

Screenwriting



Storytelling

Narrative elements to
engage your audience

by Neil Fallon



mypocket
guide FILM, TV & MEDIA

Introduction

Beyond the 3-Act structure, there are many narrative elements which make your story more engaging to your audience. These elements will make your audience become more emotionally involved in the development of your story and characters. Creating expectations or dread and constantly navigating from hope to fear allows a viewer to experience a wide range of emotions.

While there are some subjects more interesting than others, characters more intriguing than others - although it's a matter of taste and personal interest - what makes a story a great one to read, to watch, comes from the way the story unfolds, the way the plot and characters are revealed to us, the audience.

How to create your plot without revealing too much but enough to constantly hook your audience is the heart of storytelling. And

your skill as a screenwriter is to combine and deliver all these narrative elements, to make an engaging story for your audience.

Whether you are stuck on developing your plot or need to refer to storytelling characteristics as a guideline, this storytelling guide will examine all the narrative elements that you should use to transform your story into one that is captivating to tell.

The plot

At the start, regardless of the story, there is a plot. There is a character who wants to achieve something but will have great difficulty in doing so. There will be many obstacles along the journey.

And how you tell the story will determine whether it is engaging or not for your audience.

The audience

Even the most fascinating stories on paper can be boring if they are not told in an engaging way. Equally, insignificant stories can become much more interesting when told in an exciting, sometimes funny, way.

What makes a good story a great story is a mix of both elements:

- One side is the story itself: its message, its stakes, its values, its morality, etc.
- The other side, and equally important (not to stay even more important), is the way it is told and unfolds.

You are the God of your story. You know it by heart. Now what you need to achieve is to get your audience as excited as you are about it. And to achieve this purpose, you need to carefully select the elements that you reveal or not to your audience.