

Making a Scene

Motivation and Reaction Units (MRUs)

Dwight V. Swain (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dwight_V._Swain)

As presented in *Structuring Your Novel: Essential Keys for Writing an Outstanding Story* by K. M. Weiland

Motivation – an outside stimulus that affects your character; a catalyst that causes your character to react

Reaction – the effect of the cause:

1. Feeling and/or thought (involuntary subconscious response)
2. Action (involuntary physical reaction and/or conscious physical movements)
3. Speech

Scenes by Jim Butcher (with commentary by Karen Woodward)

<http://jimbutcher.livejournal.com/2647.html>

<http://blog.karenwoodward.org/2012/10/making-scene-using-conflicts-and.html>

Point of view of character – the one who has most at stake emotionally

Goal – needs to be active and specific

Conflict (scene question) – which character will succeed, the protagonist or the antagonist?

Setback (scene answer)

Yes (boring, avoid)

Yes, but there is another complication

No, and there is another complication

No

Sequels by Jim Butcher

<http://jimbutcher.livejournal.com/2880.html>

Sequels are what happens as an aftermath to a scene. They do several specific things:

1. Allow a character to react emotionally to a scene's outcome.
2. Allow a character to review facts and work through the logical options of his situation.
3. They allow a character to ponder probable outcomes to various choices.
4. They allow a character to make a CHOICE--IE, to set a new GOAL for the next SCENE.

The basic structure of a sequel:

1. Emotional reaction
2. Review, logic, & reason
3. Anticipation
4. Choice