

HOW TO WRITE YOUR OWN STORY!

WELCOME!

The blank page is a vast canvas that is scary to step out into and find your footing to start writing your story. That first step is scary mostly because of the unknown. "Where do I even start?" is a question that echoes through your brain. You're definitely not alone in this problem. The dreaded blank page seems to scare many aspiring story tellers, but hopefully this site will give you the proper information over the basics of storytelling and remedy this obstacle to some extent. The purposed of this site is to inform and educate aspiring writers and storytellers how to find the their footing for that first step in the process of creating their story. Hopefully wit this you will be able to dive in a begin creating your characters, worlds, and plots.

Below you will find sections defining different stages and methods of the storytelling/writing process, and instructions on how to utilize them to create your very own stories. This information can help you with writing your first novel, screenplay, web comic, etc. So read on, and let's start learning how to create!!



CONCEPT



WORLD BUILDING



CHARACTERS



PLOT

HOW TO WRITE YOUR OWN STORY!

CONCEPT

So you're sitting at your desk staring at the blank page...what do you do? Well, let's first talk about your concept. A **“Concept”**, according to Google's dictionary, is ***an abstract idea; a general notion.*** So what is the abstract idea of the story you want to tell? Do you even have one yet? This is the true starting point of the story creating process. You need to come up with an initial idea for a story you want to tell. Best way to do this if you don't have much of concept yet is to create a tagline for your story.

You've probably seen a logline when searching for a show/movie to watch. They are often the descriptions for the various films and shows you see on IMDb, Rotten Tomatoes, Streaming Services, etc. So if you don't have a concept for a story, don't worry all we need to do is brainstorm some good loglines to build off of. Your logline doesn't have to be very detailed, and it's actually better if they aren't detailed. Less is more when it comes to logline.

Exercise #1 : Longline Brainstorming Session

Let's set some parameters so we know what these loglines need. First here is a good example of a logline to give us an idea of what they need to look like.

Example: *“A young hobbit needs to destroy an ancient, powerful ring before the evil overlord consumes the world in everlasting darkness.”*

In case it doesn't ring a bell, this is a longline written for the fiction classic *Lord of the Rings* by J.R.R. Tolkein. As you can see from the logline, it establishes a lot of the fundamentals to a story. We know the hero (“*A young hobbit*”), we know the villain (“*...the evil overlord..*”), and we know the conflict (“*...needs to destroy an ancient, powerful ring..*”).

So for you concept brainstorming, set a timer for 15 minutes and write as many different loglines that you can think of write them down on a sheet of paper. In each one of the loglines, establish your hero, your villain, and the conflict of the story concept. Don't get hung up on the details. All you need to worry about is getting the three things I listed down, and the rest can be fleshed out later on. Also know that nothing is set in stone during this process. You will be adding and subtracting from your story very often. The creative process is fluid and never stops being sculpted until the product is published.

Once you've done the brainstorming a few times, pick out the strongest log lines you wrote. Once those are narrowed down, look at them and decide which story you want to begin writing from the concepts you have selected. If you love multiple loglines, then you're in good shape. Decide which one you want to begin writing on now and set the other or others you love to the side. You now have a concept and can start working on the next step!

*** NOTE:** If you would like to learn more about loglines visit [this link](#) to read more. You can also find a lot of great sources of information to further your understanding on the topics we'll cover on the [Resources](#) page.



HOW TO WRITE YOUR OWN STORY!

SETTING/WORLD BUILDING



Exercise #2 : Setting Swap

With this idea in mind, it might help your ideas for your own setting if you do a similar exercise. Follow the instructions listed below and see what kind of results you get!

- **Pick a story you love and write a longline for it.**
- **Establish the story's hero, villain, and the conflict.**
- **Now think about the story in a totally different setting than it originally takes place in.**

Now that you've played around with that little exercise, try to take your original logline and workshop it with some settings that you're interested in. Try a few you're not interested just to see if it works, and if for whatever reason it does make note of why it doesn't work. Also make notes on why it works for the setting you choose. These are good to refer to when building your world and/or fleshing out the characters of your story.

Now world building...how is it different from creating/choosing a setting. The setting is more of the basic idea. Setting is the environment and the time period. World Building is where you take the setting and flesh out the world of your story. How in depth you get is ultimately up to you, but what's most important is what of course whatever amount of the world is shown/has an impact on the story. I remember watching a video where this guy who often creates his own campaigns for Dungeons & Dragons said, "You'll probably only use 30% of the world you created."

However, it's not completely worthless to build up your world even if your audience won't get to see a lot of it. Reason I say that those details could help you enrich the story. Much like what we discuss in the [Characters](#) section, your audience will probably not get to learn about every bit of a character's backstory (only possible exceptions would be the Hero and/or Villain), but an in-depth backstory builds up subtext to the characters as well as helps form their personality, perspective, and how they view themselves existentially. You probably won't want to make your story long-winded by detailing every character's background and life in your story, but building a history out for your characters and world gives you (the author) more familiarity and allows you to come up with great ideas for your story. This is because it has a foundation of which you can draw from. Too get you started on this let's do a few exercises.!

Exercise #3 : Creation Myth

In cultures and religions all over the world and through history, there have been many Creation Myths made to explain the origins of mankind. Popular ones include Christianity's tale of Adam and Eve in the garden, or the Greek's myth of Zeus vs. the Titan Kronos. For this exercise, research a few creation myths or familiarize yourself with ones you may already know. After you do that write your own creation myths. I recommend 2 myths that maybe contradict each other.

These myths now can be ones that possible religions in your world could subscribe to and have in their sacred text. Or maybe this is a certain nation's national belief in how the world was made. This is all up to your discretion of course. However, you feel these myths work best in your story or maybe it's just to give your self context of this imaginary world, but now you have it in your files and it can help you give depth to the story.

Exercise #4: The Great War

Now everyone's favorite topic...politics!! For this next exercise, write out a summary about a war that happened in your world. It could be one that happens before, during, or in the future of your story. In the summary, write about 2 or more nations and the inciting incident(s) that became the cause of the conflict (territory dispute, assassination, etc.). The finish up the summary about how the conflict ended and what lasting effects it had on the world afterwards.

After these exercises are done, write some notes about your world and build it out as much as you feel is necessary for your story. Think about what kind of effect living in this world will have on your characters and the overall plot. Look at your original concept. How can you flesh it out more now that you have some details about the setting and world?

* NOTE: You can also find a lot of great sources of information to further your understanding on the topics we'll cover on the [Resources](#) page.



HOW TO WRITE YOUR OWN STORY!

CHARACTERS



Characters are one of the most important components to any story. Like I said in the World Building section, your audience will probably not get to learn about ever bit of a characters backstory (only possible exceptions would be the Hero and/or Villain), but an in-depth back story builds up subtext to the characters as well as helps form their personality, perspective, and how they view themselves existentially. You probably won't want to make your story long winded by detailing every characters background and life in your story, but building a history out for your characters and world give you (the author) more familiarity and allows you to come up with great ideas for your story. This is because it has a foundation of which you can draw from. Too get you started on this let's do a few exercises!

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Exercise #5 : Deconstructing Your Heroes/Villains

Think of your favorite characters through out literature, film, comics, etc. Now come up with a selection of a few that are heroes and some that are supporting characters. Once you have that selection, write down all the identifiable aspects of each character followed by what you like about the and what you think their flaws are. Now do the same with a selection of your favorite vila

This exercise will help you in seeing the dichotomy inside all humans. Character is nothing without their strengths and weaknesses. They are also identified by appearance and presence. The design of the character is very important, but know who they are inside is important to nail down first when fleshing out characters. This goes for all characters that you want to be well defined no matter their role.



HOW HIROHIKO ARAKI MAKES A CHARACTER

Exercise #5 : Character Profile Sheets

As we just saw in the video above, making character sheets can be a huge help when organizing your characters. Especially with large casts of characters, you need to be able to get your thoughts documented and in correct order. If not you mind forget things about characters or get certain things mixed up between two. Then all the hard work you put in goes out the window if information is well organized and documented in your story notes.

For this exercise, take the advice from the video and fill out a Character History Sheet for your hero and villain. I would strongly reccomend you do this for all major characters , but use the method as it works best for you!!



HOW TO WRITE YOUR OWN STORY!

PLOT

This like all the other parts of the storytelling process is very important. There is a lot that goes into mapping out your plot, but you need to so you will have a solid guideline that you can deviate or build-upon at your own discretion. Now I could go through all of the components and theories of the plot. I could just go through what English teachers have already explained about story structure for years. I could go over 3 act and 5 act structure, but I won't. Actually Dan Harmon, creator of great shows like *Community* and *Rick and Morty*, has come up with a method of story mapping that I think is the best way to look at how to plot out your story.

Below you will find two videos from Youtube that will explain **Dan Harmon's Story Circle Method**. One is an [Adult Swim](#) upload that features Harmon himself explaining the concept. The second video is by [Studio Binder](#), and they unpack Harmon's Story circle even more and give an in=depth explanation. I strongly feel if you take what you learn from these videos and apply it to writing your plot outline, then this will definitely prepare you for writing your own story!!!

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DAN HARMON’S STORY CIRCLE | RICK AND MORTY | ADULT SWIM



DAN HARMON STORY CIRCLE: 8 PROVEN STEPS TO BETTER STORIES



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RESOURCES

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VIDEOS



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DAN HARMON STORY CIRCLE: 8 PROVEN STEPS TO BETTER STORIES



HOW HIROHIKO ARAKI MAKES A CHARACTER



HOW TO: TELL A GREAT STORY — 5 STORYTELLING TIPS



WRITING 101: BASIC STORY STRUCTURE



COMING UP WITH STORY IDEAS: 10 METHODS YOU CAN USE

