

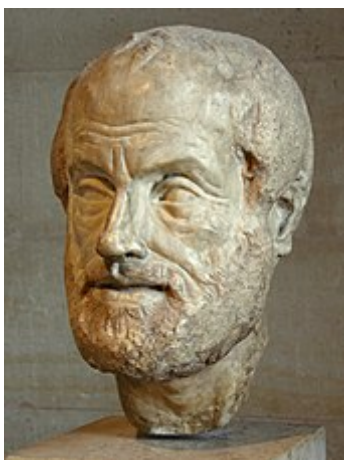
# MIKEY D'S STORYTELLIN' BLOG

2020/09/19 BY ORIGMIKEYD

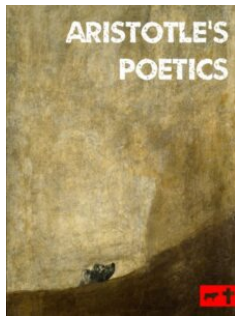
Shakespeare Would be Proud: A Tale about Five Acts & How Have My Media Habits Changed

## Shakespeare Would be Proud: A Tale about Five Acts

Three act structure is the framework that most writers learn when plotting their stories. Whether knowingly or not, many storytellers, from those around campfires to epic poets to dramatists to avant-garde playwrights, have used three acts to design tales since Aristotle's Poetics.

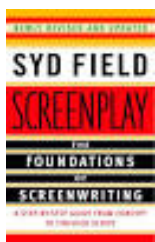


Aristotle Bust



New York Times: <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/19/arts/syd-field-author-of-the-definitive-work-on-writing-screenplays-is-dead-at-77.html>

Today, the Three Act Structure is the go-to structure for most movies and television shows in Hollywood. Syd Field is responsible for much of the reason the Three Act Structure. His 2013 obituary explains this as well as how his landmark book: *Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting* is considered the first book to document screenwriting structure.

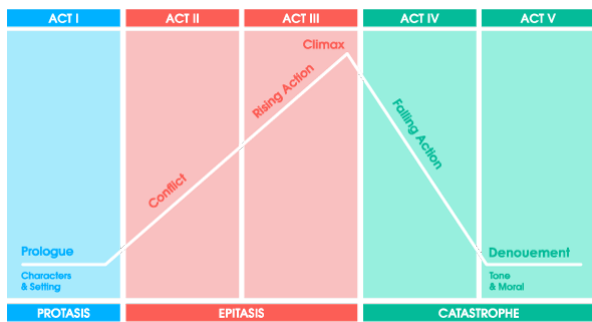


Field's obit. also mentions that Syd Field's screenwriting book is a go-to manual for many screenwriters, including Judd Apatow, James Cameron and Tina Fey but also details how many believe his structure leads to movies that are too formulaic.

Fortunately, many other screenwriting structures exist if a storyteller finds the Three Act Structure too binding. Writers can use Four Act, Five Act, even Nine Act form to plot out their film. The Five Act Structure will be the focus of this post. Though it has a long history, today, it is a form mainly used in one hour TV Dramas. However, writers sometimes use it in film.

What is the Five Act Structure? To explain it, one must define and break it down to its components. Each Act serves a purpose. Therefore it is crucial to explain what an Act is. Merriam Webster defines an "Act" as "one of the principal divisions in theatrical work." So it shouldn't surprise anyone that each Act has a purpose.

<sup>4</sup> : one of the principal divisions of a theatrical work (such as a play or opera)  
// a play in three acts



Freytag's Pyramid

Archives.org: <https://archive.org/details/freytagstechniqu00freyuoft/page/n5/mode/2up>

In his book, *Die Technik des Dramas* (English translation: *Freytag's Technique of the Drama: An Exposition of Dramatic Composition and Art*), German Novelist Gustav Freytag used a pyramid to show the Five Act Structure.

No Film School: <https://nofilmschool.com/how-to-write-five-act-structure>

This article titled 'What is Five-Act Structure and How Do You Use It?' by the website, NoFilmSchool.com is an outstanding primer for an individual interested in story structure. It explains the purpose of each Act straightforwardly.

Vox.com: <https://www.vox.com/culture/2018/1/20/16910760/breaking-bad-10th-anniversary-birthday-structure>

Shakespeare is the most famous proponent of this structure, but a modern user is Breaking Bad creator Vince Gilligan. This Vox.com article explains how Vince Gilligan and

his writing staff wrote the modern-day Shakespearian drama 'Breaking Bad.'

YouTube Channel: Lessons From The Screenplay: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yYMhalLOs-I>

As said before, though not as common as the Three-Act Structure, some well-known films such as *The Girl With The Dragon Tattoo* and *Gladiator* abide by the Five Act Structure. The video breaks down how *The Girl With The Dragon Tattoo* uses the Five Act Structure.

Gladiator Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uvbavW31adA>

This is the trailer for the famous Sword and Sandal movie *Gladiator*. The story uses the Five Act Structure to tell the story of Roman General Maximus Decimus Meridius.

StoryboardThat.com: <https://www.storyboardthat.com/articles/e/five-act-structure>

This comic from the website StoryboardThat shows what happens in each of the Five Acts of Shakespeare's 'Macbeth.'

John Yorke: <https://www.johnyorkestory.com/the-book/>

In the book, *Into the Woods: A Five-Act Journey Into Story* by BBC TV executive John Yorke goes into incredible detail with a clear understanding of writing a story using the Five Act Structure. When advocating for using the Five Act Structure instead of the Three Act Structure, John Yorke writes, “writers who struggle with the Hollywood paradigm often find the five-act shape gives them control over their middle section they otherwise find hard to deliver.”

John Yorke Google Talk: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=POUZHUnB5pQ>

In this video, John Yorke gives a Google Talk discussing his storytelling process. He uses clips from the long-running British Soap ‘Eastenders’ to explain story structure.

Five Act Structure is an ancient structure that, if used more often, could help the movie industry get out of the funk of creating “the same old same old” kind of content.

## How Have My Media Habits Changed

Overall I would say that my media habits have stayed relatively the same. In the past couple of weeks, I have spent more time watching shows on streaming services. I believe it has changed because I get more of my news from the internet. I still find myself reading various stories from different sources, but many I read come as updates on my cell phone. Other news pieces are from news or media companies I follow on social media. I will click on a story posted that interests me.

I believe one way I have changed my mind is I now view MSNBC as far left as Fox News is right. Though I tend to agree with their views, I can now step back, see their bias, and notice the biases that I hold. I still watch MSNBC on TV, but I would not use them as a source when debating people who disagree with my viewpoints. I have only added two sources that I didn't read before. I now also look at articles and media from two conservative sources: The Guardian and The Bulwark. These sources have allowed me to form more well-rounded opinions.

 **UNCATEGORIZED**