

The ABCs of Story Structure
(Developed by Val Edward Simone)

For

**“A Minute of Forever”
An Original Screenplay
By Val Edward Simone
Copyright © 2014 by Val Edward Simone
All Rights Reserved.**

PREMISE

A single sentence briefly describing the main purpose, theme, or action of the story. If the premise cannot be confined to one sentence, then the premise has not been properly considered. (Note: You are not after detail here. You're after the *MAIN THRUST* of the story. Think TV listing here.)

THE ABCs

A) Faults of the Main Character –

The faults exhibited by the main character, that is, their internal failings, their short-comings, their inabilities, their weaknesses, often cause them difficulties at the beginning of the story. These issues tend to overwhelm the main character to the point where a conflict is inevitably generated. It usually starts quickly and tends to run through the story up to the resolution phase. These faults or weaknesses further tend to be most threatening to the main character and might even determine his or her survival and victory over the conflict, or send them to death and a crushing defeat.

--

B) Internal Needs of the Main Character –

The internal needs of the main character compels the main character through the story toward the resolution. That which must be conquered, resolved, and/or satisfied or the main character will fail and perhaps might perish from it if not realized.

--

C) Desperate Desire of the Main Character –

This really is the backbone of the story. The underlying element (Desperate Desire) which drives the hero forward toward resolving the conflict. Please note that the “desire,” the “want” differs much from the "Internal Need" of the Main Character above.

--

D) The Opposing Force –

The Opposing Force can be a character or characters, or happenings, or circumstances, which will inject opposition against the desperate desires of the main character. Such opposition might even wish to destroy the main character through the main character’s own “internal faults” and “internal needs” for reasons of its “own desire.” Typically, the antagonist, which could be a character, event or circumstance, attempts to force its will upon the Main Character and will try to prevent the Main Character from achieving victory.

E) The Battle Plan of Action –

This is the considered plan of battle that must take place. The protagonist must implement such a plan or be destroyed. In other words, the Main Character must devise a plan or strategy to defeat the efforts of the Opposing Force and bring about the conclusion to the story, the resolution of the Big Conflict.

F) The Big Conflict –

This where the actual battle plan is implemented as the pressure rises to fever pitch, or boils over into a deadly crisis. It is the actual "fight" or action which brings about the greatest peril to the Main Character. The action that will result in the Main Character's defeat or victory.

G) Light of Self-Discovery –

This is where the Main Character finally realizes that what he or she really wanted is much different from what he or she originally thought he or she wanted. It is a solemn revelation or discovery that the truth of what is *really* wanted is not what is truly “needed” to resolve the conflict within the bosom

of the Main Character. Something that reader might feel as well. The true point or Great Truth of what the author intends to impart to the reader.

H) New Knowledge or Understanding –

With the new knowledge or understanding, the world changes for the protagonist. He or she sees the new world through new eyes, or new awareness. The resolution is realized.

I) A New Beginning

The Main Character moves into or gains a New Beginning, a new "lease" on life, discovers a new path. The reader is left believing that the Main Character is off to new destinies, new places, new dreams, and new experiences much improved from where the Main Character came from at the start of the story. It might even resonate with the reader to mean that all things are possible for them as well.

The End