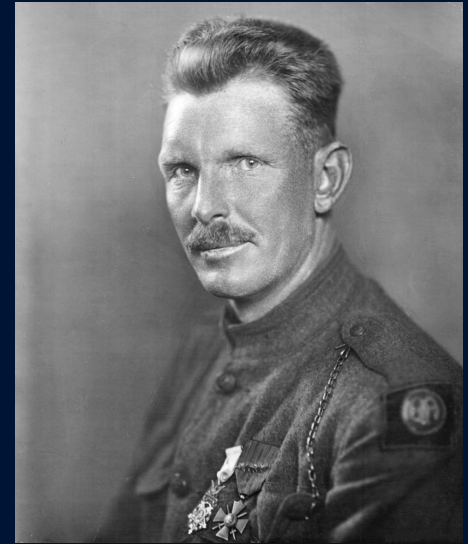


Alvin York

Life of a Peacemaker

Basic Bio

- Born in 1887 in the backwoods of Tennessee
- Raised in a Christian home but fell away after his father's death in 1911
- Returned to faith after the death of his best friend
- Was drafted into WW1
- Filed as a Conscientious objector but it was denied
- Became a decorated war hero



1887-1964

PC Army, U. S.
(n.d.). Alvin York .
photograph.

My primary research questions

- **Could a man's life story be turned into a film that would appeal to a modern audience?**
- **What life events were the most important to include**
- **What were the different methods for adapting a life story?**

Blake Snyder Beat Sheet

Opening Image (1) – A visual that represents the struggle & tone of the story. A snapshot of the main character's problem, before the adventure begins.

Set-up (1-10) – Expand on the “before” snapshot. Present the main character's world as it is, and what is missing in their life.

Theme Stated (5) (happens during the Set-up) – What your story is about; the message, the truth. Usually, it is spoken to the main character or in their presence, but they don't understand the truth...not until they have some personal experience and context to support it.

Catalyst (12) – The moment where life as it is changes. It is the telegram, the act of catching your loved-one cheating, allowing a monster onboard the ship, meeting the true love of your life, etc. The “before” world is no more, change is underway.

Debate (12 – 15) – But change is scary and for a moment, or a brief number of moments, the main character doubts the journey they must take. Can I face this challenge? Do I have what it takes? Should I go at all? It is the last chance for the hero to chicken out.

Break Into Two (Choosing Act Two) (25) – The main character makes a choice and the journey begins. We leave the “Thesis” world and enter the upside-down, opposite world of Act Two.

B Story (30) – This is when there's a discussion about the Theme – the nugget of truth. Usually, this discussion is between the main character and the love interest. So, the B Story is usually called the “love story”.

The Promise of the Premise/Fun and Games (30 – 35) – This is when Craig Thompson's relationship with Raina blooms, when Indiana Jones tries to beat the Nazis to the Lost Ark, when the detective finds the most clues and dodges the most bullets. This is when the main character explores the new world and the audience is entertained by the premise they have been promised.

Midpoint (55) – Dependent upon the story, this moment is when everything is “great” or everything is “awful”. The main character either gets everything they think they want (“great”) or doesn't get what they think they want at all (“awful”). But not everything we think we want is what we actually need in the end.

Bad Guys Close In (55 – 75) – Doubt, jealousy, fear, foes both physical and emotional regroup to defeat the main character's goal, and the main character's “great”/“awful” situation disintegrates.

All is Lost (75) – The opposite moment from the Midpoint: “awful”/“great”. The moment that the main character realizes they've lost everything they gained, or everything they now have has no meaning. The initial goal now looks even more impossible than before. And here, something or someone dies. It can be physical or emotional, but the death of something old makes way for something new to be born.

Dark Night of the Soul (75 – 85) – The main character hits bottom, and wallows in hopelessness. The *Why hast thou forsaken me, Lord?* moment. Mourning the loss of what has “died” – the dream, the goal, the mentor character, the love of your life, etc. But, you must fall completely before you can pick yourself back up and try again.

Break Into Three (Choosing Act Three) (85) – Thanks to a fresh idea, new inspiration, or last-minute Thematic advice from the B Story (usually the love interest), the main character chooses to try again.

Finale (85-110) – This time around, the main character incorporates the Theme – the nugget of truth that now makes sense to them – into their fight for the goal because they have experience from the A Story and context from the B Story. Act Three is about Synthesis!

Snyder, B. (2019). Blake Snyder
Beat Sheet. New York;
Screenwriting .

Non-linear

- Allows for tension and action throughout the story
- Heavily influenced by Greta Gerwig's *Little Women* and Christopher Nolan's *Batman Begins*
- Use York's time in the military as the main timeline with flashbacks to earlier life

Make it a love story

- Classic love story between York and Gracie
- York's love for his country and his God

Opening Image and Set Up

- Target practice at a military camp where we meet York.
- Brief flashback to him as a young man doing target practice with his friends. He is an excellent shooter
- York gets two bullseyes back-to-back when it's his turn to shoot
- His major is confused as York had filed as a conscientious objector so he calls him into his office
- York talks with his commanding officers about his reason for not fighting

Themes Stated and Catalyst

- Sometimes one way to be a peace maker is to fight for what's right.
- You don't need hate to fight a war. You need love
- **York's superiors send him home to think it over**

Flashback while traveling home

- York's father teaches him how to hunt
- York's father dies
- People say Christian cliches at the funeral
- This pushes York toward drinking, fighting and gambling

Debate

- York arrives home and the first place he goes is to his family's church
- Flashback to him becoming a Christian at a revival meeting
- He goes to see his fiancé Gracie

Flashback as part of Debate

- Alvin and Gracie meet for the first time- they can't have a relationship because he isn't a Christian
- Once he is a Christian they start to fall in love
- Alvin proposes before he leaves for camp

Debate continued

- York goes up on the mountain
- He reads several passages of scripture including 'blessed are the peacemakers'

Break into Act Two

York decides that he is called to fight

B-Story

- York tells Gracie about his decision to fight
- He reminds her that he's fighting for her and their future family
- She promises to pray for him every day even if she doesn't like him going off to war

Promise of the Premise

- York goes back to camp
- He and his company are sent to France
- Several smaller battles play out
- York relies on God for his strength even though he misses home and struggles to connect with his fellow soldiers at times

Midpoint

York is promoted to corporal

Bad Guys Close in

York and his company are ordered to proceed to the Argonne Forest

All is Lost

One of York's men who is also a close friend is killed

Dark night of the Soul

- York grieves his friend
- Flashback to York's childhood best friend dying in a bar fight- this is what compelled York to become a Christian

Break into Act Three

- York writes to Gracie. He tells her about his friend and that he has decided to fight even harder
- The battle for the Decauville Railroad begins

Finale

- The 82nd have to cross a large funnel shape valley
- They are hit hard by machine gun fire
- York and his men make a plan to put a machine gun nest out of action
- They encounter a medical unit that are so surprised they throw up their hands and surrender
- It turns out to be a trap- they are hit hard by machine guns and soon York is the only one left
- York uses the hunting trick his father taught him to kill 20 Germans before a major surrenders to him and York captures the remaining soldiers in the company
- He takes them back to the few surviving men that had been drawing fire and declares that they will take them back alive
- On the way back to their company, they go through the German frontlines where they capture the rest of the company bring their prisoner total up to 132

Finale Continued

- York and his men arrive back at their camp unharmed
- York is promoted to Sergeant
- They rejoin their company and capture the Decauville Railroad
- The war is ended
- York is celebrated as a war hero but still longs to go home

Final Image

York sits on his front steps and watches the sun rise. Gracie slips out to stand beside him. He reaches up his left hand revealing a simple wedding band and pulls her down beside him. They share a few words and a kiss before the credits roll

Alvin York

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Sources

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