

A short story needs three steps.

1. Introduce the main character and the problem or challenge that they face. The problem or challenge must give your main character some conflict or it won't be a believable problem.

2. Escalate the problem by making you main character struggle.

3. The main character must solve the problem, or come to a new understanding of it.

1. Introduce main character: _____

a. Problem or challenge: _____

b. Conflict: _____

c. Main Character's goal: _____

2. The Struggle: _____

3. How it will be solved or what is learned: _____

Example: *The Merak Galaxy*, by Jill Williamson

1. Introduce main character: Rigil Kentarus is a space ranger who is trying to pull his daily quota of stars into the station. _____

a. Problem or challenge: Many of the space rangers have disappeared lately. Now Rigil's best friend, Merak, has disappeared and Rigil must go and save him. _____

b. Conflict: Rigil must fly to the legendary magnetic hole to rescue his friend and coworkers. It is a dangerous task, but Rigil has no choice. _____

c. Main Character's goal: Rescue the people from the magnetic hole without getting sucked in. He borrows his little sisters plastic space bike to achieve this goal, that way he won't be sucked in by the magnet. _____

2. The Struggle: The only way Rigil knows of to demagnetize is to use a great amount of heat, but how can he tow a star with a plastic kid space bike? _____

3. How it will be solved or what is learned: Rigil tows Merak on his bike away from the magnetic hole long enough for Merak to lasso a star. The magnetic hole pulls Merak's bike in, but Rigil swings up just in time for Merak to jump on Rigil's bike and escape before Merak's bike crashes into the magnetic hole. Everyone is freed. _____