

Writing to Capture & Engage Your Readers

Dr. Stan Williams

Copyright 2025, Stan Williams. All rights Reserved



Secrets of Writing to Capture & Engage Readers

This is a Brief Overview.
In-depth resources are here:

www.MoralPremise.com



YouTube / Rumble
12 Lessons - 25 Videos
9 Ancillary Videos



Book

2

Secrets of Writing to Capture & Engage Readers

This slide set is available as a
Free PDF Download

www.MoralPremise.com
Workshops

3

Secrets of Writing to Capture & Engage Readers

General Rule No. 1

EMOTIONALLY &
INTELLECTUALLY
CONNECT

your main characters
with your audience.

4

Secrets of Writing to Capture & Engage Readers

General Rule No. 2

GET INSIDE YOUR CHARACTERS

- One POV per Scene
except for omniscient scene setting
- Internal Monologue: Moral Dilemmas
fiction delivers more truth than non-fiction

5

Secrets of Writing to Capture & Engage Readers

General Rule No. 3

Obsess Over Opposites

	PROTAGONIST	ANTAGONIST
GOAL	Impossible but Noble	Obstruct the Protagonist Goal
METHOD of achieving goal	Rational (if misled)	Rational (and deceptive)
SOLUTION to achieving goal	Intelligent and Clever	Pervasive and Powerful
MOTIVATION for achieving goal	Selfless	Selfish

6

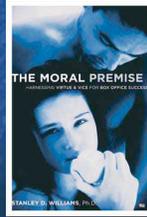
Specific Writing Techniques to Connect Readers Emotionally and Intellectually with Your Characters

1. Permeate with Truth
2. Relate to Reality
3. Create Emotional Coaster
4. Lather with Reason
5. Transform Values
6. Use Tropes
7. Visualize with A.I.

1 Permeate with Truth The Moral-Physical Premise Statement

digest of

- LOG LINE
- STORY HOOK
- CONFLICT OF VALUES
- STORY QUESTION
- BOOK PITCH
- 2 SENTENCE SYNOPSIS
- ELEVATOR PITCH

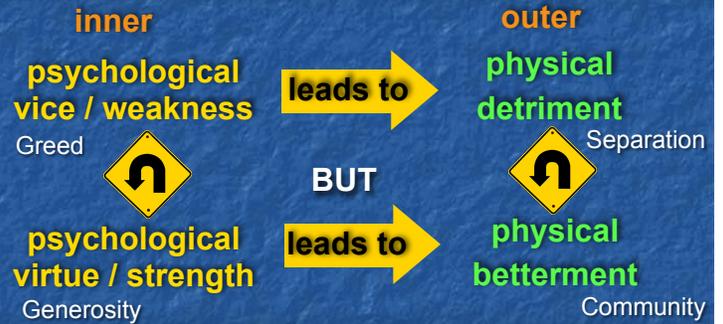


1 Permeate with Truth The Moral Premise Statement



Psychological SPINE
(Inner Journey, Spiritual, Metaphysical)
metaphored in the
Physical SPINE
(Outer Journey, External, Existential)

1 Permeate with Truth The Moral Premise Statement



APPLIES TO ALL CREATIVE ELEMENTS

1 Permeate with Truth The Moral Premise Statement

inner → outer
[moral vice] leads to [physical detriment]; but
[moral virtue] leads to [physical betterment.]

LIAR! LIAR!
A deceptive heart leads to rejection; but
A truthful heart leads to acceptance.

1 EXAMPLES The Moral Premise Statement

inner → outer
Hunger Games
Disrespect for life leads to tyranny; but
respect for life leads to freedom.

BRAVEHEART

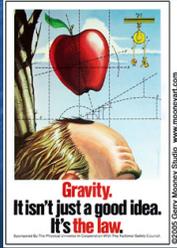
Capstone example in The Moral Premise book

Compromise of liberty leads to tyranny; but
Willing to die for liberty leads to freedom.

inner → outer

2 Relate to Reality

Natural Law: Cause & Effect



2 Relate to Reality

Natural Law: Cause & Effect

Physical Realm

gravity, inertia, magnetism, momentum, thermal dynamics, et al

Psychological Realm

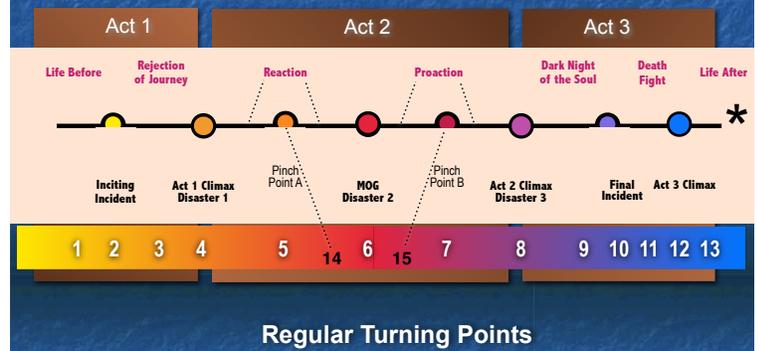
guilt, confidence, kindness, truth telling, lying, adultery, sacrifice, murder, humility, arrogance, charity, greed, slander, honor

2 Relate to Reality

Storytellers must unite these two Natural Realms



3 Create Emotional Coaster

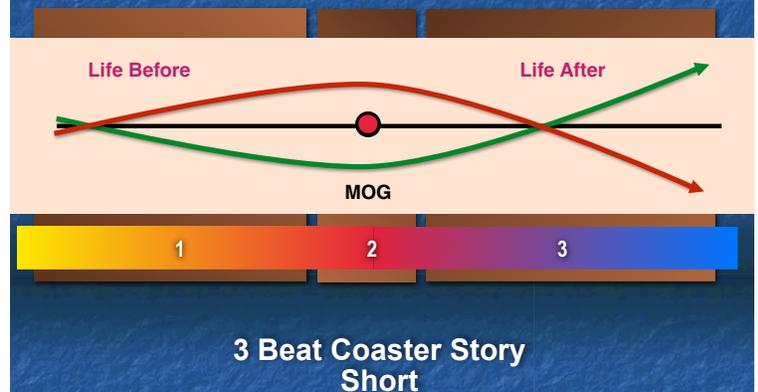


3 Create Emotional Coaster



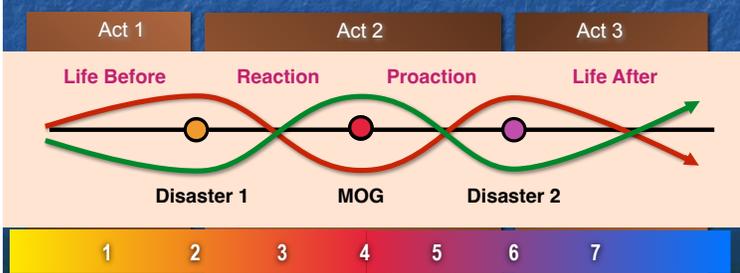
15 Beat Roller Coaster Story

3 Create Emotional Coaster



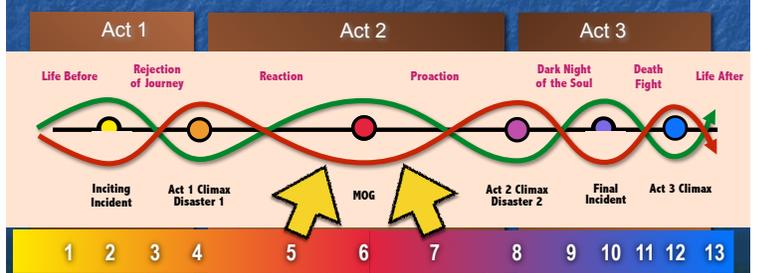
3 Beat Coaster Story Short

3 Create Emotional Coaster



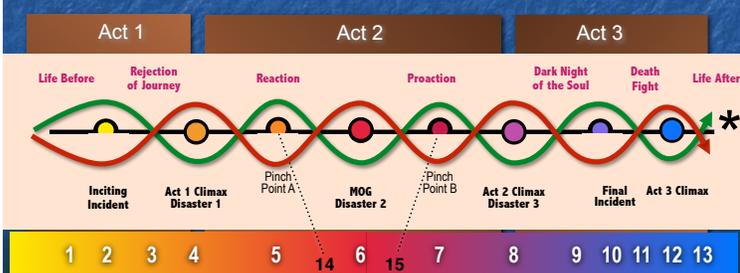
7 Beat Coaster Story Novella

3 Create Emotional Coaster



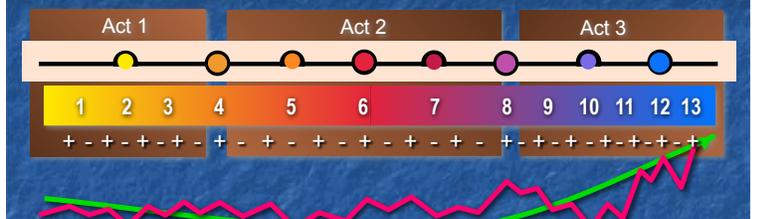
13 Beat Roller Coaster Story Traditional Film - Slow Middle

3 Create Emotional Coaster



15 Beat Roller Coaster Story

3 Beat-by-Beat: Test the Truth



The Moral Premise Test

It's true... it's **not** true... it's true... it's **not** true...
Emotional UP... Emotional DOWN... Emotional UP... Emotional DOWN.

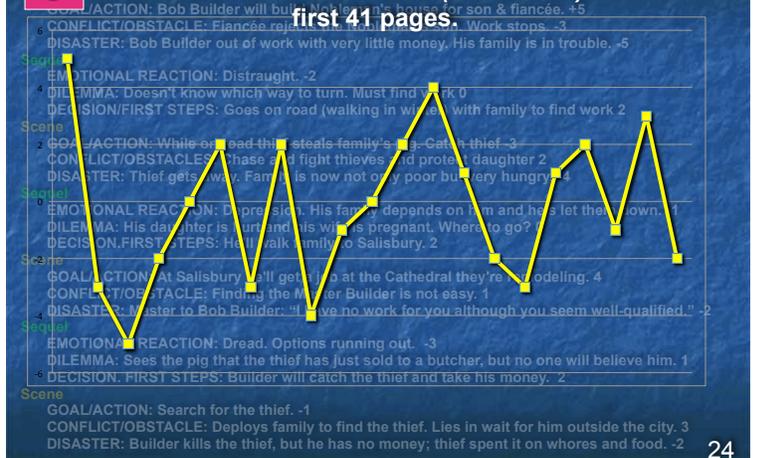
The Physical Premise Test

Hero will... Hero will not... Yes he will... No he won't...
Emotional UP... Emotional DOWN... Emotional UP... Emotional DOWN.

3 Chapter-by-Chapter Coaster Escalating Goals ★ and Disasters ●

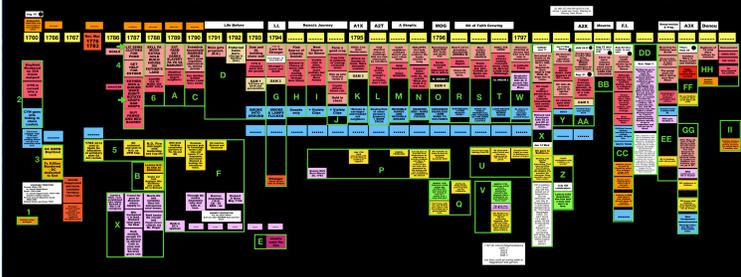


3 Emotional Coaster The Pillars of the Earth (Ken Follett) first 41 pages.



3 Create Emotional Coaster

Wizard Clip Haunting Card Plot



4 Lather with Reason

Irony Leads to Hook (Trope)

A young man falls in love with a real mermaid.
 A monster shark attacks a town.
 A rat can cook better than a man.
 A lawyer loses his ability to lie for 24-hours.
 A dead man fights to live again.



4 Lather with Reason

Myers-Briggs Personality Types

		T Thinking		Feeling F			
P Perceiving	J Judging	ENTP RATIONAL INVENTOR One exciting challenge after another	ESTP ARTISAN PROMOTER The ultimate realist	ESFP ARTISAN PERFORMER You only go around once in life	ENFP IDEALIST CHAMPION Giving life an extra squeeze	E Extroversion	
		ENTJ RATIONAL FIELD MARSHAL Life's natural leaders	ESTJ GUARDIAN SUPERVISOR Life's administrators	ESFJ GUARDIAN PROVIDER Hosts and hostesses of the world	ENFJ IDEALIST TEACHER Smooth talking persuaders		
P Perceiving	J Judging	INTJ RATIONAL MASTERMIND Everything has room for improvement	ISTJ GUARDIAN INSPECTOR Doing what should be done	ISFJ GUARDIAN PROTECTOR A high sense of duty	INFJ IDEALIST COUNSELOR An inspiration to others	I Introversion	
		INTP RATIONAL ARCHITECT A love of problem solving	ISTP ARTISAN CRAFTSMAN Ready to try anything once	ISFP ARTISAN COMPOSER Sees much but shares little	INFP IDEALIST HEALER Performing noble service to aid society		
		N Intuitive		S Sensing			

4 Lather with Reason

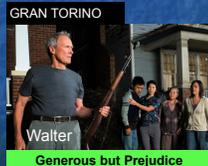
Myers-Briggs for Tiger's Hope

		T Thinking		Feeling F			
P Perceiving	J Judging	D. HAHN - ENTP INVENTOR One exciting challenge after another	STACEY - ESTP PROMOTER The ultimate realist	TIGER - ESFP PERFORMER You only go around once in life	ENFP Giving life an extra squeeze	E Extroversion	
		JOSEPH - ENTJ FIELD MARSHAL Life's natural leaders	ESTJ Life's administrators	ESFJ Hosts and hostesses of the world	F. MIKE - ENFJ TEACHER Smooth talking persuaders		
P Perceiving	J Judging	INTJ Everything has room for improvement	FR. REG - ISTJ INSPECTOR Doing what should be done	D. PERRY - ISFJ PROTECTOR A high sense of duty	INFJ An inspiration to others	I Introversion	
		INTP A love of problem solving	ISTP Ready to try anything once	JAKE - ISFP COMPOSER Sees much but shares little	INFP Performing noble service to aid society		
		N Intuitive		S Sensing			

Secrets of Writing to Capture & Engage Readers

5 Transform Values

The Story MUST be about a Protagonist (HERO) who's an IMPERFECT MIX OF VIRTUE AND VICE



5 Transform Values

The Protagonist MUST mount a quest for an apparently IMPOSSIBLE, PHYSICALLY VISIBLE, and NOBLE GOAL



5 Transform Values

But the Protagonist must **ACTIVELY STRIVE** to achieve the goal



5 Transform Values

The Protagonist must achieve the impossible goal through **REDEPTIVE SUFFERING AND PAIN.**

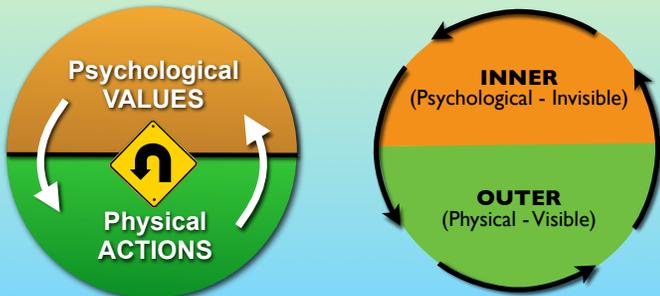


5 Why do Characters Transform?

...because

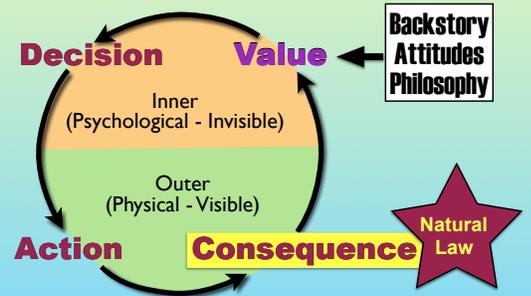
INNER VALUES are not reflected in **OUTER WORLD**

Earlier... Relatability



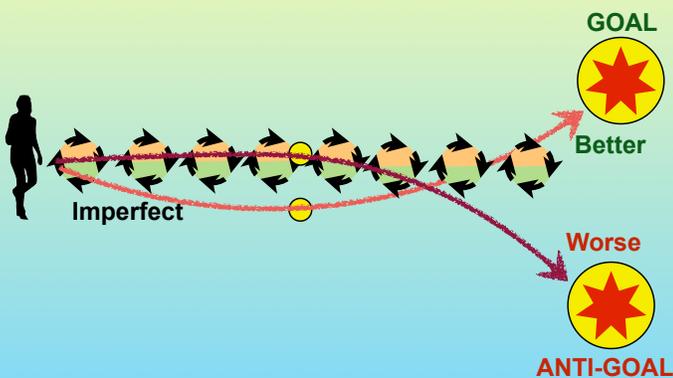
5 How Characters Transform by Scene

Inner motivates the **Outer** which changes **Inner**



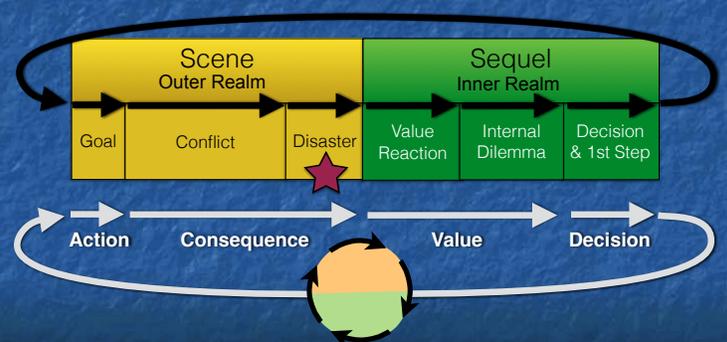
IRONY: Goal to change OUTER, changes INNER.

5 How Characters Transform Scene-by-Scene-by-Scene



5 Transform Values

Scene-Sequel Structure



6 Tropes Narrative Tropes

Stereotypical situations, characters, setting, or scenario creating engaging expectations in your reader.

Secret Baby	Medical	Return to Home Town
Martial Arts	Romance	Human Trafficking
Secret Lover	Thriller	Law Enforcement
Time Travel	Murder	Mail Order Bride
Double Agent	Mystery	Unrequited Love
Moral Dilemma	Military	Criminal Gang

But...

Introduce Irony: TWIST EXPECTATIONS

37

6 Tropes Rhetorical Figures of Speech

Words & phrases used in a non-literal way.

Irony: juxtaposition of opposites

Metaphor: properties of one thing assigned to a second

Oxymoron: adjacent terms that contradict

Pun: same word different meaning

Synecdoche: refers to whole using the name of a part

Simile: comparison of different things with "like"

Wikipedia (65)

Innocent as a virgin she was set on destroying his virility.

He was built like an ox but carried himself like a sloth.

The novel was a roller coast of emotions, the scenes a zoo.

The orders came from the Resolute Desk and Whitehall.

The book on gravity was impossible to put down.

He ordered the jumbo shrimp in deafening silence.

38

6 Use Tropes Schemes Figures of Speech

SCHEMES: change the ordinary or expected pattern of words.

Alliteration: list that starts with same letter or sound

Emphatic: most important word at the end

Consonance: repetition of consonant sounds

Internal Rhyme: rhyming words in same sentence

Onomatopoeia: words that imitate real sounds

Wikipedia (54)

Each ear enjoys every ecstasy.

The brass crescendoed and the bass drum boomed.

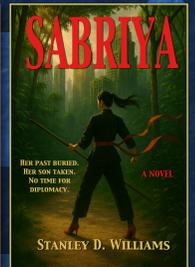
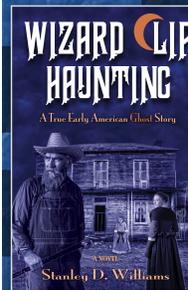
The silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain. (The Raven)

Meow, meow said the cat, and oink, oink echoed the pig.

39

Secrets of Writing to Capture & Engage Readers

7 Visualize with A.I.



40

7 A.I. SABRIYA



Sabriya of Shenzhen Cast



Busaba Sabriya Sir Duke Jechu Sapp Protege Ci and Megui



Dr. Lu Funzini Sensei Sister Linsim Sensei Master Singha Frog Truck Driver Buddhist Master Anya Pharmacist

41

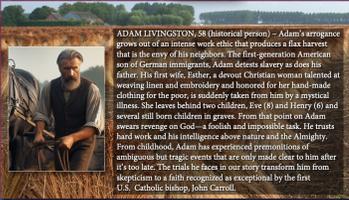
7 A.I. Wizard Clip Haunting



THE CHARACTERS

42

7 A.I. Wizard Clip Haunting



ADAM LIVINGSTON, 58 (Historical person) - Adam's arrogance grows out of an intense work ethic that produces a fine harvest that is the envy of his neighbors. The first-generation American son of German immigrants, Adam detests slavery as does his father. His first wife, Esther, a devout Christian woman talented at weaving linen and embroidery and honored for her hand-made clothing for the poor, is suddenly taken from him by a mystical illness. She leaves behind two children, Eve (9) and Henry (6) and several still born children in graves. From that point on Adam swears revenge on God—a foolish and impossible task. He trusts hard work and his intelligence above nature and the Almighty. From childhood, Adam has experienced premonitions of malignants that fringe events that are only made clear to him after it's too late. The trials he faces in our story transform him from skepticism to a faith recognized as exceptional by the first U.S. Catholic bishop, John Carroll.



THE CLIPPING WIZARD (CYN NAMRASHT) (Historical entity)
-The Wizard is the seminal, demonic antagonist of the story. It is by far the most arrogant and confident of our characters. Its hellish charge is to bring its targets, Adam Livingston and Denis Cahill, to perdition by causing them to reject religion in all its forms and curse God before they die. The Wizard is not always successful, but it tries hard, too hard for many who have experienced its wrath in history.



SAM AND BETHANY DARK, late 30s -The Darks are former married slaves of General Horatio Gates whose plantation home is known still today as Traveler's Rest near Kearneysville, West Virginia. Adam buys the Darks from Gates, and then signs them to an indentured work agreement as freemen. Although illiterate, they are devout Christians. Adam buys the Darks from Gates, and then signs them to an indentured work agreement as freemen. Although illiterate, they are devout Christians. Adam buys the Darks from Gates, and then signs them to an indentured work agreement as freemen. Although illiterate, they are devout Christians. Adam buys the Darks from Gates, and then signs them to an indentured work agreement as freemen. Although illiterate, they are devout Christians.



CATHARINE CAHILL, 16 - Fr. Denis' 14d sister immigrated to the United States from Ireland ostensibly to find a husband, as all the Irish boys (and one particularly) are rakes. Her parents would not let her travel alone, so she comes with her best friend, the older, wiser and more cunning, **LETICIA MCCARTNEY**, 19, a dedicated sten who from first sight is determined to marry Fr. Denis Cahill, having heard much about him from Catharine and the older Cahille. Together, Catharine and Leticia are lives-in sinners for the McCherry's three boys. Catharine is domestic and loves to knit. Leticia is a siren and loves to ride horses ... bareback.

7 A.I. - Tools I've Used

Microsoft Copilot
ChatGPT
Google Labs: Whisk
Google Veo3

7 A.I. TIGER'S HOPE



Anna Marie (Tiger) Norwell

7 A.I. Wizard Clip Haunting Jr. (YA)



Secrets of Writing to Capture & Engage Readers

RESOURCES

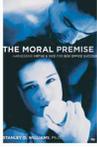
www.MoralPremise.com



382 Essays



YouTube / Rumble
12 Lessons - 25 Videos
9 Ancillary Videos



Book