Story Cheat Sheet
Answer the questions to help write your story outline

- What is the opening image that the audience sees when your story starts? Is it memorable?
- What is the ordinary world of your story? What are the rules and how is it conveyed visually?
- What visual act does your protagonist perform that shows an act of humanity or display a flaw that is engaging enough to convince the audience to “care” and stick around for the entire story to see what happens to your protagonist?
- Can you visually show the audience the deepest desire of your protagonist?
- Can you visually show the audience the deepest fear of your protagonist?
- What is the “inciting incident” that sparks a change from the ordinary world into the new world? This marks when your protagonist’s deepest desire is challenged and/or their deepest fear presents itself.
- Who is the mentor, or the wise wizard that your protagonist meets after the “inciting incident”?
- How does your protagonist visually show a refusal to take action on the “inciting incident”?
- What is the visual moment when the protagonist has no choice but to take the first step out of the ordinary world and step into the new world? Is this choice the right choice? Normally, the wrong choice sets up more conflict, drama, and suspense.
- What is the first challenge the protagonist faces in this new world?
- How much fun, or how life threatening does each challenge become for the protagonist?
- At what point does the protagonist meet their “dark night of the soul”, when they feel all is lost?
- What sort of final challenge does your protagonist have as they enter the “inmost cave” to defeat the final monster (figuratively or metaphorically)?
- After defeating the final monster of the “inmost cave”, what sort of elixir or knowledge does the protagonist possess? How will this protagonist share this elixir with the common villagers back home (figuratively or metaphorically)?
- What is the final image that the audience sees when the story ends? How does it relate to the opening image?