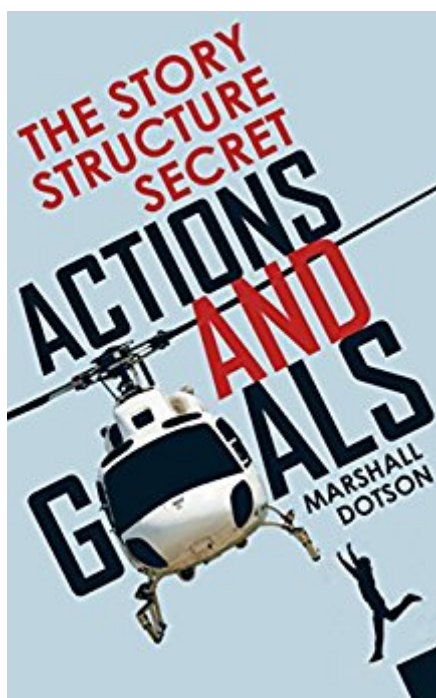


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# The Story Structure Secret: Actions And Goals (Plotting A Novel Or Screenplay Using Character Actions)



## Synopsis

The most intuitive, in-depth, easy-to-use story structure that exists! How is A Game of Thrones the same story as The Lego Movie? How is the mind-bending plot of Inception identical to the terse narrative of Gravity? In what way is Clarice Starling's struggle to silence the lambs indistinguishable from Harry Potter's pursuit of the philosopher's stone? Despite the striking differences in these stories, they share a less conspicuous similarity: they're all structured on a universal pattern of actions undertaken by their characters. This sequence of six Actions and Goals is the hidden foundation of modern story structure. By aligning the unique actions your characters take with these universal story actions, you can easily create compelling narratives that grab your audience by the lapels and punch them in the face (figuratively, of course). Whether you're writing for television or plotting a novel, penning your first screenplay or following up your latest bestseller, this groundbreaking storytelling technique will revolutionize your writing process. Actions and Goals will teach you: How to use the actions of your characters to structure your story. How your character's goal should evolve as the story progresses. The five turning points and the decision your character must make at each one. How a conflict of ideals creates the opposition your characters face. How your character's attempt to fill a new role propels them through the story. Successful storytellers understand the importance of structure. Actions and Goals gives you beat-by-beat examples of this structural secret at work in over a dozen critically acclaimed novels and films. From The Hunger Games to The Empire Strikes Back, from Titanic to Iron Man, learn the innovative, action-oriented structure at the heart of them all! Reader Praise for Actions and Goals

"I've read a lot of books on structure, but this one tops the list. This book should be in every author's toolkit. Dotson creates a road map and explains it better than anyone I've read so far."

"I have a library of screenwriting books I've bought on Kindle and this is one I return to."

"This type of structuring system makes a lot more sense than the other, more traditional types of story structure."

"This is the best book on story structure I've read so far. I can't say enough about this book. I couldn't have devoted the time it took to do this. And, even if I had the time, I couldn't have written it any better than Dotson."

## Book Information

File Size: 1543 KB

Print Length: 410 pages

Page Numbers Source ISBN: 153700140X

Simultaneous Device Usage: Unlimited

Publisher: Idea Brain Publishing (November 16, 2016)

Publication Date: November 16, 2016

Sold by:Â Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B01MRL10N3

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #54,969 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #14 inÂ Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Humor & Entertainment > Movies & Video > Screenwriting #63 inÂ Books > Humor & Entertainment > Movies > Screenwriting #112 inÂ Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Reference > Writing, Research & Publishing Guides > Writing Skills

## Customer Reviews

I purchased Marshall Dotson's book in order to have a greater understanding of how to develop goals for my characters and strengthen the plots of my stories. I have to say, this book far exceeded my expectations. Dotson uses a six-act structure (which can easily fit into a three-act structure) to show the progression of actions and goals. Mr. Dotson organizes each chapter brilliantly, so that there is no way you can move past that chapter without having a solid understanding of the concepts. He uses multiple examples from movies and books to show the progression of goals and actions in a story. He breaks each act down into a structure that is easy to follow and he includes a reference guide at the end with a complete outline of all six acts. I started taking notes until I realized that the reference guide provided everything I needed. He also gives a final outline of all the movies and books he referenced, so you can see how each follows this structure from beginning to end. As a bonus, Mr. Dotson writes with humor and there were many moments I found myself laughing at his jokes. I've read a lot of books on structure, but this one tops the list. I hope Mr. Dotson publishes more books on writing.

This is an interesting book on story structure. It focuses on structuring a story into a series of six acts that correspond with the protagonist's changing goals and his/her actions to reach the goal.

This type of structuring system makes a lot more sense than the other, more traditional types of story structure (at least for me). The breakdown of many popular books and movies help to illustrate how versatile this type of story structuring can be. It's especially useful for planning the story's middle, which can go nowhere if you're not careful. This is not a how-to book, but it's not difficult to see how this method could be applied to a story's brainstorming and outlining process. I have already begun rereading and taking notes (which is something I do only for craft-of-writing books I really like). A couple of minor complaints. The author's attempts at humor are sometimes distracting and inappropriate, and the book isn't available in hard copy. Regardless, I highly recommend this book to anyone who writes, or enjoys reading craft-of-writing or story structure books.

This is the best book on story structure I've read so far. Coming up with plot is one of my biggest struggles with writing and I need a lot of guidance. I rely on structure as prompts to help me think of plot points and scenes. I was previously using the three act structure but it's so vague. I manage to think of a story skeleton with it but have a hard time filling in the scenes between those points. Doston provides an in-depth look at each of the six acts AND the various points that make them up. He doesn't just say, for example, that the first act is the setup and leave it at that like many other resources. He explains exactly how the setup tends to happen (initial goal, oppressive opposition, disturbance, dilemma, new role), which helped me plan the first act better. Although he doesn't explicitly say this, his system also accounts for the character arc so you don't have to plan it separately. He provides many diverse examples and summarizes everything in a neat little package at the end for quick reference. I was going to create my own template but then I took a look at his website ([sixactstructure.com](http://sixactstructure.com)) and he even has templates for you. I used the template to plan my next project and came up with a plot that I feel pretty pleased with. I haven't started writing it yet but I don't feel lost or unsure of what's going to happen, which is the #1 problem I have when I finally start writing a first draft. Filling out the template only took a couple hours, compared to the days I used to spend trying to think of plot. If you, like me, struggle with plot and find that the more structure and guidance you have, the better, then you'll probably enjoy this book.

How can I place reliance on the skill and integrity of an author who labels Hagrid a borderline pedophile and thinks the main character of the Harry Potter books is Lara Croft - and publishes it. This really is a case of hubris - a writer who thinks he does not need an editor. From the book: Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone 1997 Novel Written by JK Rowling Character Lara Croft Ultimate Goal Stop Voldemort from using the Philosopher's Stone to come back to

life.Total Runtime: 17 chaptersHowever, this self-published title, 'The Story Structure Secret - Actions and Goals', still explores and develops a sound structure for a novel or screenplay, and is worth the price. You will have to overlook some rather particular and often peculiar redundant attempts at humour and some poor self-editing. It is worth three stars because of the sloppy and indulgent errors and humour, but it should be worth five stars because of the access to the authors useful website and the book's intellectual rigour.

This book should be in every author's toolkit. Dotson creates a road map and explains it better than anyone I've read so far. If you want to be a good storyteller, first you have to learn how to tell a story. What will keep the reader engaged? If you don't think it's important, remember that 70% of readers never finish a book. Why? Either they get lost or the writer just can't keep the reader engaged.If you follow Marshall Dotson's map, you'll end up with a better story. How so? He takes the best books and movies, slices and dices the narratives and draws you a line to get from point A, to point B, to point C and beyond. I can't say enough about this book. I couldn't have devoted the time it took to do this. And, even if I had the time, I couldn't have written it any better than Dotson.Every writer wants a template. Well, here it is.

This book is great! I have a library of screenwriting books I've bought on Kindle and this is one I return to. The film breakdowns are a variety of current movies that really help you grasp this concept. Creates a great roadmap for your screenplay.

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