



Photo by [Miguel Henriques](#) on [Unsplash](#)

# EVERY STORYTELLING FRAMEWORK EVER. EXPLAINED.

RAVISHANKAR IYER







**Stories have been around since the dawn of civilisation**

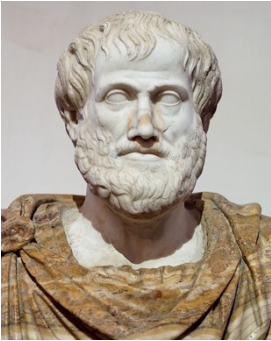
STORY  
rules



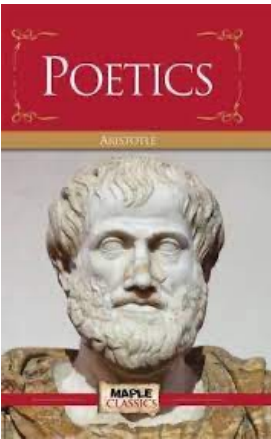
**Cave paintings in France, 17,000 years old**

Image credit: Jack Versloot, CC BY 2.0, via [Wikimedia Commons](#)

# 🔗 The first recorded story framework was by Aristotle



ARISTOTLE  
C. 384-322 BC



Every plot must have a:

BEGINNING

MIDDLE

END

(If it looks too simple, hang on – we're about to dial up the complexity lever)



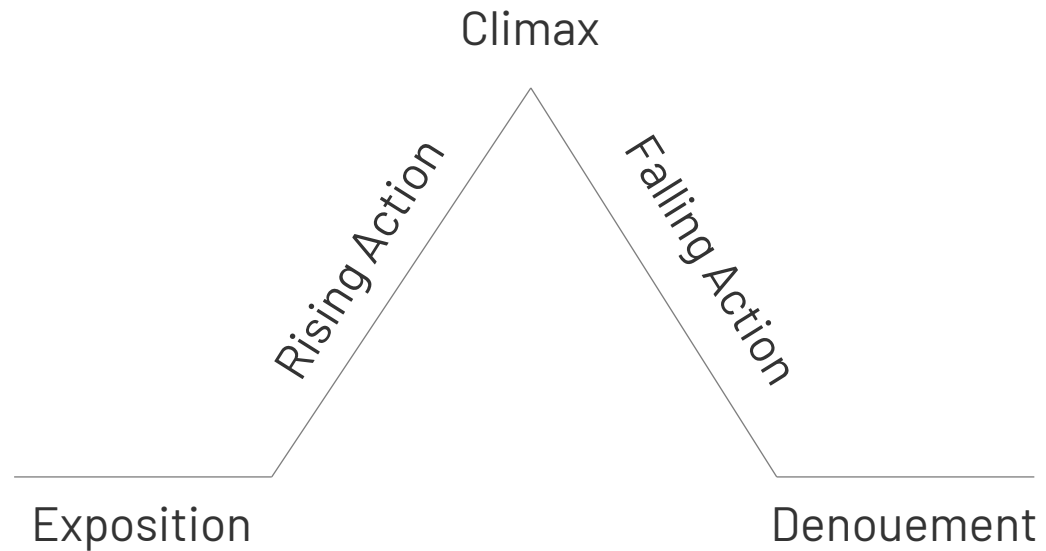
# Then there was the more nuanced Freytag Pyramid by German novelist, Gustav Freytag



GUSTAV FREYTAG  
1816-1895



## Freytag's Pyramid

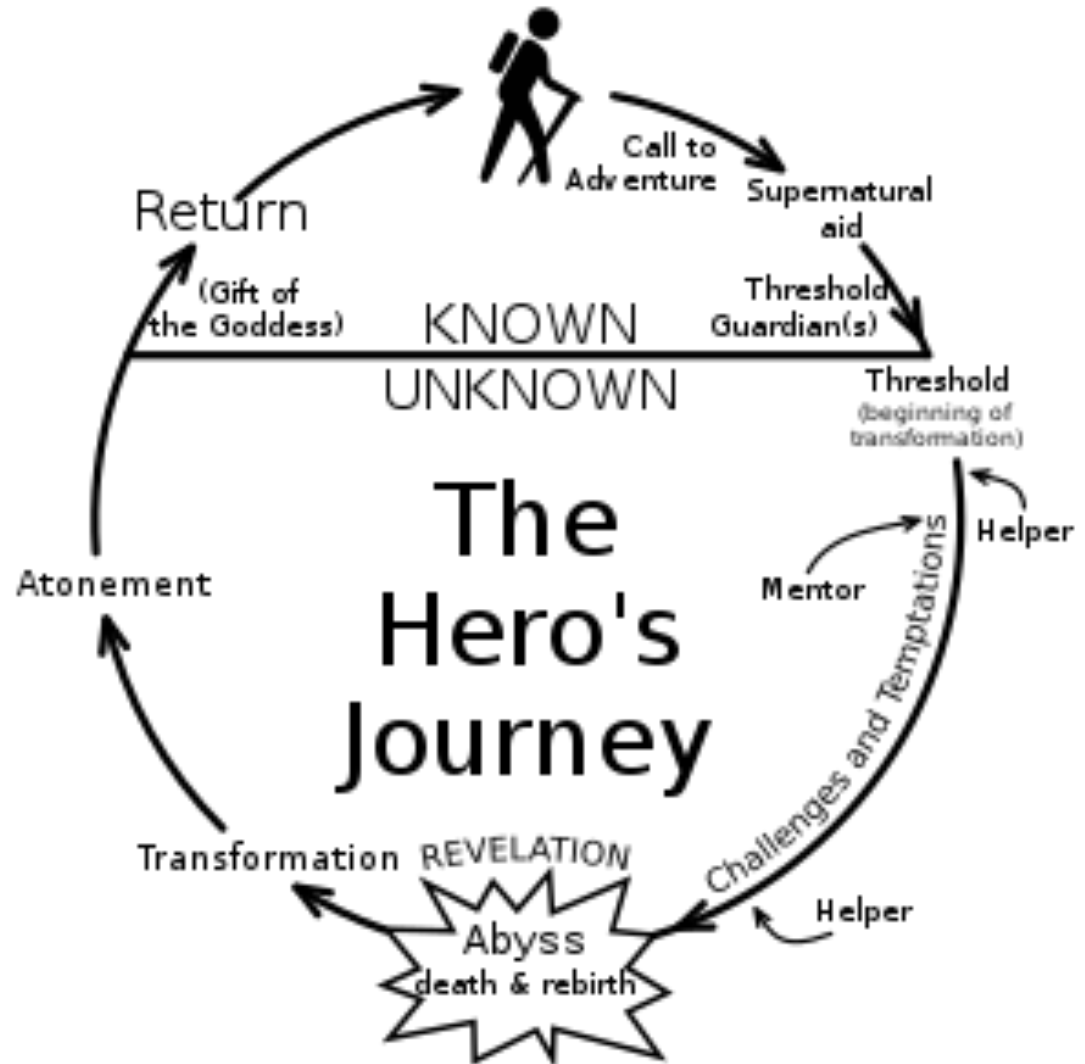
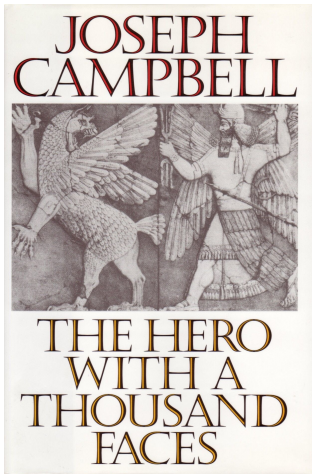




# The slightly more complex Hero's Journey by Joseph Campbell

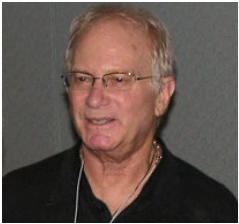


JOSEPH CAMPBELL  
1904-1987

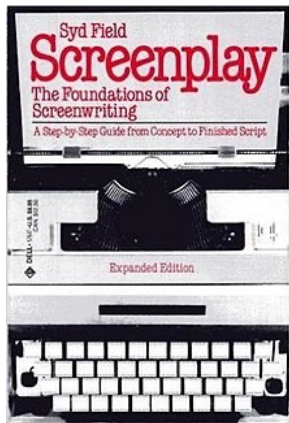




# With Syd Field, things became simpler again, taking inspiration from Aristotle



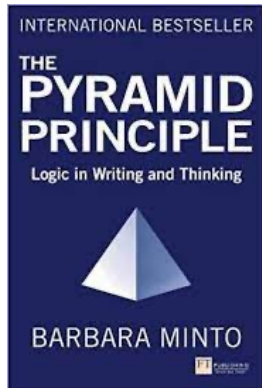
SYD FIELD  
1935-2013



## ☞ And then there was the business-focused version by Barbara Minto



BARBARA MINTO  
B. 1934



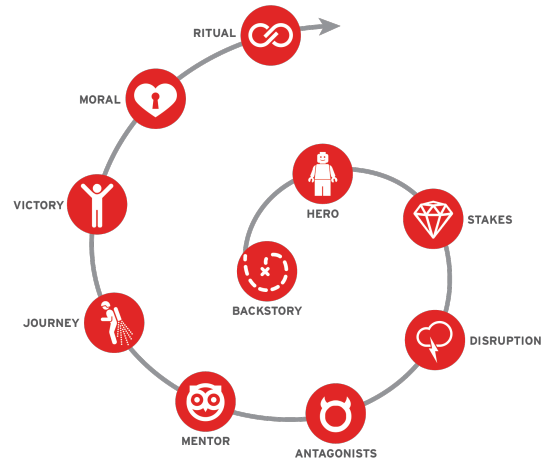
S Situation

C Complication

Q Question

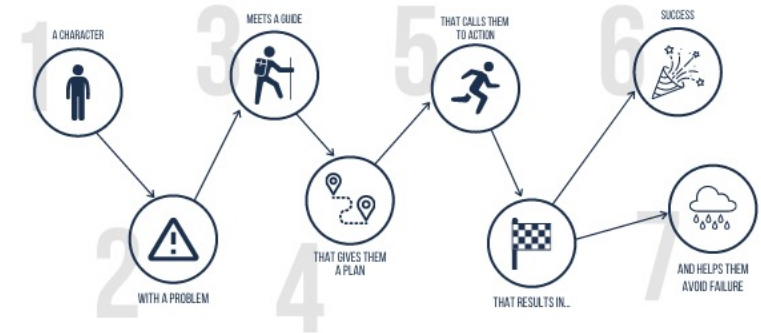
A Answer

And then there are the plethora of frameworks by Storytellers like us...

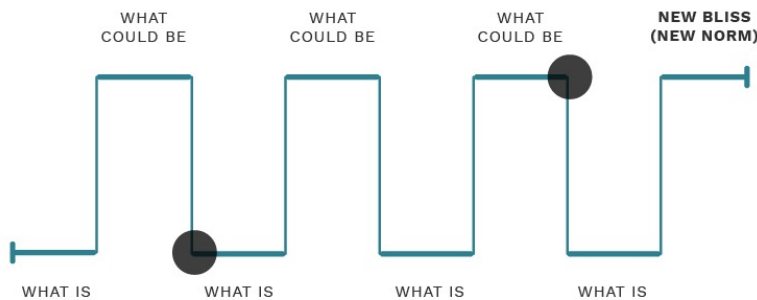


PARK HOWELL'S STORY CYCLE SYSTEM

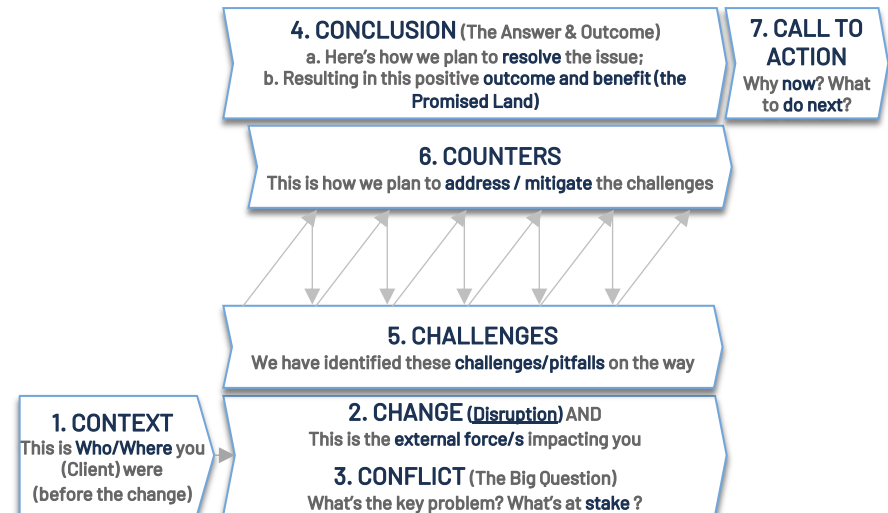
## THE STORYBRAND 7-PART FRAMEWORK



DONALD MILLER'S STORYBRAND FRAMEWORK



NANCY DUARTE'S STORY STRUCTURE



RAVISHANKAR IYER'S 7Cs STORY FRAMEWORK



## Three questions

Why so many  
frameworks?

How are they  
similar and  
different?

Which one is  
the right  
framework?



# Before we get to story frameworks, why story?



*Humans have been using stories to share  
info since millennia...*

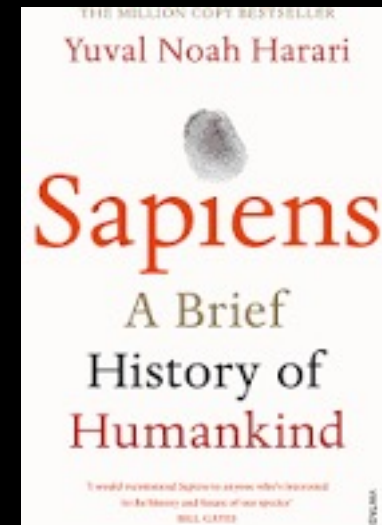
# Yuval Harari: Storytelling is the reason why Homo Sapiens are the dominant species on the planet

*“...**myths***

*give Sapiens the unprecedented ability to cooperate flexibly in large numbers. Ants and bees can also work together in huge numbers, but they do so in a very rigid manner and only with close relatives. Wolves and chimpanzees cooperate far more flexibly than ants, but they can do so only with small numbers of other individuals that they know intimately. Sapiens can cooperate in extremely flexible ways with countless numbers of strangers. That's why Sapiens rule the world”*



Yuval Noah Harari



***But why were stories so important?  
What info would be shared by them?***

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***STORIES ARE CRITICAL BECAUSE THEY  
SHARE INFO ABOUT SOMETHING  
FUNDAMENTAL TO HUMANKIND.***

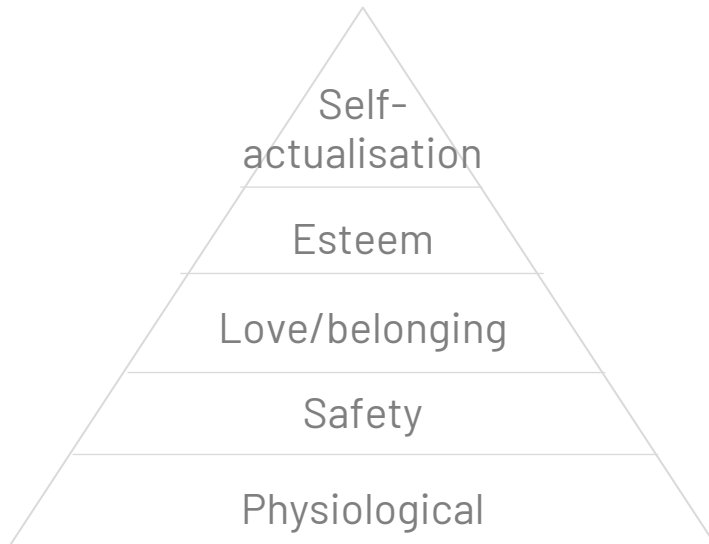
***PROBLEM SOLVING***



Here's the deal: All of humankind is engaged in two activities

## PROBLEM SOLVING

**We are defined by our needs.  
Every need is a problem to solve...**



Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

## STORYTELLING

**...And every problem solved is a  
story to tell**



**Every problem you have may be one that others also have (or might have).**

***You need to teach them how you solved it.***



# Stories are the most effective way to teach: They are memorable, they pack in emotion and they hold our attention

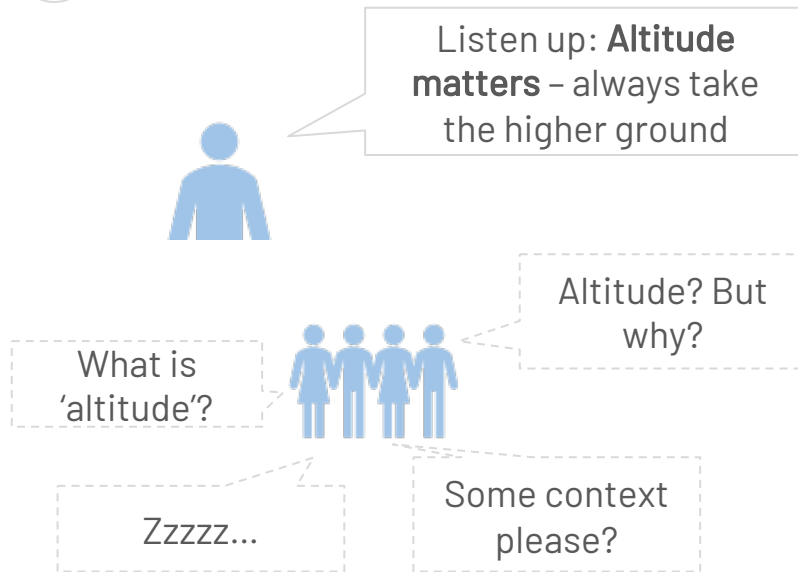
1

## The Incident



2

## Later that evening at home: Take 1



3

## Later that evening at home: Take 2



In short,

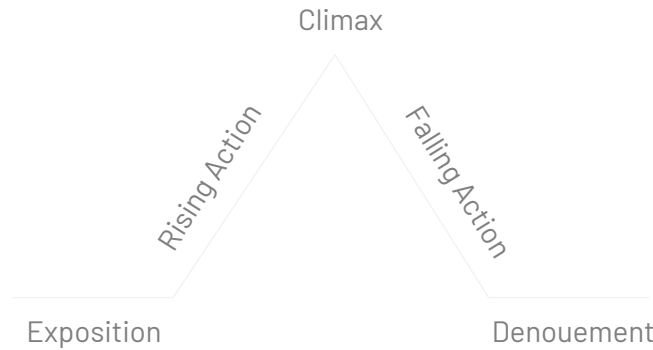
***A STORY IS  
AN ACCOUNT  
OF HOW TO  
(OR HOW NOT TO)  
SOLVE A PROBLEM***

# And now let's get back to our Story frameworks



**Problem**      **Solution**

Aristotle

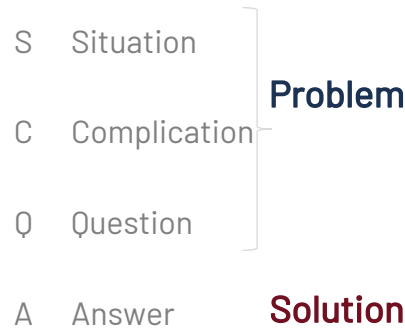


**Problem**      **Solution**  
Freytag's Pyramid

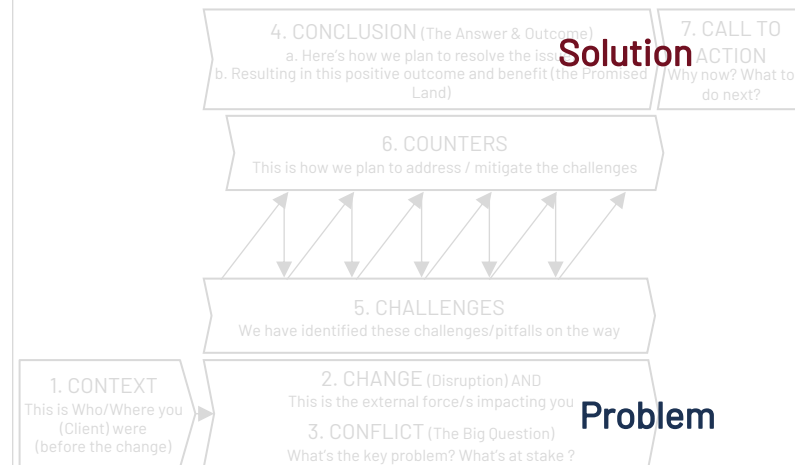


**Problem**      **Solution**

Three Act Structure



SCQA



The 7Cs Story Framework ☺



# In conclusion

At a Fundamental level, that's all a Story has to do. Clearly tell the audience:

1

Who is the protagonist and what was their status quo?

2

What changed in their world?

3

What Problem did that give rise to? Why should the Audience care about that Problem?

**Problem**

4

What was the Solution?

5

What were the obstacles and pitfalls in implementing that solution?

**Solution**

6

How did the Hero/Solution navigate those pitfalls?

7

What lesson or implication do you draw from the story?



For more good stuff from the land of storytelling, follow me at your preferred location



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