

Outline for Informative Speech “3 Essential Story Elements”

Intro:

- List a few movie quotes. Ask audience what movie after each quote.
 - “To infinity and beyond” – Toy Story
 - This quote comes from a popular movie known as “Toy Story.”
 - “May the force be with you” – Star Wars
 - “wingardium leviosa” – Harry Potter
- These movie quotes are familiar because they all come from movies that have good stories.
- As a filmmaker who has studied and worked in the film industry since 2010, I have come to believe that stories are the most essential part of any film.
- One animation studio who would back me up on this point is Pixar, whose motto is, “story is king.”
- Preview: 3 elements that are essential to any story
 - a. Characters
 - b. Conflict
 - c. The power of uncertainty
- I share this information with you so that you can understand why stories and films have such a powerful influence on you.

Body:

- Character:
 - A character (such as Luke Skywalker, Buzz Lightyear, and others) must have:
 - Goal or Objective (Wizard of Oz: Dorothy wants to get back home to Kansas)
 - Jeff Parkin (film instructor at BYU): “Characters always need to want something. When a character does not want something, people don’t care.”
 - Imperfections – Gives the character room to grow
- Obstacles and Conflict:
 - Conflict is created when we see a character who really wants something really badly and is having a difficult time getting it.
 - Ex: In “Toy Story” Woody wants to get back to Andy, but has difficulty in doing so because of his jealousy for Buzz and because of Sid who tortures toys.
 - Dave Trottier (A script consultant and screenwriting teacher since 2003):
 - “I want to hear about a fascinating character who has a problem. Who was the character? Why are they interesting? What is the problem?”
 - Characters are fascinating when they face conflicts.
 - Conflict gives characters an opportunity to make choices. It also gives them an opportunity to grow.
- The Power of Uncertainty:
 - In other words, Hope vs. Fear
 - Here’s how David Howard (a script consultant in both Hollywood and Europe) once defined hope vs. fear:

- “The key to keeping the audience from guessing ahead is...to make it believe that maybe its hope will come about, but that its fear is just as likely to happen.”
- In order for hope vs. fear to create the power of uncertainty, the audience must see the character as they experience both failure and success along the way.
- For example, in the “Harry Potter” films we see Harry’s success when he finds a horcrux and we see his failures when the forces of Voldemort combine against him.

Conclusion:

- Now that you know a little bit more about characters, conflict, and the power of uncertainty, you can take this knowledge and apply it to the films you see in order to take your movie watching experience “to infinity and beyond.”

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