

Act I

Stage 1: Introduction to the Ordinary World

- We meet home base, gaining context for our story
 - Provides contrast for the Special World to come
- Opening image is a suggestion of: the story to come; or the theme; or the Special World
 - It sets the stage
 - It conjures up a mood, an image or a metaphor, all by our design
- Hero's entrance - Defines the hero straight away
 - How will our reader first experience our hero?
 - First actions speak volumes
 - First actions and behaviors should be characteristic – defining and revealing character
 - No bait and switch - be consistent
 - Raises dramatic questions about hero – goals, inner and outer problems
 - What's at stake?
- Lures our reader into our hero – empathy – identification, bond, sympathy
 - Universal goals, drives, desires, or needs
 - Hero's Lack (missing elements) can drive reader's sympathy and desire for their wholeness
 - Hero's Lack makes him human, real
 - Lack is sometimes hidden, but still somehow revealed
- First statement of theme comes in the Ordinary World (In *Act I*)
 - Theme: "something set before" – needs to be laid out in advance
- Backstory through exposition – artfully and gracefully reveal all backstory and all other pertinent information about the plot
 - Reader will be more involved if they have to work a little to piece things together
 - Reveal indirectly: visually, on the run, through conflict