

PIXAR'S
22 Rules
to
*Phenomenal
storytelling*



[1]

You **ADMIRE** a **CHARACTER** more
for **TRYING** than
for their
successes.



[2]

Keep in mind what's
interesting to an **AUDIENCE**
NOT what's **FUN** to do as a writer.
They can be very **different**.



[3]

*Trying for theme is important,
but you won't see what the
story is actually **about**
until you're at the **end** of it.*

*Now **rewrite.***

[4]



Once upon a time there was _____.
Every day, _____.
One day _____. Because of that, _____.
Because of that, _____.
Until finally _____.

[5]

*Simplify. Focus. Combine
characters. Hop over detours.
You'll feel like you're losing valuable
stuff but it sets you free.*



[6]

What
is your
character
good at,
comfortable
with?



Throw the
polar
opposite
at them.
Challenge
them.

How
do
they
DEAL?

[7]

*Come up with your ending
before you figure out your
middle. **Seriously.***

Endings are HARD,
*get yours
working
up front.*



[8]

FINISH YOUR STORY,

let go even if it's not perfect.

*In an ideal world you have both,
but **move on.***



DO BETTER

next time.

[9]

When you're **STUCK**, make a list of
*what wouldn't
happen next...*

Lots of times the
material to get you
UNSTUCK will show up.

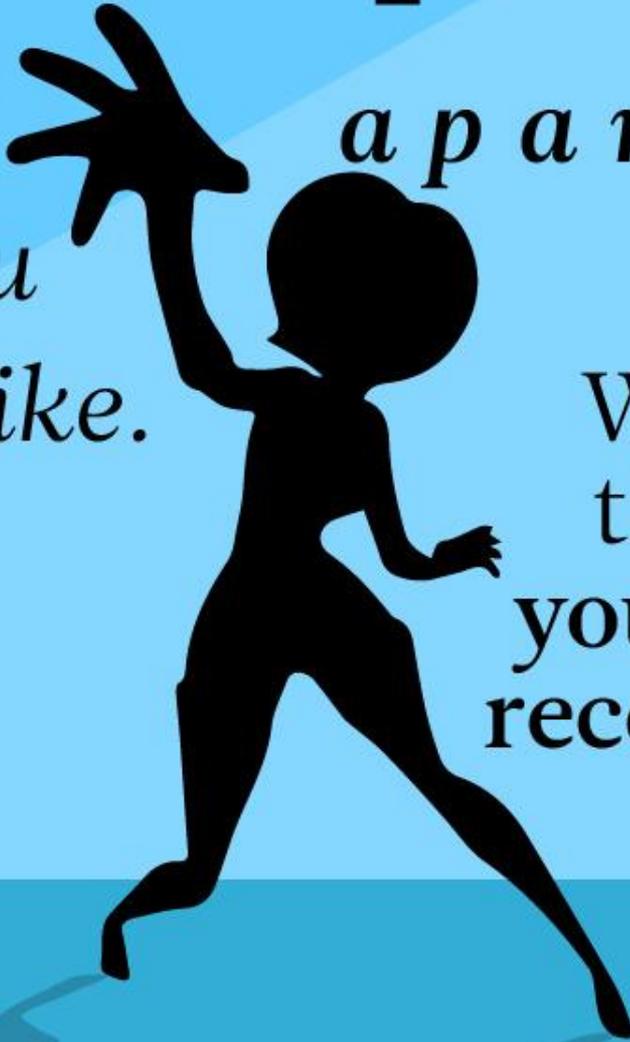


[10]

*Pull
you
like.*

a p a r t t h e s t o r i e s

*What you like in
them is a part of
you; you've got to
recognize it before
you can use it.*



[11]

*Putting it on paper
lets you start fixing it.*



*If it stays in your head,
a perfect idea,
you'll never share it with anyone.*

[12]

DISCOUNT

*the 1st thing
that comes to mind.*

*And the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th
– get the obvious out of the way.*

Surprise yourself.



[13]



Give your *characters*
OPINIONS.
Passive/malleable might seem
likable to you as you write,

but it's
poison
to the audience.

[14]

Why must you tell this story?

*What's the
belief burning within you
that your story
feeds off of?*

*That's the
heart of it.*



[15]

*If you were your character,
in this situation,
how would you feel?*

*Honesty
lends credibility to
unbelievable situations.*



[16]

*What are the **stakes**?*

*Give us reason
to root for
the character.*

*What happens
if they don't succeed?
Stack the odds against.*



[17]

No work is ever wasted. If it's not working, let go and move on – it'll come back around to be useful later.



[18]

You have to

KNOW YOURSELF:

the difference between

doing your best & fussing.

Story
is

testing

not refining.



[19]

COINCIDENCES

to get characters into

TROUBLE

are **GREAT.**



COINCIDENCES

to get them out of it

are **CHEATING.**



[20]

*Exercise: take the **building blocks** of a movie you **DISLIKE**.
How d'you rearrange them
into what you **DO** like?*



[21]

You have to
identify with your
situation and *characters*,
CAN'T JUST WRITE 'COOL'.

*What would make
YOU act that way?*



[22]

WHAT'S THE
ESSENCE
OF YOUR STORY?
MOST ECONOMICAL
TELLING OF IT?



IF YOU
KNOW
THAT, YOU CAN
BUILD OUT
FROM THERE.

P I X A R ' S
22 Rules
to
*Phenomenal
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*If you paint a picture with
words, why not tell a story
with your pictures?*

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