



THE BLAKE SNYDER BEAT SHEET

<https://savethecat.com/get-started#1565365814194-e72fe034-d83c>

ACT 1: THE ORDINARY WORLD – THESIS

BEAT 1 – OPENING IMAGE (0–1%)

A thematic or grabbing visual image, scene, or short sequence which sets the tone of your movie. It often serves as the “before” picture of your hero (or world) that will transform throughout the story.

BEAT 2 – THEME STATED (5%)

A line of dialogue that organically states what your story is all about. The theme is typically voiced by another character to your hero, calling out the hero’s deeper flaw or spiritual need for change.

BEAT 3 – SET-UP (1%-10%)

Reveals your main character’s “ordinary life” or status quo. Takes time to demonstrate a character’s flaws that negatively impact the hero’s life. Describes the character’s familiar world when it comes to home, work, and play, and introduces the main characters who inhabit the hero’s life.

BEAT 4 – CATALYST (10%)

The life-changing moment that happens to the hero and sets the story in motion. Provides that initial shove onto the story roller coaster.

BEAT 5 – DEBATE (10%-20%)

The reaction to the Catalyst, usually presented in the form of a question (“Do I really have to go on this dangerous quest?”). Can be a sequence of doubt, denial, evasion, or even preparation. It lends weight to the life-changing bigger journey yet to come and foreshadows the new world as one that you do not enter lightly.

ACT 2: THE UPSIDE-DOWN WORLD – ANTITHESIS

BEAT 6 – BREAK INTO 2 (20%)

The hero decides to take action and locks in to accomplish a goal, venturing into a new world, or choosing a new way of thinking. This is a no-turning-back decision that separates the old, ordinary world from the new world.

BEAT 7 – B STORY (22%)

A thematic secondary story is kicked off. Often, this is a story about love or friendship or mentorship.

BEAT 8 – FUN & GAMES (20%-50%)

The hero is in the new world. This beat delivers on the promise of the premise. It's a large section of the story that essentially presents "the movie you came to see." Contains scenes and sequences that are shown in the trailer of movies or hinted at in the blurb on the back of the book or on that "Coming Next Week" teaser at the end of a TV show.

BEAT 9 – MIDPOINT (50%)

The middle of the story and culmination of the Fun & Games. Usually, this beat is a false victory or a false defeat. The Midpoint raises the stakes on the hero, forcing them to narrow their focus on winning the day or surviving. Often, a ticking clock is introduced here, ratcheting up tension and boosting the urgency.

BEAT 10 – BAD GUYS CLOSE IN (50%-75%)

Stakes are raised and tension is higher. External Bad Guys may be literally closing in or psychological, internal Bad Guys may be causing more problems.

BEAT 11 – ALL IS LOST (75%)

The moment the hero most fears actually happens. Now it looks like the hero will lose. Usually contains a whiff of death where someone has died or the threat of real death is in the air. This is the hero's rock-bottom moment.

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

A reaction to the All Is Lost where the hero wallows in sadness, mourning what was lost and lamenting that they are now worse off than before the story began. This is an opportunity to take stock, where meaningful learning happens on the way to transformation.

ACT 3: MERGED WORLD – SYNTHESIS

BEAT 13 – BREAK INTO 3 (80%)

A new piece of information is discovered and the hero realizes what they must do to solve all the problems that have been created in Act 2.

BEAT 14 – FINALE (80%-99%)

The big showdown where the hero finally proves they've learned the lesson that was taught via their struggles in Act 2. The quest is won, the dragon is slain, and when the smoke clears, the hero has changed. Their flaw is repaired and the world is indeed a better place.

BEAT 15 – FINAL IMAGE (99%-100%)

The “after photo” of the hero and the world. A mirror of the Opening Image. Shows how far the world and the hero have transformed.