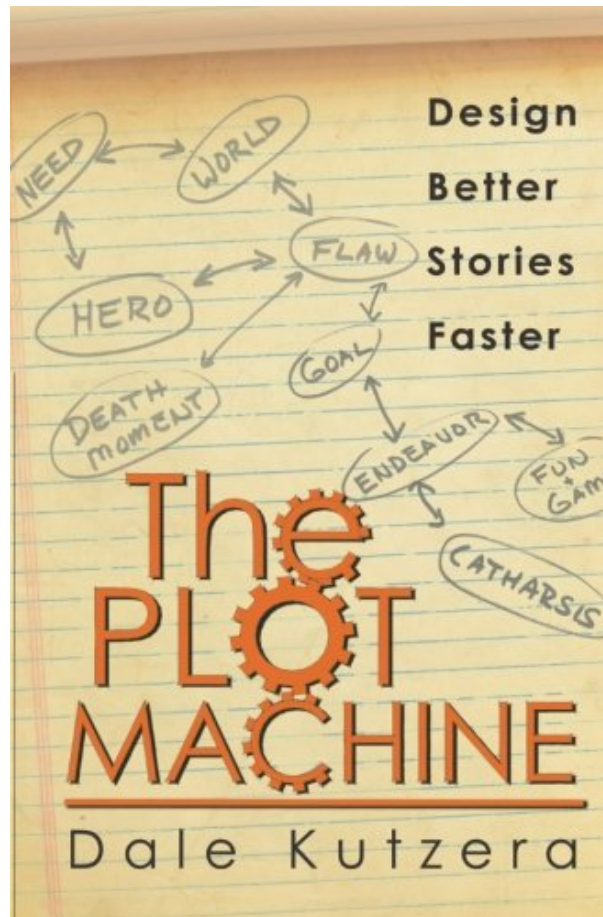
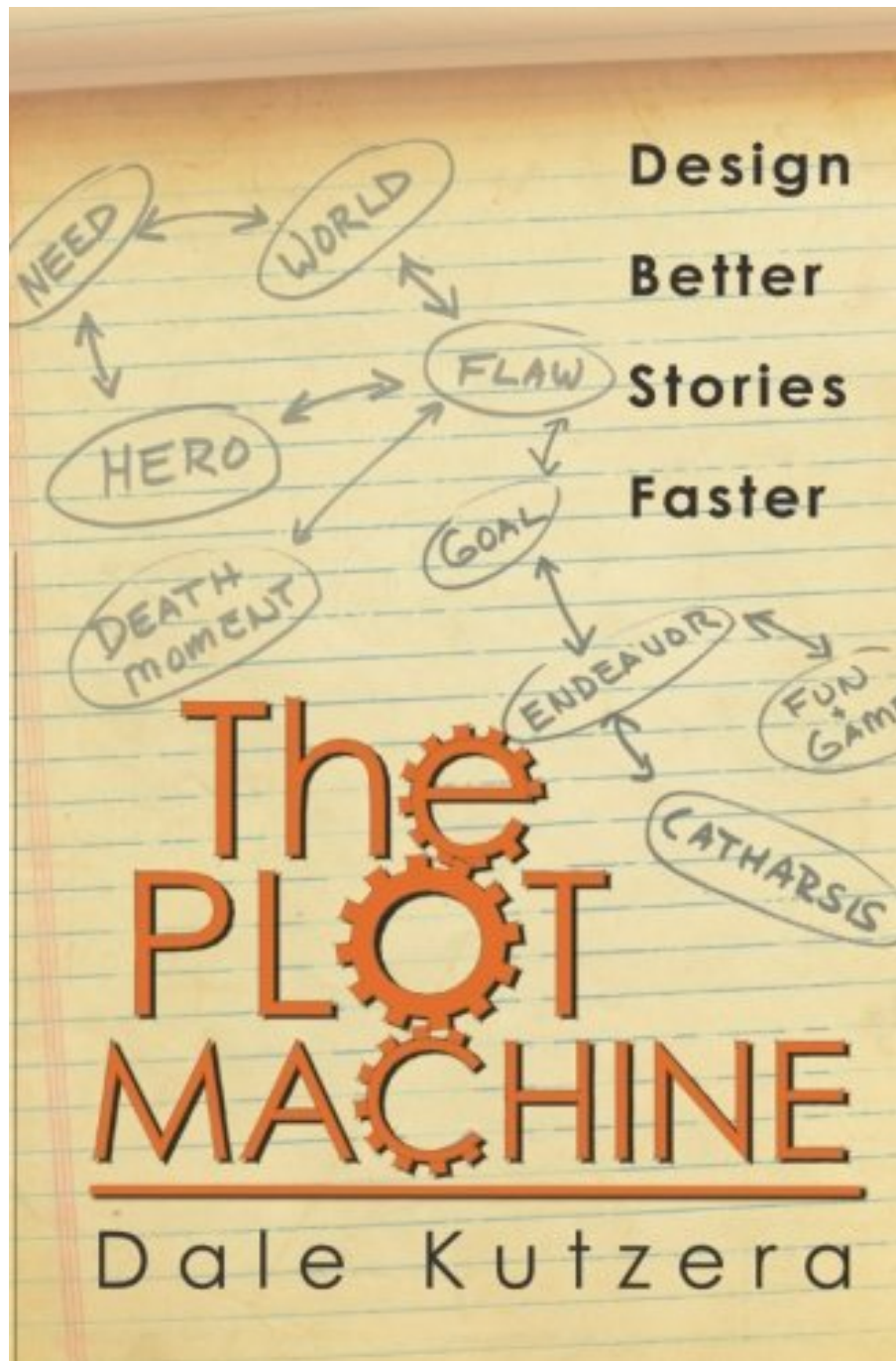


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## About the Author

Writer Dale Kutzera worked as a screenwriter for over ten years. He has worked in television and film and blogs about both at [DaleKutzera.com](http://DaleKutzera.com). His novels include "Manhunt" and the "Andy McBean" middle-grade adventure series.

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# **THE PLOT MACHINE: DESIGN BETTER STORIES FASTER**

## **BY DALE KUTZERA PDF**

There are a lot of books on story structure, but only THE PLOT MACHINE presents a step-by-step guide to designing a story. In clear precise language, this guide discusses the various types of stories we tell, their specific parts, and how they are assembled. Say good-bye to staring at the blank page waiting for lightning to strike. Just put a few coins in THE PLOT MACHINE and design better stories faster.

- Sales Rank: #917810 in Books
- Published on: 2015-10-16
- Original language: English
- Dimensions: 8.00" h x .26" w x 5.25" l,
- Binding: Paperback
- 104 pages

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### Most helpful customer reviews

19 of 20 people found the following review helpful.

Basic to the point of unusable

By Anna van D.

I was curious enough to buy this book but then I was forced to return it to Amazon. The thing is, IMHO, it says nothing about how to design better stories. The book consists of dozens of laundry lists of various genres, themes, plot twists, character traits etc etc. with little or no commentary on how to actually apply them. The idea behind this book, as I understand it, is to mix and match various ideas and premises or see if any of them inspire you enough to come up with a story around them. It's all right as a fun reference for what it costs, just don't expect miracles: you just can't throw a novel together by connecting the dots on these numerous lists.

28 of 32 people found the following review helpful.

Razor sharp thinking and powerful methods, but not for beginners

By Fossil

An excellent book with clear thinking, well communicated, but not for beginners. Coming to this book after reading, and trying to employ, several methods for evaluating and improving story structure, it's like a beacon in the fog.

For someone coming to it without a background of reading and practice in the field, I suspect it might seem overly simplistic and the methods hard to follow or stick to. It's only once you've learned the hard way that fuzziness in thinking about your story leads to fuzzy, muddled results that the true value of this book becomes apparent. I can say with confidence that if I'd found this book two years ago, I wouldn't have "got

it" at all.

It doesn't distinguish between plot and structure as some do, rather it treats structure as an aspect of a plot, something it always exhibits in one form or another, a position which is hard to dispute.

It doesn't deal with every kind of plot. It isn't a method well suited to producing plots where the protagonist doesn't really have an arc. However, it's excellent for any kind of protagonist-centric story where you want a strong arc. Despite not being aimed primarily at literary fiction, it would be very useful to a literary fiction writer that appreciates structure. The language is quite different to some other books that categorize plots in a different way, but it turns out more useful than any system that says one label can describe a plot. For example, William Bernhardt says there are five kinds of plots. While his system of division isn't useless, it isn't powerful because it provides only limited, vague information about a plot. Kutzera's system says far more.

I found that many other books provided systems that seemed to make sense while you were reading, but when you tried to apply them, they were too vague to be effective. The brutal simplification this book encourages, and the clean-cut methods of doing it, are a great aid in pre-planning a story so it really has strong bones, or evaluating why an existing story is weak.

With the tool-kit of concepts in this book, you can easily take stories apart and evaluate their strengths and weaknesses.

Another strength of this book is the order it suggests, the priority of working. By focussing on issues in the right order, the characteristics of the protagonist flow from the plot and reinforce it. This method is easy to apply, rather than trying to work out how to drape a plot onto a character concept, which is hard. The focus on essential parts of the story is better than simplistic advice like "write from the end backwards".

If only more screen-writers would pay attention to this book I think we'd be spared a huge number of dismal movies and lacklustre television.

14 of 16 people found the following review helpful.

This book is chock-full of plotting information!

By John D.

With NaNoWriMo only a few days away, I needed a quick primer on plotting. I came across Dale's eBook "The Plot Machine", was intrigued by the title, browsed the first few pages, saw that it was reasonably priced and bought it, not knowing what to expect. I'm sure glad I took that chance. I read it cover-to-cover in one sitting, jotting down a ton of notes as I read. This book goes way beyond the basic three-act structure. It explains in detail how to fill all those spaces in-between the acts. Not only does Dale give you an extensive overview of story structure and design, but he also breaks the story down into it's most fundamental elements, giving a novice writer like myself the tools necessary to tackle the complex task of story-crafting. The deeper I got into his lessons, the more I started to understand the story I wanted to write. I will definitely be using this book as reference for NaNoWriMo (and beyond).

See all 28 customer reviews...

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