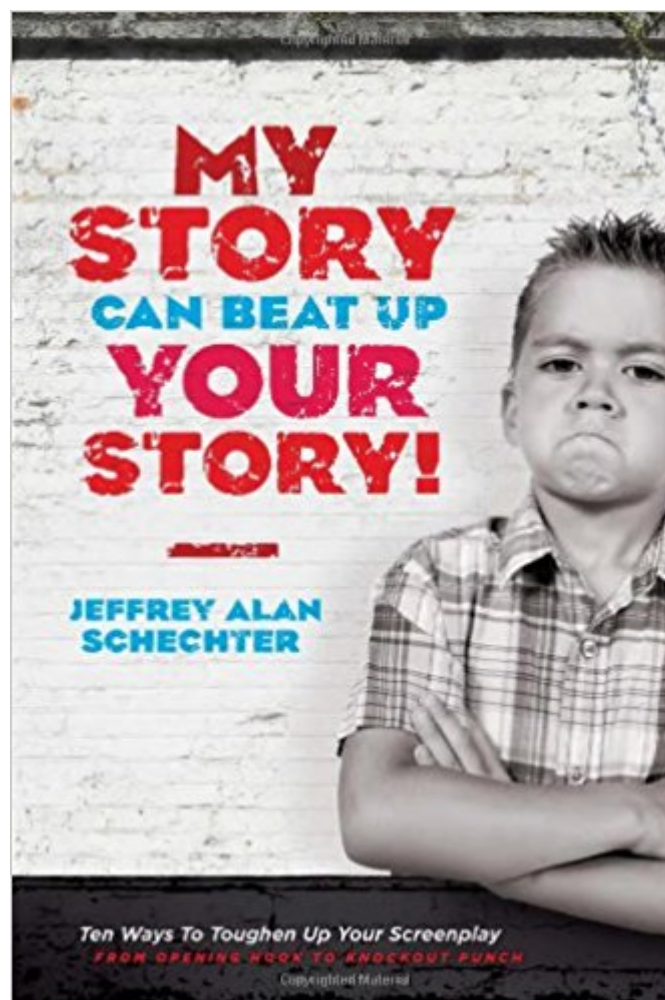




The book was found

My Story Can Beat Up Your Story: Ten Ways To Toughen Up Your Screenplay From Opening Hook To Knockout Punch



Synopsis

My Story Can Beat Up Your Story! is the same powerful, easy-to-learn system that industry insiders have used to generate millions of dollars in script sales and assignments. In a clear, step-by-step fashion, this book is a fun, eye-opening, brain-expanding, and often irreverent guide to writing stories that sell. Covering everything from Heroes to Villains, from Theme to Plot Points, from cooking up good ideas to a business plan for smart writers, this book forever eliminates that horrible feeling every writer goes through — staring at the blank page and wondering “what comes next?”

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Customer Reviews

My Story Can Beat Up Your Story! is the same powerful, easy-to-learn system that industry insiders have used to generate millions of dollars in script sales and assignments. In a clear, step-by-step fashion, this book is a fun, eye-opening, brain-expanding, and often irreverent guide to writing stories that sell. Covering everything from Heroes to Villains, from Theme to Plot Points, from cooking up good ideas to a business plan for smart writers, this book forever eliminates that horrible feeling every writer goes through — staring at the blank page and wondering “what comes next?”

Jeffrey Alan Schechter was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York, which explains his endearing personality. After moving to Los Angeles and not wanting to starve, he quickly established himself as a versatile writer, able to work in all genres from action films to family comedies, from pre-school

to adult drama, from live action to animation. His writing has earned him nominations for two Emmy awards, a Writers Guild of America award, a Writers Guild of Canada award, and a BAFTA award. Over the years Jeff has worked with dozens of studios and networks including Warner Bros, Universal Pictures, ABC, NBC, The Discovery Channel, Nickelodeon, The Hallmark Channel, the BBC, VH1 Films, RHI, and The Walt Disney Company.

This book is easy to overlook if you're writing books, not screenplays. After all, the subtitle is, "Ten Ways to Toughen Up Your Screenplay from Opening Hook to Knockout Punch." And, if you're writing screenplays, this is one of the best by-the-numbers, no-rubbish books I've ever seen to talk you through the process... and actually create a screenplay that will sell. But... I'm not writing screenplays. I'm writing books, and -- right now -- most of them are nonfiction. So, why am I so excited about this book, I'm actually considering buying a second copy for my husband, and one for my daughter... ? Because, for anyone writing short stories, novels, or "based on a true story" books, this book is pure gold. Some of my books are "based on a true story." And, a lot of nonfiction tells a story... or it should, anyway. Schechter starts with the basic, three-act play concept. Then he expands it to a four-act play. Next, he adds a central question. After that, he breaks the central question into themes for each act. By the time this book concludes, you'll have an incredibly detailed, by-the-numbers approach to telling a story... and it's based on the general "hero's journey" concept, too. If your brain just can't seem to wrap around plotting, character development, and... well... a good story, this book is the best I've seen. If you've written a novel and it doesn't have enough punch, this book will probably give you so many really good pointers, it'll make your head spin. When your head stops whirling like a carousel in hyperdrive, you'll probably start scribbling idea after idea. Your enthusiasm will be back, and you'll be able to give your story the zest it needs. Or, if you're working on nonfiction with a story -- "based on a true story" or biographies or first-person memoirs -- you'll like this book, too. Really, if you can't write a novel from a formula this detailed, throw in the towel and go back to nonfiction. I mean it. If you can't stand formula approaches -- even if they're supported by brilliant examples from blockbuster movies -- you'll hate this book. It's so detailed, it actually includes graphs that are practically flow charts. In fact, if I were to criticize anything in this book, it's that the process can seem too complex. He's broken every story element into such detailed steps, you might get overwhelmed. (Instead, flip through the book and look at the illustrations. They'll tell you a lot. Or, skip to the final graphic in the book and see which steps you want to understand better. Then, go back to them.) I have a lot of originality. I see things in ways that don't occur to other people, but they like reading what I write, anyway... or maybe that's why they

like what I write. Nevertheless, there are days when I stare at the computer monitor (or printed copy of my book) and I feel utterly stupid. I can't figure out what's wrong with my book, or if it's good enough, or if I've delivered the story in the best possible sequence. This book holds the answers to those problems.

I've read a lot about how to structure stories, such as the three-act structure, the 8-point story arc, and Dan Well's 7-point story structure, but I struggled to understand how to translate those theories into my writing. I had heard about the four-stage character arc (Orphan, Wanderer, Warrior, Martyr), and researching that I found this book. This is the most detailed, yet concise, easy-to-understand work I've read on the subject of story structure. Not only does Schechter explain the structure clearly, he offers up numerous examples from movies from all genres. This really helped to see exactly where certain plot points should fall and what exactly constitutes such milestones in a story. To top it all off, the author provides very useful exercises at the end of each chapter that, if followed, should get you going on writing your story. Even though the book is geared to screenwriters writing feature length film scripts, I've found it translates very well to novel-writing. My only beef is somewhere in the book the author implies that there will be further examples of movies with story structure breakdown on the book's website, but I have yet to find those examples. I'm not sure if they are behind a paywall, don't exist, or if the website navigation is just bad. Not going to hold this against the book's review, though, because there are more than enough examples provided in the text.

This gets five stars for many reasons. I'd give it six if I could for its honesty about the business and how to approach it, and who should approach with caution. Schechter is not shy about telling those over 40 to do nothing stupid and approach screenwriting as a very serious hobby and a positive attitude. There are very few books on screenwriting that don't have at least something of value for the writer, but this book does not contain digging to find the pony. It is formulaic, but that's as good a place to start when jumping into one's own creative process and preferable to fumbling in the dark. I found his use of specific plot points very useful and surprisingly helpful in the creative process. They're so good they're the basis of a popular software for building a script. The author's plot points differ from "beats" (a term borrowed from acting and not applied to screenwriting until the 1980s) and offer much more wiggle room for the writer to jump into their own story. I'd highly recommend this book to anyone interested in screenwriting or how to shape a story in a way that satisfies the reader.

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