Awaken or Rebel	Victory or Failure

Story Beats (based on Blake Snyder's Save the Cat model)	Setup	Debate	Fun & Games	Bad Guys Close In	Dark Night of the Soul	Finale - Confrontation & Aftermath
	Opening Image, Theme Stated, Catalyst		Break Into Act 2, Subplot/B Story	Midpoint	All is Lost/Low Point, Break Into Act 3	Final Image

Page Count	0-5%	6-12%	13-18%	19-24%	25-30%	31-36%	37-42%	43-48%	49-54%	55-60%	61-66%	67-72%	73-78%	79-84%	85-90%	91-96%	97-102%	103-108%	109-114%	115-120%
Book ~120 pg. or Film ~2 hr.	~0-6	~6-12	~12-18	~18-24	~24-30	3~0-36	~36-42	~42-48	~48-54	~54-60	~60-66	~66-72	~72-78	~78-84	~84-90	~90-96	~96-102	~102-108	~108-114	~114-120
Book ~400 pg.	~0-20	~20-40	~40-60	~60-80	~80-100	~100-120	~120-140	~140-160	~160-180	~180-200	~200-220	~220-240	~240-260	~260-280	~280-300	~300-320	~320-340	~340-360	~360-380	~380-400
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