

Workshop 3: Fundamentals

- Components of a good story
- Openings



We acknowledge and respect the lək'wəŋən peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.



What are the essentially components of a good story?



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Fiction

- **Setup/Opening:** Who is the story about? Who are the characters? *Frodo, Gandalf, Sauron, Gollum..*
- **Challenge/Conflict:** What needs to happen? *This is Sauron's one ring and it must be destroyed..*
- **Action:** What are the steps to overcoming the challenge? *Leave The Shire, cross under the Misty Mountains, climb the stairs of Cirith Ungol.. etc*
- **Resolution:** Without change, stories feel static. Someone or something is not the same at the end as at the beginning.. *The world is no longer in danger, characters have grown wiser..*



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Science writing

- **Setup/Opening:** Who is the story about? Who are the characters? *Natural processes and systems*
- **Challenge/Conflict:** What needs to happen? *The knowledge gap that needs to be resolved.. something doesn't make sense and we need to figure out why.*
- **Action:** What are the steps to overcoming the challenge? *The work that has been done to solve the challenge. Modeling, data collection, analysis, etc.*
- **Resolution:** Without change, stories feel static. Someone or something is not the same at the end as at the beginning.. *Our world view as readers must change. Knowledge about the world should have moved forward from the opening.*



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Science writing (review papers)

- **Setup/Opening:** Who is the story about? Who are the characters? *Natural processes and systems*
- **Challenge/Conflict:** What needs to happen? *The knowledge gap that needs to be resolved.. something doesn't make sense and we need to figure out why. Unresolved debates, change in the knowledge gap over time*
- **Action:** What are the steps to overcoming the challenge? *The work that has been done to solve the challenge. Modeling, data collection, analysis, etc.*
- **Resolution:** Without change, stories feel static. Someone or something is not the same at the end as at the beginning.. *Our world view as readers must change. Knowledge about the world should have moved forward from the opening. More often a review paper finish with emphasis on "What's next?"*



How do these components fit into normal science paper sections?

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How do the components on the left fit into typical science writing sections?

Science paper sections

- **Introduction:**
- **Methods:**
- **Results:**
- **Discussion:**

- **Conclusion:**



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Science paper sections

- **Introduction:** Opening and Challenge
- **Methods:** Action
- **Results:** Action
- **Discussion:** Action that develops and builds towards the resolution
- **Conclusion:** Resolution



Workshop tasks

In your groups, describe each of these elements below in the Vine and Matthews 1963 paper. Were these story elements effective?

Science writing

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Vine and Matthews 1963

- **Setup/Opening:**
- **Challenge/Conflict:**
- **Action:**
- **Resolution:**



Workshop tasks

In your groups, read the openings and challenges that your peers have written. Identify the characters and the challenge as best as you can. Discuss your interpretation with the author. Are you hooked and dying to read more? How could you help your peer improve the opening?

Take a close look at how the opening structured internally. When is the challenge presented? Some papers will jump right into action or a question and then back up to offer more background and development. Other writing will more slowly build up to the challenge, giving the reader the background needed to understand the issue. Consider if restructuring might make your openings stronger.

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After the workshop

- Use the workshop discussion to revise your draft. Write a short (a few sentences to 1-2 paragraphs) reflection describing your take-aways from the workshop and the revisions you've made. Submit your reflection as well as your revised draft.
- Don't forget to keep working on your **fundamentals** from workshop 2. Keep practicing!

