

Creative Writing



Welcome

Creative Writing



WEEK ONE **Introduction to Creative Writing**

with Joe Murray & Steve Crone



WEEK

ONE: Introduction: Writing Poetry

TWO: Writing Poetry

THREE: Nature Walk

FOUR: Writing Short Fiction

FIVE: Writing Short Fiction

SIX: Writing for Theatre

SEVEN: Writing for Theatre

EIGHT: Editing a Play

NINE: Finalising the Script

TEN: Tutorial



Cluster, Memory, Map and Freewrite Exercise

1 CLUSTER

Meaningful words on a subject close to your heart:
family, art, music, literature, poetry work

2 MEMORY MAP

Mention:

- one sound
- one smell
- one taste
- one meaningful experience

3 FREEWRITE

When I think of..... I think of.....

Cluster	SUBJECT Poetry	
<p>Beauty Social art Rhyme Confidence</p> <p>Sensual Nature Jan Typing</p> <p>life Change place quiet excite</p>		
Memory Map	<p>1980 mention one noise one smell one taste one touching experience</p> <p>1987 Bangor clatter splash</p> <p>1985 North Sea TIGER</p> <p>1992 Albert knowledge</p> <p>1987</p> <p>Silly sea weans</p> <p>Flowers program</p> <p>me</p>	
Freewrite, when I think of	SUBJECT Poetry	I think of
<p>How poetry helped me find my creativity again. I began writing some seriously in 1980-81, mainly trying to write short stories. I was not very good but I enjoyed it so much. It allowed me to get lost in my imagination and to write stories create stories and events that pleased me. I went to Stephen Mulhane's writing group at Glasgow uni in 1984 where I met many excellent people. I knew I wasn't very good, but as good as I am anyway, but I</p> <p>Joe Mulhane</p>		
NAME	(Please turn over to continue)	



EXERCISE: Acrostic Poem (nicked from internet :-D)

SUMMER

Sunshine warming my toes,
Underwater fun with my friends.
Making home-made ice cream on the porch,
Many long nights catching fireflies.
Early morning walks to the creek,
Revelling in the freedom of lazy days.

A FRIEND

F is for the fun we had together
R is for the relaxing time we shared together
I is for the interesting moments we had
E is for the entertaining time we spent
N is for the never-ending friendship that we'll have
D is for the days we'll never forget



EXERCISE

1 do an Acrostic on the board.

2 write a poem (subject each student takes a line)



HOMEWORK

Write a poem in any style or on on any subject. Maximum 20 lines

**Email them to:
drjoemurray@gmail.com**

by teatime next Wednesday

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WEEK TWO
Writing Poetry



WRITING POETRY

PROSODY (scansion)

RHYTHM

RHYME (or not)

FORM/STRUCTURE (Stanzas)

TYPES



THE STRUCTURE OF A POEM

FORM

Form, in poetry, is the physical structure of the poem: the length of the lines, their rhyming schemes and repetition where these features have been shaped into a pattern – especially classical and ancient poems.

Contemporary poets in many cases don't slavishly follow these classic patterns especially when using Free or Blank verse, but they are not ignored either.



THE STRUCTURE OF A POEM

PROSODY

Prosody is the patterns, rhythms and syllabic stresses and intonation in speech.

While a lot of contemporary poetry does not have rhyming sequences like classical poems, they have structure and use prosody in creating patterns...

even if the new poet is unaware of it.

However, it makes life easier if the poet is aware of such things.

So, how does it work?



PROSODY (Scansion)

The poet determines the rhythm of the poem and measure the lines in what are known as metric feet.

The FOOT is the basic unit repeating rhythm of a line of verse.

Trimeter [3 feet];

Tetrameter [4 feet];

Pentameter [5 feet];

Hexameter [6 feet] etc....

A foot is made up of syllables and the length of the foot is usually two or three, sometimes four syllables. This is where Scansion comes in.

An accented or stressed syllable (Ictus) is shown by /

an unaccented or unstressed syllable (nonictus) is shown by x.



The most common Feet are:

IAMB: an unstressed syllable [x] followed by a stressed syllable [/]

x / x / x / x / x /

Pentameter: To **strive**, to **seek**, to **find**, and **not** to **yield**. (from: Alfred Tennyson's, Ulysses)

x / x / x / x / x /

Pentameter: Shall I compare thee **to** a **summer's day**? (William Shakespeare, Sonnet 18)

TROCHEE: a stressed or heavy syllable followed by an unstressed or light one.

/ x / x / x / x

Tetrameter: **Double, double Toil and Trouble**

/ x / x / x / x

Fire Burn and Cauldron Bubble

Prosody is like lifting the bonnet of your car and looking at the engine. It might not make much sense, but at least you know what the mechanics of a poem looks like. Pay more attention to how it sounds in your head and you won't go far wrong.



THE STRUCTURE OF A POEM

STANZA

A sunny morning
after rain the smell
of heather and wild
flowers heavy on air

stravaigin our way
east towards Creag a Chadha –
the loch is smoothing

we walk the path down
to the stony shore
sit on a large rock
by the water's slowing edge

we eat sandwiches
made of our own baked bread
apples from Jytte's tree
drink spring water that Davy
piped down from the hillside

**To A Cat Fiona**

The grey, hard "Precious Paw Imprint" bears no resemblance to your wee pink paw pads. Perhaps the company just stock pre-prepared imprints in various sizes for sending out.

I had not realised that at some point during our eighteen years together, pet cremation had become a thing - a highly lucrative one at that.

I am sorry I did not have a garden where I could have laid you to rest and for falling prey to emotional blackmail when overwhelmed with grief.

I am also sorry for all the trips to the vet over your last few months, and that the best treatment proved to be unsuccessful.

The pain of losing you lingers on and, having had feline companions since childhood, I feel unsettled as well in my moggie-free solitude.

Although you are irreplaceable, it seems right to give another cat the chance of a forever home and I hope this is alright with you.



The man at the bar Steve

The man at the bar
sat unsteadily on his bar stool.
Shouted encouragement
to the Karaoke girl.
Finished his pint
and asked the barmaid
for another.
She whispered in his ear.
Climbing down awkwardly
he clung on to his seat,
bumping into
the guy next to him.
With a lot of effort,
he made for the door.
That's when I saw
the walking stick.





TYPES OF POEM to rhyme... or not

RHYME

Couplets

Rhyming sequences (A-B:A-B) (A-A:B-A) (A:B-B:A)

Perfect rhyme Deer/Fear/ May/Day

Stress end rhymes (masculine)

Imperfect rhyme unstressed end rhymes (feminine or slant rhyme)

So many others

Non-rhyme or blank verse – sometimes use internal rhymes – dependant on syllabic structure and rhythm.

Haiku (syllabic) usually three rows of 5-7-5 syllables.

On Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

Whose woods these are I think I know.	A
His house is in the village though;	A
He will not see me stopping here	B
To watch his woods fill up with snow.	A

My little horse must think it queer	B
To stop without a farmhouse near	B
Between the woods and frozen lake	C
The darkest evening of the year.	B

He gives his harness bells a shake	C
To ask if there is some mistake.	C
The only other sound's the sweep	D
Of easy wind and downy flake.	C

The woods are lovely, dark and deep.	D
But I have promises to keep,	D
And miles to go before I sleep,	D
And miles to go before I sleep.	D

—Robert Frost

*stravaigin our way
 east towards Creag a Chadha –
 the loch is smoothing*



EXERCISE



Be the child here and write a 6 line poem in any form.



HOMEWORK

**Write three Haiku
on one subject**

**Email them to:
drjoemurray@gmail.com
by teatime next Wednesday**

WEEK THREE

**Nature Walk in Festival Park
Dress appropriately for weather**

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WEEK THREE
Nature Walk

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WEEK FOUR
Writing Short Fiction



WRITING SHORT FICTION

1 The Story (beginning, middle and end)

2 Characters

3 Captivate

4 Pace

5 Dialogue/narrative

6 Senses (Show, don't tell)

7 Conflict/tension

8 Edit
Edit
Edit

Start close to the end... no prelims

Protagonist & Antagonist no more than three

Immediately drag your reader in

Do not let the narrative lag

Make it as tight as possible

Let your reader smell, taste and 'feel' the story

Can be between characters or within the protagonist. You want your reader to cheer on your character



WRITING SHORT FICTION

In a good short story we understand why this particular moment, or series of moments, is critical to the protagonist's life.

Also: Things must happen.

Also: Let the reader do a bit of heavy lifting.

A memorable short story is both economical and evocative, brief but resonant, short but not superficial.

It creates the illusion of more experiences beyond the relatively few words on the page.

Within a limited span of time, the author is expected to engross readers from the first moment of interaction and to sustain their attention.

There is no time for waffling or hyperbole; every single word is crucial and sentences are carefully crafted to ensure maximum impact.



WRITING SHORT FICTION

EDITING

No matter how good a writer thinks their story is, it can be made more concise and compelling.

To be a good writer, you need to learn to be a ruthless editor.

This is the time to look at the backstory and decide how much of it is critical to the story. Remember, just because short stories are short, they aren't necessarily easier to write.

Some ways to do that...

- Combine characters where possible.
- Delete transitory scenes and get right to the meat of the story.
- Remember, *Show Don't Tell*.
- Get rid of repetitive words.
- Rip out unnecessary adverbs and adjectives.
- Make every sentence count.



WRITING SHORT FICTION

EXERCISE

Write a short story in 50 words about a bird

The Man

The night air froze as he entered the close, hands deep in his pockets. Classical music echoed from a radio as he climbed the stairs. The door was open – excited voices of children – the warmth of the fire, the smell of cooking. This wasn't right, they shouldn't have sent him.

DWP

With pained effort, Agnes slid the envelope from the letterbox. Postie always jammed them as he knew she couldn't bend down to pick letters off the floor. She hirpled painfully slow to the living-room; a fingernail sliced open the letter to reveal that: "...your Universal Credit payments have been suspended".

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WEEK FIVE
Script Writing



SCRIPT WRITING FOR THEATRE

Writing for theatre is the dramatisation a story's narrative for stage.

Similarly, a screenwriter will draft a screenplay for television or film.

These types of scripts are for characters to perform live on stage in front of an audience.

Stories, Playscripts and Screenplays while similar are written and formatted differently.



SCRIPT WRITING FOR FILM – from Cuning Plans by Joe Murray

1 EXT. BELGIUM – GERMAN POSITIONS, FRONT LINE: Run VT of German heavy artillery [bombardiers continually loading shells and rapidly firing].

2 EXT. BELGIUM – ALLIED FRONT LINE – FROM DISTANCE: Run VT of heavy bombardment on the allied trenches.

3 EXT. BELGIUM – BEHIND THE FRONT LINE [SOUND OF BARRAGE]

Two men with binoculars stand alone far behind the lines watching the devastation unfold on the lines of trenches in the distance. The thinner man is in Infantry Uniform, the stout man wears a duffle-coat and a naval cap with much braiding; he is smoking a cigar; the smoke is billowing around them. Both look tense, but are calm.

4 The man with the cigar is WINSTON CHURCHILL. [He turns to his companion].

CHURCHILL
How long?

5 The man beside him is MAJOR-GENERAL PARIS, [he looks at CHURCHILL].

PARIS
Three days, four at the most.

[CHURCHILL lowers his binoculars; takes a hard draw of the cigar and lets out a long stream of smoke]

CHURCHILL
Make it four ... [he turns his back to the carnage and takes another draw of the cigar] we need four days ... and those ports.



SCRIPT WRITING

- 1 Determine Your Plot
- 2 Main Character(s)
- 3 Outline your idea
- 4 Write your Act(s)
- 5 Dialogue/narrative
- 6 Conflict/tension
- 7 Reread, edit and revise...
- 8 Again
Again
Again

Brainstorm a few ideas

Plays are usually character driven

Characters + Plot = Story (sketch it out)

Set Up – Obstacles – Resolution

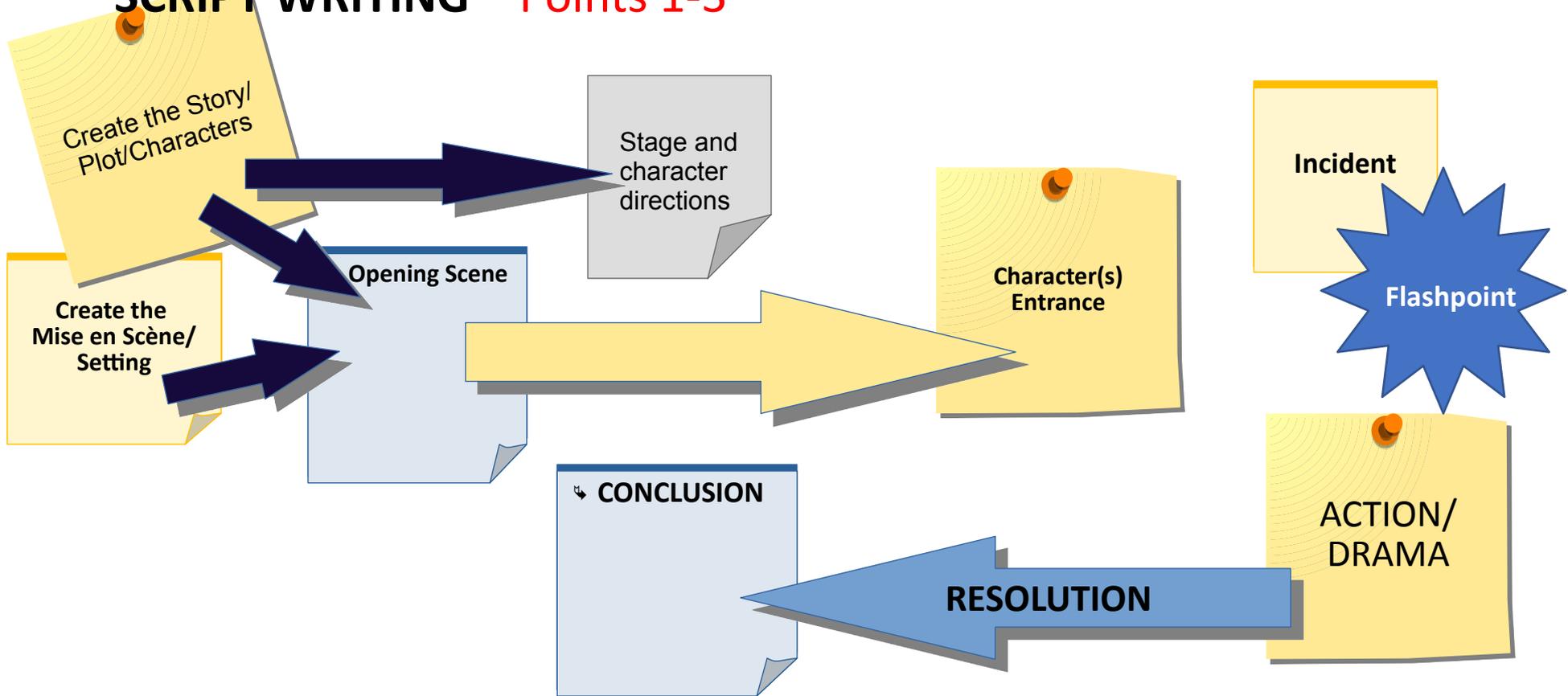
As in story writing make it as tight as possible

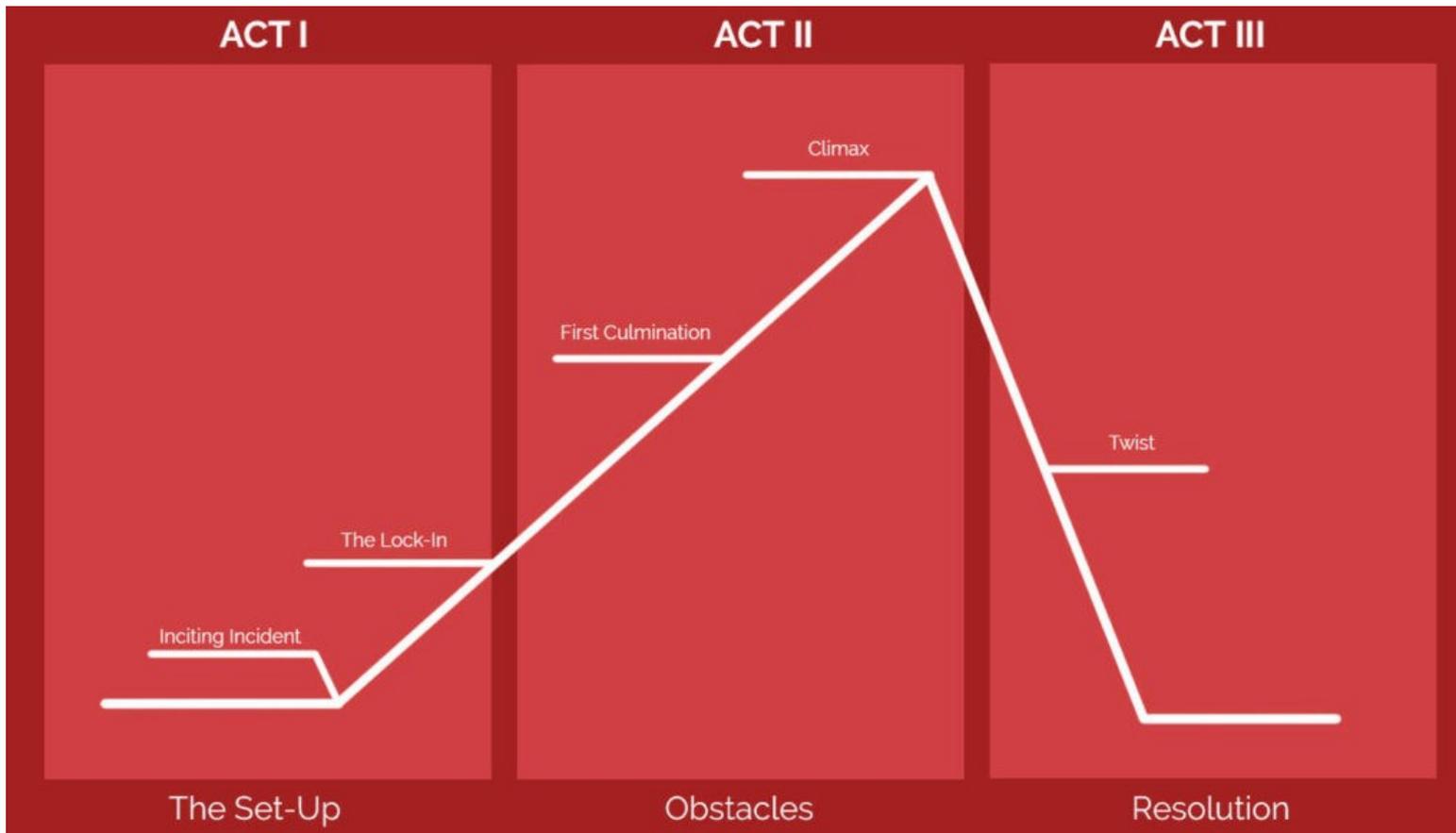
Can be between characters or within the protagonist.

Make sure the story/plot works.



SCRIPT WRITING – Points 1-3





Five plot points of a basic story arc.

1. **Inciting Incident** is the introduction of the main conflict that threatens normalcy.
2. **The Lock In** is when the protagonist becomes locked in to face the main conflict.
3. **First Culmination** – the midpoint where the character finds a solution that might work.
4. **Climax – Main Culmination** of the screenplay where the peril and magnitude of the conflict seems to overpower the protagonist.
5. **Twist – the final culmination** and change in direction where the plot and subplot collide.



EXERCISE

Brainstorm for a plot: Use the Whiteboard & choose a 'Scribe' to draw it out for the group.

There is no such thing as a bad idea at this point. Sometimes the daft idea is the one that turns out to be the best one.

If it helps, you can start with a novel, film or play you already know and redevelop it anew.

Or, try using the SWBST from the Storyline learning technique.

Somebody Who is the main character?	Wanted What does the main character want?	But What is the problem or conflict?	So How does the problem get solved?	Then What is the result or outcome?

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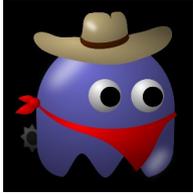
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WEEK SIX
Character Development



Character Development *ANTAGONIST (4 TYPES)*



VILLAIN



CONFLICT CREATOR



INANIMATE FORCE



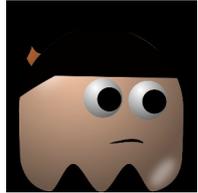
SELF

Give your antagonist morality

They/it must have power



Character Development *Secondary characters*



Make them complementary



Make them oppositional



What skills or knowledge can your protagonist gain from them?

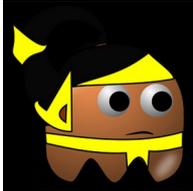


Character Development *writing great characters*



Make them memorable

Make them oppositional



Write what YOU know; write what YOU want to know.

Detail. Reveal their world through detail.



Give them the correct skills

Allow your reader to see their inner conflicts



Always try to have your characters surprise your reader



EXERCISE (Continued from week 5)

Brainstorm for a plot: Use the Whiteboard & choose a 'Scribe' to draw it out for the group.

There is no such thing as a bad idea at this point. Sometimes the daft idea is the one that turns out to be the best one.

If it helps, you can start with a novel, film or play you already know and redevelop it anew.

Or, try using the SWBST from the Storyline learning technique.

Somebody Who is the main character?	Wanted What does the main character want?	But What is the problem or conflict?	So How does the problem get solved?	Then What is the result or outcome?



EXERCISE (Continued)

Simple 'Storyline' method

SOMEBODY – *who is the main character (protagonist)?*

WANTED – *what does the main character want?*

BUT – *what is the problem, what is the conflict?*

SO – *how does the problem get resolved?*

THEN – *what is the outcome*

WEEK SIX



If it helps, you can start with a novel, film or play
Or, try using the SWBST from the Storyline learning technique.

Somebody	Wanted	But	So	Then
who is the main character?	what does the main character want?	What is the problem or conflict?	How does the problem get solved?	What is the result or outcome?
AN OUTSIDER		CHANGE / PROGRESS (COMPUTERISATION)		

RESISTANCE TO CHANGE

WORKPLACE SITCOM
SET IN THE PAST (THE GOOD OLD, BAD OLD DAYS)



SCRIPT WRITING – simple plan



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WEEK SEVEN

SO, WRITE!

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WEEK EIGHT

KEEP WRITING

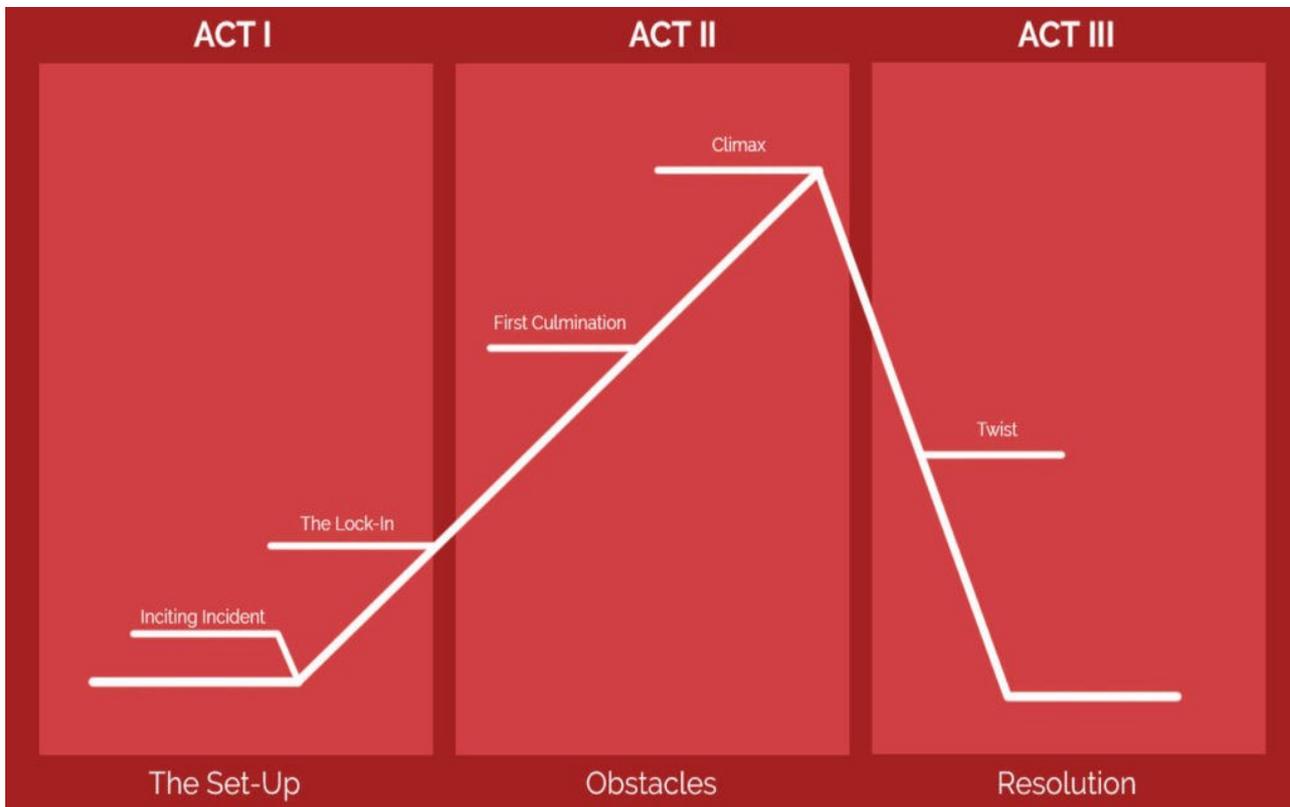


KEEP IN MIND

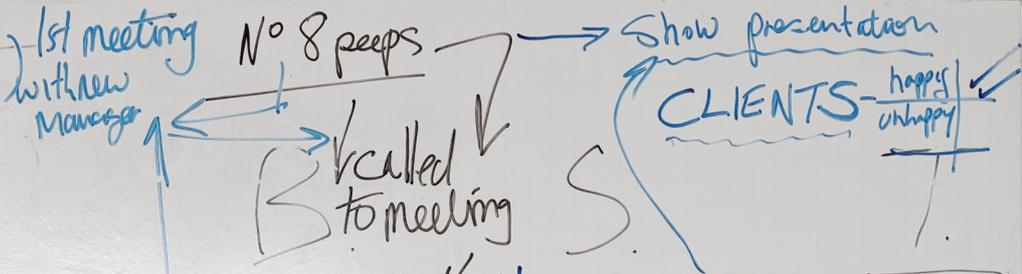
In story writing in general, your story is yours; you have carte blanche, but:

1. Your characters must make sense.
2. Things don't happen, "just because", actions should be plausible – even in fantasy.
3. Like ourselves, your characters' decisions should have consequences.
4. Movement through your story should never lack resistance or be boring.
5. try and have your reader/audience feel the your protagonist's pain or anguish.
6. slowly build towards your story's denouement; make it a satisfying end for your characters and your reader/audience... and YOU!

WRITE AN ENTERTAINING STORY



- 1. Work spokesperson.
- 2. old dyed in the wool (antagonist)
- 3. wee suck up Manager



OUTSIDER (NEW MANAGER)

PROGRESS (COMPUTERS)

RESISTANCE TO CHANGE FROM "OLD SCHOOL" EMPLOYEES.

OVER-THE-TOP TRAINING MONTAGE.

- 1 Friona
- 2 Aphid
- 3 Wendy

SCENE / setting 1

How do we know?

How do we write their reactions to new management plans - protest(?)

How do they resist?

What are they saying

response(?)

Does this resolve the problem?

Do they need to do more?

Female American name.

KYMBBA (25yrs)

Small redhead - character.

The characters



Changes

A short play set in a manufacture building's management offices.

CAST: Kymba, the new manager and “new broom”, The Staff Spokesperson; The Manager, an old dyed-in-the-wool traditionalist; A middle-management suck-up.

SCENE: The Meeting Room – the traditionalist manager is giving a presentation.

MANAGER: [*Throws out his arms as he turns to the group and speaks*] ...

GROUP: [*applause*]

MMSU: wonderful presentation, (manager), [*still applauding*] these ideas should take us forward....

KYMBA: [*enters the room, group turns; she meets their gaze, smiles and says something like:*]
Good morning everyone, my name is Kymba second name, and I am the new Area Manager...

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WEEK NINE

KEEP WRITING



HOMEWORK

**Each write your own ending to your play
use the format we have been using here.**

**Make your ending as sensible, comic, or as wild as you like.
Just try to remember what we have been talking about over the last
few weeks.**

**Email them to:
drjoemurray@gmail.com
at your earliest
convenience**

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WEEK TEN

TUTORIAL