Creative Memoir Programme

01 Introduction to Memoir Writing – *6 February*

02 Crafting Compelling Life Stories – *8 February*

03 Creative Writing Made Easy: Tools & Resources – *12 February*

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Dr Julia Evans & Richard Evans

www.852press.com.au/creative-memoir-programme

write@852press.com.au

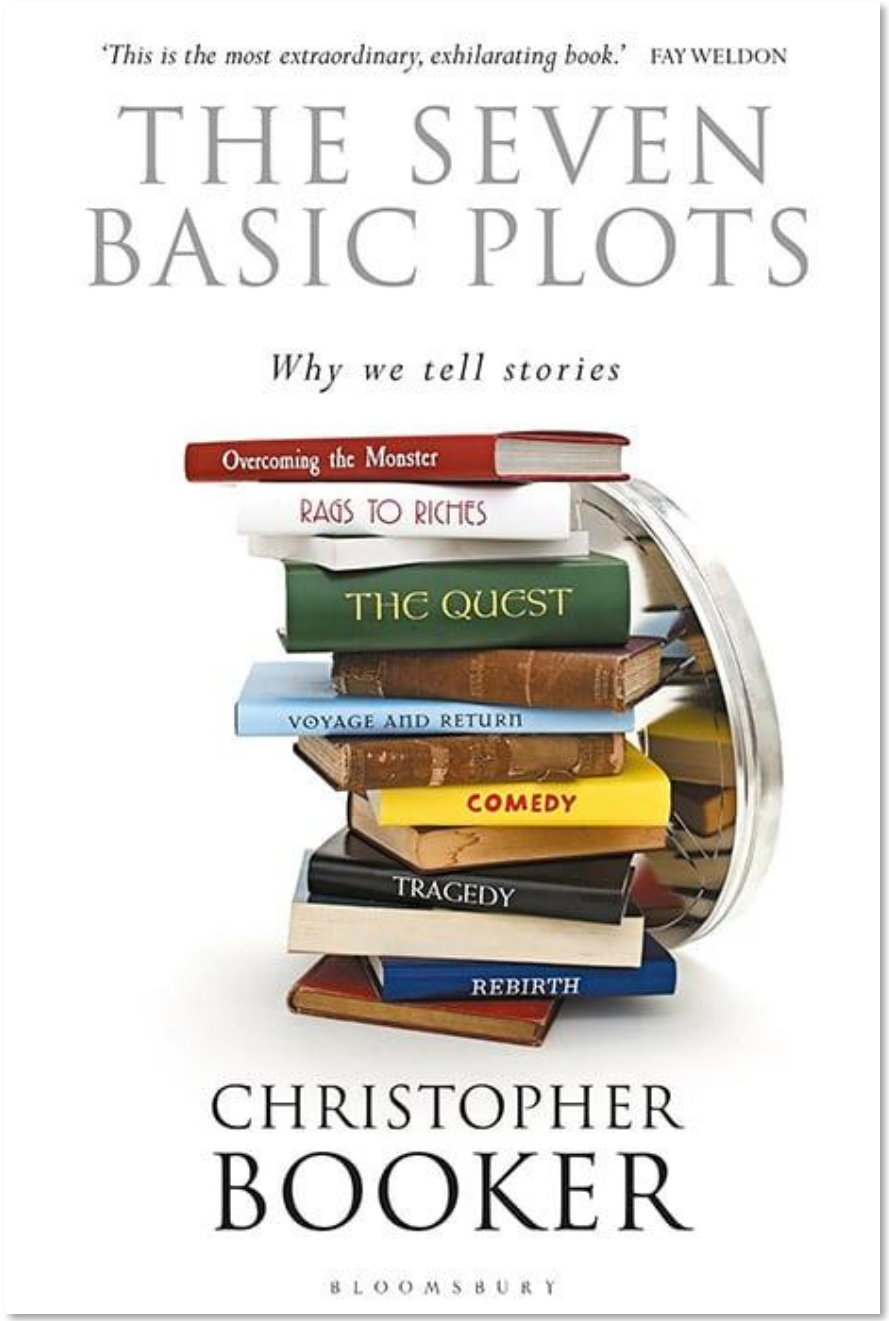
02 Crafting Compelling Life Stories

- What is your story actually about?
- Three act structure
- Characters
- Plot, title & loglines



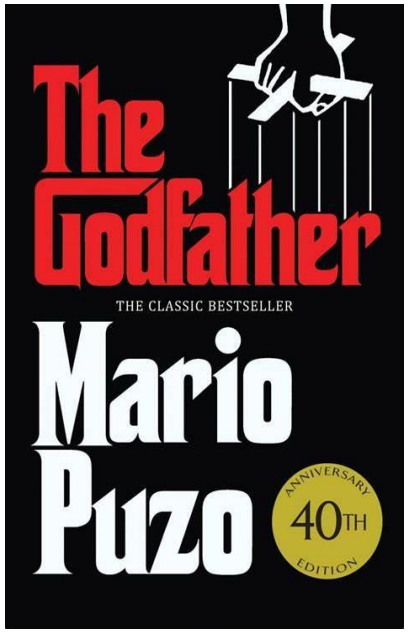
What is your story about?

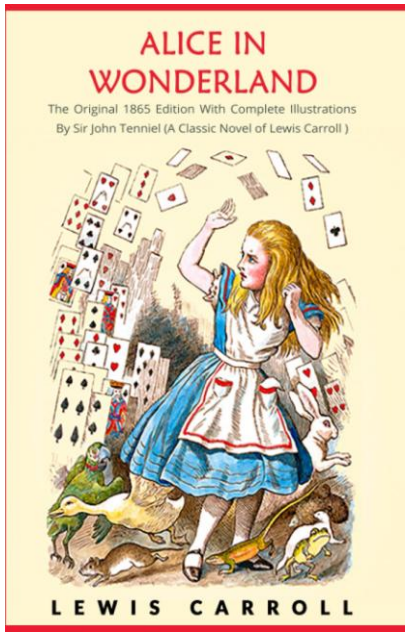
- Overcoming the Monster
- Rags to Riches
- The Quest
- Voyage & Return
- Comedy
- Tragedy
- Rebirth

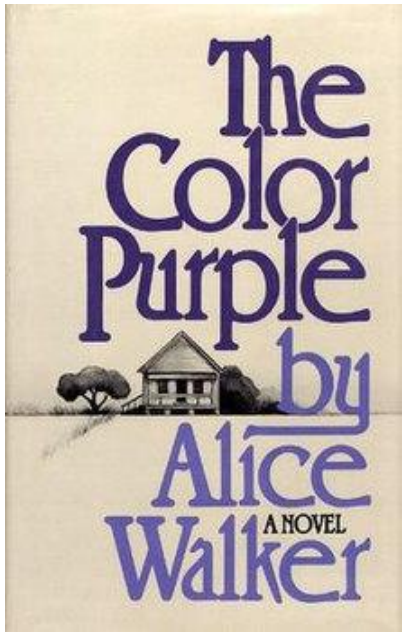


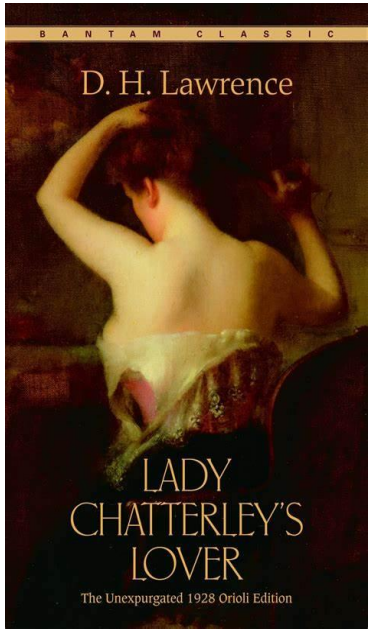
Quiz!

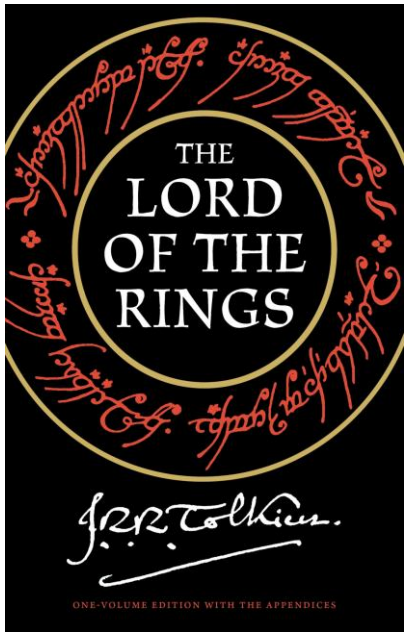
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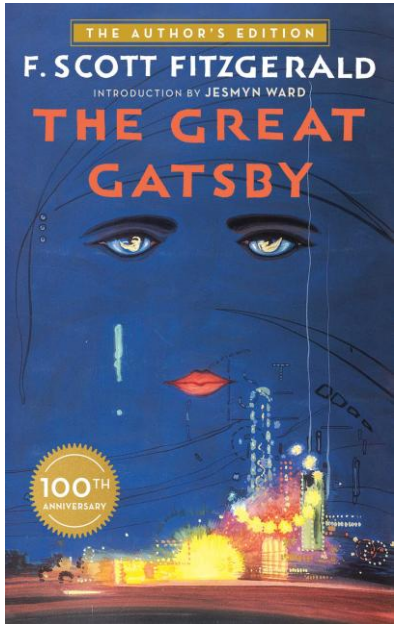


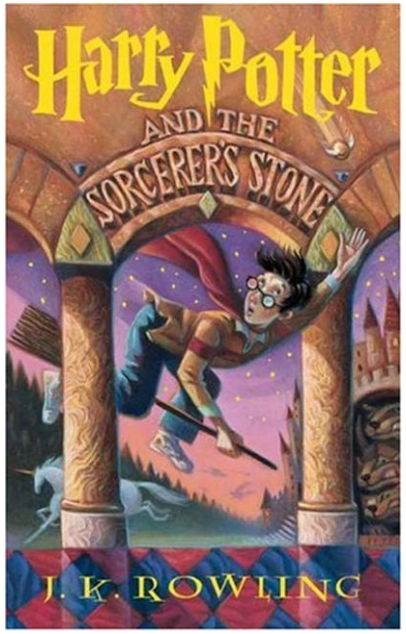


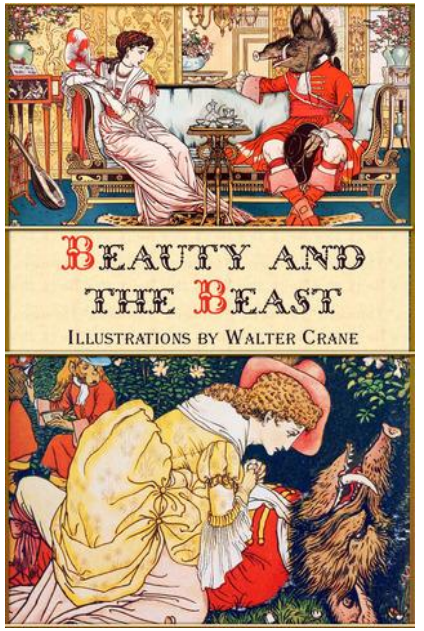












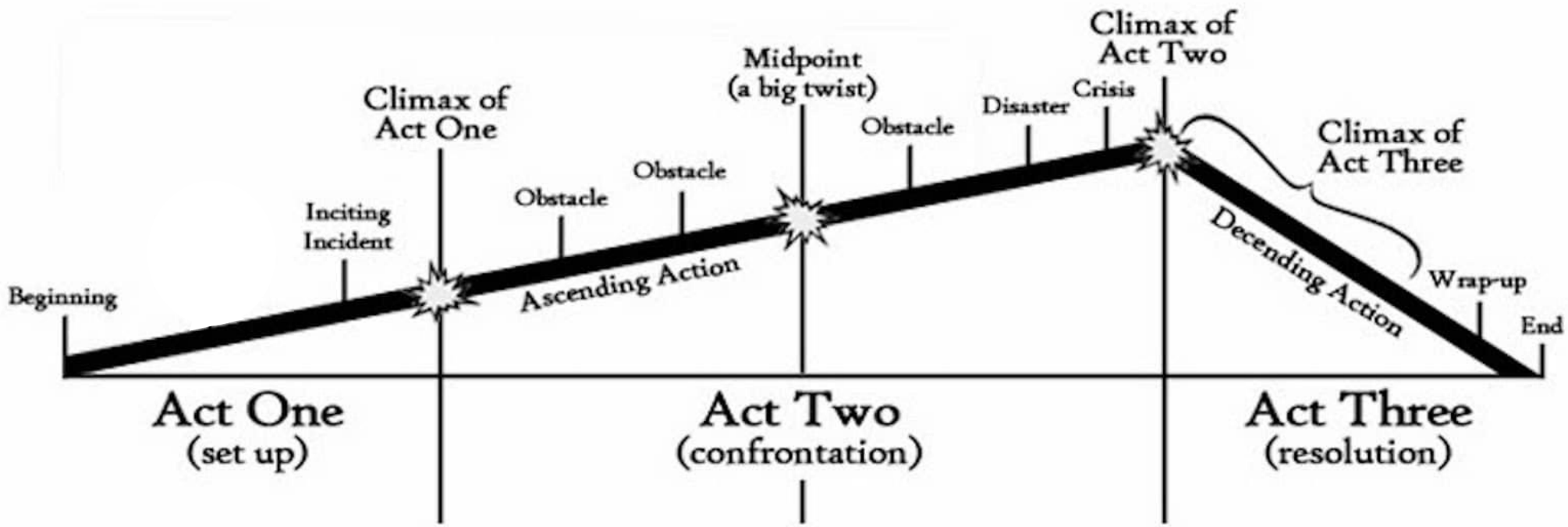
Three Act Structure

A great story has a:

1. **Beginning** (*the setup & inciting incident*)
2. **Middle** (*rising action, midpoint crisis & escalation of conflict*)
3. **End** (*climax, falling action & closure*)



Three-Act Structure



Story Throughline

Overarching structure that holds any story together and provides consistency with:

- Overall plot
- Main character (*the protagonist*)
- The nemesis or influence character (*the antagonist*)
- Relationships



Characters

Hero (*Protagonist*): Who drives your story?

Nemesis or influence character (*Antagonist*): What opposes them?

Supporting Roles: Sidekicks, mentors, or love interests?

Non-human characters: Like an illness, war, a hometown, or a pivotal goal?



What’s your story?

It is called … (**compelling title**)

My story is about …

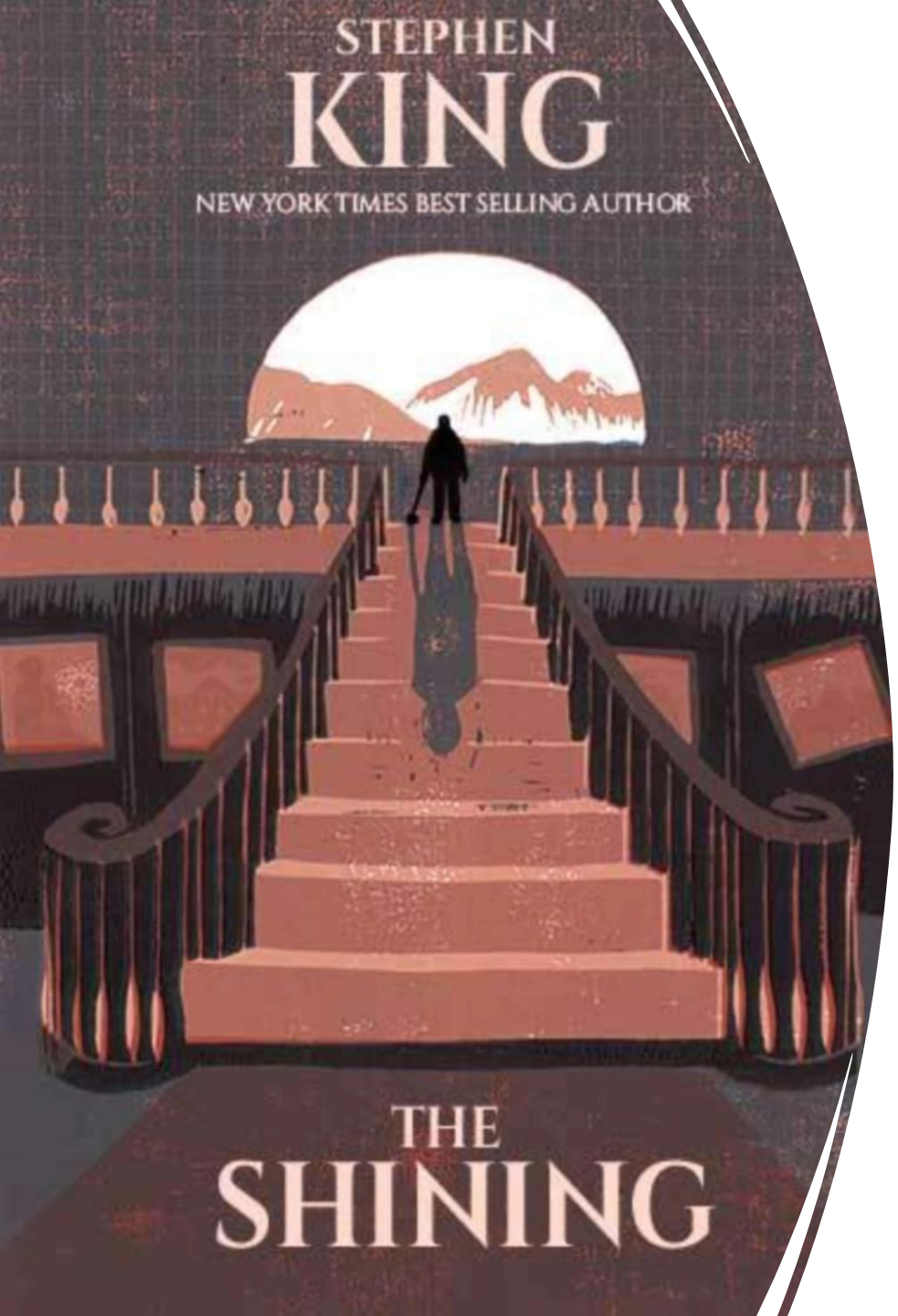
the *catalyst*,

the *protagonist*,

the *antagonist*, and

the *main conflict*.





Example

Stephen King's **The Shining** is a story of **overcoming the monster.**

When a family heads to an **isolated hotel for the winter** (*catalyst*), a ghostly and sinister **presence** (*antagonist*) influences a loving **father** (*protagonist*) into violence, while his psychic son sees horrific visions from both past and future that forbode the family **may not make it out alive** (*main conflict*).

Map Your Three Acts

ACT 1	**What is your story about (plot)?**
Beginning	**What is the backstory?**
Inciting Incident	**Who are the characters?**
ACT 2	**What are the obstacles and how are they overcome?**
Rising Action	
Midpoint	**What is the midpoint crisis?**
ACT 3	**How do you resolve your story?**
Climax	
Resolution	



Coming Up

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Writing Exercises



Show, Don't Tell

Think of a significant memory – something that still feels vivid. Close your eyes and focus on the details: What did the space look like? Were there any specific smells, sounds, or sensations? How did you physically feel in that moment? Write about this memory, focusing on describing the scene with all five senses.



Dialogue & Inner Thoughts

Recall a memorable conversation you had during a pivotal moment in your life. Write a scene with that conversation, including the dialogue as best you remember it, along with any thoughts you had but didn't say out loud. After writing, go back and add some description of body language, facial expressions, or setting details to capture the mood and setting.



Scene Setting

Think of a specific place from your past that holds a vivid memory for you—perhaps your childhood kitchen, a favourite park, or your high school classroom. Take five minutes to describe this setting using sensory details: what you see, hear, smell, feel, and possibly taste. Focus on grounding your reader in this space by being as specific as possible.



Pacing & Structure

Write about a moment when you felt nervous or excited. Slow it down by describing each step or sensation leading up to the key event. Focus on building suspense through pacing.



Symbolism & Metaphor

Think of a challenging or joyful memory. Choose an object or image from that moment to symbolise the emotion you felt and describe it using metaphor.



Flashbacks & Flash-Forwards

Write a short scene from your life and include a brief flashback or flash-forward to add context or hint at what lies ahead.

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