The Story Spine
Below you will find one of many examples of the spine to any story. This will help guide you to think about what makes a good story for the viewer. The organizational template will help provide a model for a well-constructed story with a beginning that establishes a routine, an event that breaks the routine, a middle that shows the consequences of having broken the routine, a climax that sets the resolution to the story in motion, and the resolution. It goes like:

- Once upon a time…
- Every day…
- But, one day…
- Because of that…
- Because of that…
- Because of that…
- Until, finally…
- And, ever since then…

And, here’s how the lines correlate to the different sections of a well-constructed story:

The **Beginning** that establishes the routine: Once upon a time… Every day…

The **Event** that breaks the routine: But, one day…

The **Middle** shows the consequences of having broken the setting: Because of that…Because of that…Because of that…

The **Climax** that sets the resolution to the story in motion: Until, finally…

The **Resolution** concludes the story: And, ever since then…

This model will help develop your idea to a compelling story. There are hundreds of variations known to this. This template serves as a dynamic and fluid structure, allowing storytellers to pick and choose what works best for you. You can decide what you want to include in your story but having a standard foundation to start on will lead you to creating your final piece.

**Credit:** The original story spine was created by Kenn Adams and the above was adapted from [http://improvencyclopedia.org/games/Story_Spine.html](http://improvencyclopedia.org/games/Story_Spine.html).

**Practice:** 1) Take an existing story (from a film or book) and break the film down into the different sections of a well-constructed story using the Story Spine Template. 2) Create your own story using the Story Spine Template.
**Story Spine Template:**
The following template includes the important elements to any story. Complete each section for an existing story or your own newly developed story.

**THE BEGINNING:**
Once upon a time/Every day…

**THE EVENT:**
But, one day…

**THE MIDDLE:**
Because of that…

Because of that…(repeat as many times as necessary)

Because of that…

**THE CLIMAX**
Until, finally…

**THE RESOLUTION**
And, ever since then…

www.greenninja.org