

Creative Writing Workshop: Regarding Stories

Three Types of Stories

- 1) Personal-experience stories (Autobiographical stories), and other Documentary stories.
- 2) Traditional stories (such as Animal fables, Fairy tales, Epics, and Legends).
- 3) Original creative stories.

Twelve Elements of Story

- 1) The **Title** of the story.
- 2) **Characters** (their histories, thoughts, decisions, follow-through on decisions, actions, etc).
- 3) Characters' **Ways of speaking**.
- 4) Characters' **Ways of moving**.
- 5) **Place**.
- 6) **Time** (continuous, or jumps, flashbacks?).
- 7) The **Storyline** (also known as, plot) -- in one or two sentences.
- 8) **Objects** in the story.
- 9) **Sensory Elements** in the story: Smells, Flavours, Colours, Textures, etc.
- 10) **Emotions** in the story (for the characters, the teller, and the listeners).
- 11) If the story is being told by a character in the story: **Who is the Narrator?** What is his/her Point of View, Tone of Voice, Attitude, Style?
- 12) **Point** (Theme, Meaning, Moral, Message, Lesson, Take-away).

Regardless of whether a story character may be an animal, a human, Divine, or other -- all stories are about **situations**. Story listeners can **Project** themselves into, and **Imagine** themselves in these situations. They may **Empathise** and **identify** with -- and even possibly **Imitate** -- the characters. Considering if they might do things the same as, or differently from, how the characters do things gives the listeners *practice for living*.

Identify a story's **Turning Points**, Defining Moments, Dramatic Moments, Moments of Decision, Moments of Truth, Pivotal Points, Crucial Scenes, Key Scenes, etc.

Dramatic Tension. In story, as in life, each action causes a reaction, and has consequences. "The other shoe has to drop". Seeds are planted: When and how might they grow? Suspense: When and how might anticipated events occur?

Two options are:

- 1) Insert commentary about the story throughout the piece of writing.
- 2) Just write about what happened, and let the characters and occurrences speak for themselves..

After People Read a Story

Ask "**Open Questions**" (questions with no right or wrong answers), such as,

- 1) Tell one specific thing -- an image, an action by a character, etc -- you liked about the story, or about the way the story was written.
- 2) Tell one thing you did not like about the story. Might you like to add to the story, or change it in any other way? Offer suggestions for improvement regarding how the story was written.
- 3) Might the story remind you of any personal experience, or of some other story?
- 4) Does the story seem to teach any lessons?

13 Types of Stories

1) Something That Happened in the Past 24 Hours.

(Remembering Experiences.)

2) A Favorite Grandmother Story -- Animal Fables, Fairytales, Episodes of Epics, etc.

(Remembering Stories.)

a) Tell your partner about the character.

b) As the character ("I did ...", 1st person), tell your partner what happened.

3) A Little Man in Front of a Tree.

(A Guided Visualisation, then Creating Stories.)

4) Four Words.

(A Game for Creating Stories.)

5) A Frustrating Situation, and a Wish that Resolves It.

(Remembering Experiences, then Creating Stories.)

6) A Challenging Situation.

(Remembering Stories, Remembering Experiences, and/or Creating Stories.)

7) A Character Who Wants Something.

(Remembering Stories, Remembering Experiences, and/or Creating Stories.)

8) A Moral, and a Story that Illustrates It.

(Remembering Stories, Remembering Experiences, and/or Creating Stories.)

9) An Eye-opening Experience.

(Remembering Experiences.)

10) One's Life Story.

(Remembering Experiences.)

11) Stories relating to Teaching-and-learning.

(Remembering Stories, Remembering Experiences, and/or Creating Stories.)

12) Stories relating to Business.

The stories of one's Industry, Company, and Department. Favorite projects. Dream projects.

(Remembering Stories, Remembering Experiences, and/or Creating Stories.)

13) Stories that Illustrate Points in Speeches.

(Remembering Stories, Remembering Experiences, and/or Creating Stories.)