

ACT I - Set up

Establish the main Character(s) and the world they inhabit.

Then finish this ACT with an **INCITING INCIDENT** (That is, an event or decision that begins your story's problem.)

ACT III - Resolution and The End

We are deliberately jumping ahead now.

Write how your story gets resolved?

Be as clear as you can about what happens as the film ends.

Then fold this sheet over and put it aside.

Once you've done this - fold this sheet over and put it aside - but keep the idea of where the story ends in your mind. This will help you work out the middle parts of the story.

ACT II - FIRST HALF - Main Conflict

Now go back to what you wrote for
(ACT I)

Look over what it says and then
continue the story.

Begin with the main character(s)
trying to sort out the problem they
had at the end of ACT ONE.

Then start plotting obstacles and
complications: people, rivals, secrets,
disagreements, opportunities, good
things or bad things.

By the end of this part (the midpoint)
the main character(s) are in a more
complicated situation than the one
that they found themselves in at the
end of ACT ONE.

ACT II - SECOND HALF - Main Conflict Contd

Now continue the SECOND HALF of ACT TWO with the main character(s) working to resolve the problem at the end of the FIRST HALF of ACT II.

But now it becomes clear that a solution is not going to be that straight forward.

Because there is a twist in the story that makes things harder for the character(s) to reach the goal you set for ACT THREEs RESOLUTION.

This twist not only makes it harder for the main character(s) - but also more interesting for the audience.

Before the twist the audience new what was going to happen next. But now they are not so sure.

The twist is your best chance to stop the audience from guessing exactly what is going to happen.

For example in The Wizard of Oz - it is revealed that the Wizard isn't a Wizard after all.

This twist has to make the situation the bleakest it could be!

ACT III - Climatic Incident and Resolution

Now go back to the piece of paper you wrote for 'ACT III - Resolution and The End' and then folded and put away.

Now you are in the position to 'flesh out' what comes between the end of ACT TWO and the RESOLUTION to the story.

The main character(s) develop a plan which helps them resolve everything in the THIRD ACT of the story.

It can be funny, or it could make us cry or it could make us look at the story in a different way or it can be a celebration.

Resolve everything you can in this last ACT.

But keep it brief. The audience will know the story is over - unless you have a final twist...

AND FINALLY 3 SHORT EXERCISES

1. WRITE 40 WORDS

Reduce your film idea down to 40 words which tell us:

- The characters
- The world they inhabit
- What happens
- What Genre

2. WHAT IS YOUR STORY ABOUT?

This is the story of....

3. What is it REALLY about?

(State your theme as a question.)