

Save the Cat! Beat Sheet Worksheet

Story Information

Story Title: _____

Author: _____

Genre: _____

Total Planned Word Count/Pages: _____

One-sentence logline: _____

THE BEATS

For a standard novel or screenplay, percentages and page numbers are approximations to help with pacing

1. OPENING IMAGE (1%)

The first impression of your story - a snapshot of your protagonist and their world before the transformation:

2. SET-UP (1-10%)

Introduce your protagonist's world, their flaws, and what's missing in their life:

What "Six Things That Need Fixing" in your protagonist's life will be addressed?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

3. THEME STATED (5%)

Someone or something states what your story is really about (often told to the protagonist but not understood by them yet):

4. CATALYST/INCITING INCIDENT (10%)

The life-changing event that knocks your protagonist's world off-balance:

5. DEBATE (10-20%)

The protagonist questions whether to pursue this new path or challenge:

What are they afraid of? What's at stake if they proceed?

6. BREAK INTO ACT TWO (20%)

The protagonist makes a proactive choice and crosses the threshold into a new world or situation:

7. B STORY (22%)

Introduction of a new character or relationship that will carry the theme and help the protagonist's transformation:

8. FUN AND GAMES (20-50%)

The "promise of the premise" - the enjoyable exploration of the concept and the protagonist's new world:

List 3-5 key scenes or moments that deliver on the promise of your premise:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

9. MIDPOINT (50%)

A major turning point where stakes are raised and the protagonist either gets what they want (false victory) or doesn't (false defeat):

Is this a false victory or false defeat for your protagonist? Explain:

10. BAD GUYS CLOSE IN (50-75%)

External pressures intensify while internal doubts and character flaws resurface:

External pressures/antagonistic forces:

Internal conflicts/doubts/flaws:

11. ALL IS LOST (75%)

The lowest point where the protagonist faces their greatest fear and all seems lost:

What does your protagonist lose at this moment? (Should relate to theme)

12. DARK NIGHT OF THE SOUL (75-80%)

The protagonist's moment of deep reflection where they must find a new solution:

13. BREAK INTO ACT THREE (80%)

A new insight or solution emerges from the darkness, inspired by the B Story:

How does the B Story help provide this breakthrough?

14. FINALE (80-99%)

The protagonist applies what they've learned to defeat the antagonist and solve their problems:

Gathering the team: _____

Executing the plan: _____

Highest stakes confrontation: _____

Proof of change/character growth: _____

15. FINAL IMAGE (99-100%)

The closing snapshot that shows the transformation of the protagonist and their world:

How does this final image contrast with or mirror your opening image?

Additional Notes

Genre Elements: *What specific conventions of your chosen genre have you included?*

Primal Stakes: *What basic human need or desire drives your story?*

Transformation: *In one sentence, how does your protagonist change from beginning to end?*

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