

The Story Spine

By Kenn Adams

THE STORY SPINE

THE STORY SPINE	STRUCTURE	FUNCTION
Once upon a time...	Beginning	The world of the story is introduced and the main character's routine is established.
Every day...		
But, one day...	The Event	The main character breaks the routine .
Because of that...	Middle	There are dire consequences for having broken the routine. It is unclear if the main character will come out alright in the end.
Because of that...		
Because of that...		
Until finally...	The Climax	The main character embarks upon success or failure
And, ever since then...	End	The main character succeeds or fails, and a new routine is established.

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The Incredibles

Once upon a time there was a superhero named Mr. Incredible who was forced to live as an ordinary man in a society where superheroes were outlawed.

Every day, he grew more and more frustrated with his stifling, boring life.

But one day, he accepted a secret superhero job from a mysterious stranger.

Because of that, he fell into the diabolical trap of this mysterious stranger who turned out to be Syndrome, a super villain with a long-time grudge against Mr. Incredible.

Because of that, Syndrome was able to capture and imprison Mr. Incredible.

Because of that, Syndrome could now put his master plan into motion by setting a giant, killer-robot loose on civilization.

Until finally, Mr. Incredible escaped from his prison and foiled the villain by destroying the giant, killer-robot.

And ever since then, he was loved by all and able to be a Superhero again.

From Daniel Pink's *To Sell is Human*

Imagine you're a nonprofit organization that's created a home HIV test and you're looking for funders. Your Pixar Pitch [his term for the Story Spine] could go something like this:

Once upon a time there was a health crisis haunting many parts of Africa.
Every day, thousands of people would die of AIDS and HIV-related illness, often because they didn't know they carried the virus.
But, one day we developed an inexpensive home HIV kit that allowed people to test themselves with simple saliva swab.
Because of that, more people got tested.
Because of that, those with the infection sought treatment and took measures to avoid infecting others.
Until finally this menacing disease slowed its spread.
And, ever since then more people lived longer lives.

Additional Resource

For more of Kenn Adams comments on the Story Spine see <http://www.aerogrammestudio.com/2013/06/05/back-to-the-story-spine/>.