

Olson, R. (2015) *Houston, We Have a Narrative: Why Science Needs Story*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

The word template — thought focus

Nothing in biology makes sense except in the light of evolution.

Theodosius Dobzhansky (1973) American Biology Teacher 35: 125–129

Seen in the light of evolution, biology is, perhaps, intellectually the most satisfying and inspiring science. Without that light, it becomes a pile of sundry facts — some of them interesting or curious but making no meaningful picture as a whole.

Nothing in _____ makes sense except in the light of _____.

The sentence template (ABT) — short form

_____, and _____, and _____, ..., but _____, therefore _____.

In expanded form, applied to the Gettysburg Address:

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met here on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of it as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate — we can not consecrate — we can not hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled, here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they have, thus far, so nobly carried on. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us — that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion — that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation shall have a new birth of freedom; and that this government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

The paragraph template (the hero's journey) — long form

In an ordinary world: _____

A flawed character: _____

Has a catalytic event: _____, which upends his/her world.

But after taking stock: _____

He/she decides to take action: _____

But when things get tough: _____

He/she must learn the lesson: _____

To overcome the opposition: _____

And achieve the goal: _____