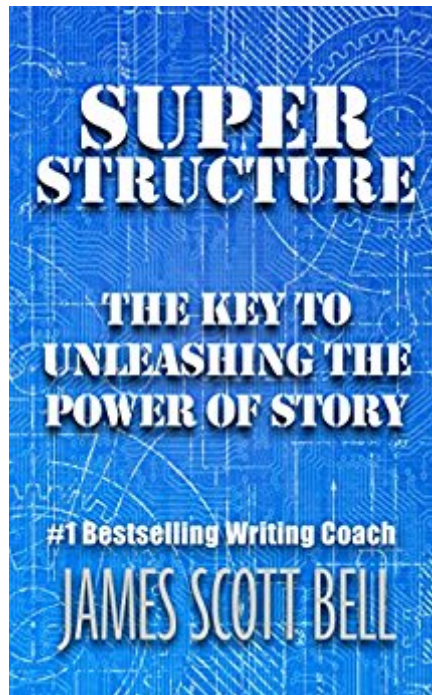




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Super Structure: The Key To Unleashing The Power Of Story



Synopsis

Story loves structure...and so do readers! Super Structure represents over two decades of research on what makes a novel or screenplay entertaining, commercial, original, and irresistible. Contrary to what some may think, structure is not a nasty inhibitor of creativity. Quite the opposite. Properly understood and utilized, structure is what translates story into a form readers are wired to receive it. And it is only when readers truly connect with your story that they turn from casual readers into fans. The material in this book greatly expands upon the chapter on structure in *Write Your Novel From the Middle*. Super Structure can be considered a companion to that book, but it also stands alone in its treatment of the elements of a solid and pleasing plot. Here's more good news: Super Structure will work for any type of writer--those who like to outline, those who just fly by "the seat of the pants," and those who do a little of both. That's because Super Structure stresses the concept of "signpost scenes." There are fourteen signpost scenes, or beats, that can be used to create an entire plot, the skeleton of an idea, or a map to help you figure out what to write next. Every signpost is given its own chapter and explanation, along with a section called "Helpful Hints for Plotters and Pantsers," showing you how to apply what you've learned and adapt it to your own style of writing. Never write a weak novel or screenplay again. Super Structure is a proven foundation that never fails. It frees you to add your original voice and vision, all of which adds up to bestselling fiction and hit screenplays. "I need three things before I tackle a new novel: Diet Coke, a laptop, and my dog-eared copies of James Scott Bell's books on writing craft!" — Kami Garcia, #1 NY Times & International Bestselling author

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Customer Reviews

James Scott Bell is one of the few authors that I collect. While I enjoy his fiction, I especially watch for his how-to books on the writing craft. He's done his homework, put in the years, tested the waters -- you name the metaphor, he's got it under his belt. (Ha!) When I'm writing and get stuck somewhere, I need something to jog me out of the hole. And it varies: I may get stuck at the beginning, the middle or the end. Or even during the process of brainstorming an idea just to determine if it's got enough story potential to bother with. Now, I'm more of a "pantser" than a "plotter" (if you write fiction, you know what I mean), but even I like to have a general bare-bones structure to guide me. I may scrap it and re-work it as I go, but if I don't have something to shoot for, I end up bogged down in the Dead Marshes with no way out. Between JSB's "Plot and Structure", "Write Your Novel from the Middle" and this newest, "Super Structure", I've got the tools to get me going again. He packs these books full of examples from real books and movies. Seeing examples helps me a LOT. I also have in my library an array of his other books for specific issues like "Conflict and Suspense", "Dazzling Dialogue", "Revision & Self-Editing", but I reach for these books on structure during the whole process. Super Structure zooms in on the very essence of what about the *form* of a story makes it engaging for readers. You'll want to earmark the chapter where he strips structure to the bare bones (the five "tent poles" as he calls them) and then describes each piece. On the Kindle version, the table of contents is perfect for jumping right to the spot I need help with.

I have read tons of books on outlining, plotting and structure, and James Scott Bell's Super Structure is by far the best. Not only is it comprehensive, it offers the clearest explanation of story structure I have ever read, detailing everything with clear examples without getting overly technical. If you want to create an effective plot for your next novel, this is the only tool you need.

This is the first of James Scott Bell's books that I've read. I hadn't even finished it before mousing

over to buy another. Now that I've finished *Super Structure*, I will definitely be looking into anything else he's written as well. Not only does Bell tell you WHAT to be doing, he tells you WHY, and why what you're doing will connect with readers. You don't even have to be a super-organized, pre-planner type of writer to use his system. But if you are a "pantser" (as in, you work by the seat of your pants), you still need a direction to head toward at various points in your story. That is precisely what Bell is so good at providing for you, with examples from classic and popular literature and films, and plenty of wit and wisdom. Whether you are planning a career as a writer, or you write for pleasure, or are simply a curious, involved reader, *Super Structure* is a valuable tool you'll want in your toolbox.

Of all the books I've ever read, all the endless blog posts consumed, Bell's breakdown of plot structure is the one that works for me. Now, I've written outlines. And when I do, my muse strolls in and reads over my shoulder, then proceeds to throw down a sentence in the first scene that renders the rest of the outline useless. So, how do I use the information contained here? After I make word salad, I use this exact story structure to refine the story into something I'm not ashamed to serve up. I first discovered Bell on a recommendation from another author. I started with *Write Your Novel from the Middle* and am working my way through all of his craft books. The market is riddled with writing advice books, some good, some junk. This one works for me. Every word this author writes just makes sense and I can always find a way to make it work for me. Part of the appeal is that he offers ways that work for both plotters and pantsers, but, when I overlaid his structure with the stories that have resonated with me over the years, those stories fit this structure. Nuff said. Find a method that works for you. But if you're still searching, I cannot recommend this one highly enough. This book, and *Write Your Novel from the Middle* are the books I buy to give to fledgling writer as well as long time writers who have not yet tapped their full potential.

Excellent book on writing a solid, creative, well-plotted book, signpost by signpost. I love that this book is shorter than most. The author just gives the reader the meat, so it's a very quick, but informative read. After reading, I deconstructed my current work-in-progress to see if I couldn't find my signposts. Most were already there, but a couple weren't. I was able to create the ones that weren't and strengthen (and re-home) a few, and feel strongly that by doing this I've strengthened my overall story. Would recommend to all writers. Excellent, excellent book!

Why do I like this book? This is the third JSB writing - how to - book and they've all been read within

days of each other. The hint is that it's the third book in days so I find value in his books. When you read several JSB - how to - books you'll quickly note he carries his personal stories and examples through multiple books. I've seen some reviews that bemoan this. I personally don't mind. I've noted that it is contextual, he includes the story or the example to enlighten the reader on a concept within the book's theme so there is a new twist and also it serves to cement the idea. In the three books I've read I haven't found it to be an egregious JSB habit and I've learned something new from each book. Superstructure is no exception. There are a lot of good exercises in here along with new ways to think about how to form plot and structure with two things in mind, the satisfaction of the reader and the commercial success of a book using this methodology. I find that heartwarming and useful. I enjoyed this book and highly recommend it to any aspiring writer who wants to write better. This book is a bargain and it's a quick read.

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