



Story Structure Architect

Victoria Lynn Schmidt

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Build a timeless, original story using hundreds of classic story motifs!

It's been said that there are no new ideas; but there are proven ideas that have worked again and again for all writers for hundreds of years.

Story Structure Architect is your comprehensive reference to the classic recurring story structures used by every great author throughout the ages. You'll find master models for characters, plots, and complication motifs, along with guidelines for combining them to create unique short stories, novels, scripts, or plays. You'll also learn how to:

- Build compelling stories that don't get bogged down in the middle
- Select character journeys and create conflicts
- Devise subplots and plan dramatic situations
- Develop the supporting characters you need to make your story work

Especially featured are the standard dramatic situations inspire by Georges Polti's well-known 19th century work, *The Thirty-Six Dramatic Situations*. But author Victoria Schmidt puts a 21st-century spin on these timeless classics and offers fifty-five situations to inspire your creativity and allow you even more writing freedom. *Story Structure Architect* will give you the mold and then help you break it.

This browsable and interactive book offers everything you need to craft a complete, original, and satisfying story sure to keep readers hooked!

Story Structure Architect Details

Date : Published July 26th 2005 by Writer's Digest Books (first published January 1st 2005)

ISBN : 9781582973258

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Format : Paperback 277 pages

Genre : Language, Writing, Nonfiction, Reference

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From Reader Review Story Structure Architect for online ebook

Joanne Wyers says

Great breakdown showing over 50 "situations" most novels/movies use as a format - either in plot, sub-plot or situation. A useful resource once you have a clear idea of what you are going to write about. Helpful by listing questions in each "situation" for the beginning, middle and end that will enhance your characters.

Syahira Sharif says

Story Structure Architect is an interesting book to read even if you aren't a storyteller. Like its name, the book detailed about the basic blocks that constitutes in making a story. This includes novels, novellas, screenplay, video games, choose your own adventures and etc. So technically, if you are looking for a read that detailed on each of these things, you wont get any but if you want to see things more clearly about the structure of a story (either its Final Fantasy 7 or Skyrim or 50 Shades rip-off), then this is quite a handy reference to have.

Set in four parts i.e. Drafting in a Plan, Building the Structure, Adding Stories and Finishing Touches. Surprisingly, it was very organized book without the tendency for the author to promote their own work. But even for a non-newbie writer, I don't think I would get a lot from this book except from the first part where it have excellent simplified structure an average person could use like list of conflicts and dramatic 'throughlines' to break those writing blockades.

Its not bad as its really nothing you haven't seen in the market unless you are doing creative writing syllabus that deals with these sort of things. Then, sure its a good book on its own. But if you are a beginner writer, then maybe you should go reading normal fiction than this kind of books so that you could have a framework that you could go on as everything in this book is very relatable to everything you see on films or books. Its not necessary but its a good thing to have if you are having hard time understanding the story structures.

Michelle Pickett says

This review was originally posted on Michelle K. Pickett

This was a good writing tutorial. The author packed a lot of information into the short book. The first two chapters were of particular interest to me, covering the three-act story and outlining. As the book progressed, types of stories, plots and situations are discussed. Example of the "Romance" chapter:

Definition of the romance plot structure. Breakdown of the types of romance structures:
The Cinderella Structure The Beauty and the Beast Structure The Sleeping Beauty Structure
Each of the structures are then broken down even further to highlight the main points in each of the three acts. Romance elements are outlined by acts. Examples are given.

The author did a good job of giving familiar examples of each. Unfortunately, some films were used as examples, not just books. That didn't bother me, however. The author is discussing storytelling, not books. What's unfortunate is that many authors will get hung up on the "movie" examples. To each their own, I

suppose. I have to say, I will read this book again. I know that some of the information didn't stick the first time around. Like I mentioned, there is a lot of good information. I'll keep it handy for reference even after I've read it a second time as I know my brain will never fully expand to contain all the gems Schmidt placed between the pages (or Kindle screen).

This review was originally posted on Michelle K. Pickett

Gaylin Walli says

People will undoubtedly criticize two things about this book: it's formulaic and the author uses movies examples. What people are clearly forgetting is that the book's intent is to discuss "formulas" for storytelling, which it does admirably well and in great detail, and the book isn't about *books*. It's about *stories* and how to tell them. Stories largely transcend the medium in which they appear so the author's use of the movies make sense for her background (which was film studies, if I'm not mistaken).

This isn't the kind of book about the craft of storytelling that you can read straight through. You really must take it in bites and tastes in order to appreciate the sections it presents. Is it thorough? Yes. Is it engaging? For the most part, yes. Will it help me improve portions of my writing? Yes, if only for the fact that it shows me patterns of themes common to all great stories. I class this book in the "once I know the rules I can consider bending or breaking them" category. This book teaches the rules. I plan to break them some day.

Hunter says

A reference guide to plot structures, and 54 different dramatic situations. I read a library copy quite quickly (admitting that Section 3 which contains the 54 dramatic situations can be an eye glazer) but am glad I picked up a free ebook version for my Kindle library last NaNoWriMo, as the book will provide some browsable ideas when I'm stuck in a writing phase. Section 4 on research seems an un-necessary tagon, as the book isn't really a writing craft how-to write a story at all.

As a reference to structures we can see through many stories, on and off-screen, I give this book 4/5 stars. It's an excellent reference tool.

Anthony says

Actually, full disclosure: I finished this book years ago. I have found this an absolutely indispensable tool in constructing any story that I write. Every type of story, plot and situation is fully explained complete with familiar examples for each one. If you write, whether you're a seasoned pro or just starting, I strongly recommend this for your library. I further recommend this book to be within arm's reach at all times.

Adrienna says

I was just trying to learn more as a writer, boring!

Debra Daniels-zeller says

This is either the writing book you've been waiting for, or it isn't. It's a complex book and a lot went into writing it. Many interesting questions are raised but, I found the book confusing--5 dramatic throughlines, 11 dramatic structures, 21 genera and 55 situations--this book seemed consumed by numbers. And numbers don't make for the most compelling reading. The dramatic situations taken from George Polti's book from 1945 and expanded on and if you can find the situations from the book you're working on, this book helpful. It could also possibly be helpful if you're just started writing and have no ideas. Some of the categories seemed odd here, like the metadata structure (like Ferris Buellers Day Off--how common is a metadata structure? I get it, this book is attempting to be inclusive but by including everything, a reader is compelled to skip sections. This book is also in my unfinished pile for that reason.

Sherry says

I love this book. Some readers have commented that they found it too formulaic - but of course it's formulaic, it's offering an insight into the many ways that one structure and organise a story. And it's strength is that in offering one a whole host of options, it defies being formulaic because it demonstrates what a wide range of options there are. If anything, this book has opened my eyes and broadened my horizons and helped to kick my brain out of being a little too predictable in my own storytelling.

I'm not sure if it's a plus or a minus: since reading this book I've gotten even better than I always was at spotting plot development in TV and movies. I can see those "twists" coming!! :) Drives my friends nuts.

Michael says

This book is a deconstruction of the major themes and plots behind most western story telling. The author, Victoria Schmidt, is a graduate of film studies, explaining why most of the references and examples are films rather than books. However, storytelling is storytelling, no matter what the medium.

The first two chapters were the most useful from a writer's perspective, outlining and defining the three acts most familiar to western thinkers, planning and development of plot and character. I felt a lot more could have been addressed in these sections.

The third chapter is an extensive catalog of 55 different situations, outlining their use as plot, subplot or incident. How useful this section is, and it's the bulk of the book, is questionable. If exploring and

understanding the major plots of western culture is what you're looking for, this section is for you. If you're looking for insight into the creative writing process, this is not the right place to look.

The fourth and final chapter, research, skimmed over the very necessary step of getting your facts straight when telling your story. Of course, you don't want your hero riding off into the sunset in a convertible before cars had been invented, but there's more to it than that. The author calls this to attention, and gives some indication of resources to use, but it's a light section and more could be said here.

I would have liked to see more in depth analysis of stories that matched the fifty five scenarios, rather than mentioning four examples at the end of each situation. Of course, doing so would quadruple the size of this book.

All in all, I'll put this book on my shelf and occasionally take it down for reference. I can't recommend this for anyone looking to learn the craft of writing.

Heidi says

I found this book very confusing and was particularly turned off when I discovered that all the examples came from movies, not books. But the final straw was when, under the chapter of "Imprudence and caution" she gives this definition of "Little Women": "Jo waits too long to decide to marry long-time friend, Laurie, and ends up losing him to her younger sister."!!!!

Elizabeth says

Run into a rut? Want inspiration? Comparison for other plot types?

This book has it all. It's a must read for writers of all levels of experience.

It gives a detailed description on how to write what types of plots and how to write them and gives examples just in case you're curious.

John Jemar says

Advanced, technical, and useful in a writer's tool chest

Elfscribe says

Victoria Schmidt details 11 master plot structures such as romance, the journey, the slice of life and then goes through 55 dramatic situations such as vengeance for a crime and rehabilitation or falling prey to cruelty or misfortune. For each situation she discusses the type of characters involved. For example in falling prey there is the unfortunate person and a master who has control over them. She then asks questions that the author should consider in the beginning of the story, for example "an unfortunate has a tough time of it and things get tougher . . ." the middle, "in which the unfortunate deals with the cruelty or misfortune" and the end "in which the unfortunate succeeds or fails to put herself back together." At the end of each plot situation section there are examples of stories that fit the pattern.

The book was systematic and useful in looking at structure. It might be helpful if one is stuck writing a story to identify the plot structure being used and then see what the normal arc would be. Possibly.

Tara Calaby says

This book is very good at looking nice and pretty good at describing some of the common plots and situations. I don't think it would be a great deal of use, personally, though, because if I used its suggestions it would lead to a **MORE** generic story rather than a less generic one.
