

# BLAKE SNYDER BEAT SHEET (aka: BS2)

*Adjusted slightly & annotated for YA novelists by Alexa Donne*

BS2 beat definitions (w/ original names): <https://timstout.wordpress.com/story-structure/blake-snyders-beat-sheet/>

1. Opening Image

2. Theme Stated

3. Set Up

1-3 all go together in your first chapter or chapters. Think either a “day in the life” or “today’s the day”—something to establish your character(s), who they are, where they are, and what they want.

4. Inciting Incident

5. Debate

6. Break into Two

The inciting incident and it’s timing are KEY. Hit it too soon, the pacing is rushed. Too late, it drags and your book is boring. Use “debate” and “break into two” beats to explore your stakes and to build character/give them agency.

7. B Story

8. Fun and Games or  
“Promise of the Premise”

The FUN part! And often the muddled middle! In one! Have fun here, but keep a mind to pacing and the reasoning behind each “fun” scene—they should drive your character towards the mid-point/develop the character arc and plot arc.

9. Midpoint

10. Bad Guys Close In

This is where things need to turn—think about a boulder edging over the top of a hill and picking up speed. Your midpoint/all is lost section should fall between the 50%-70% mark of your book and set the end in motion.

11. All Is Lost

12. Dark Night of the Soul

Many authors skip the DNofS and the character arc suffers. Probably my favorite beat. If your last third has issues, consider whether you have this!

13. Break into Three

14. Finale

15. Final Image

I’ve always thought the BS2 was missing one beat: **The Calm After The Storm**. Arcs & emotions should firmly resolve here, and you should allow the reader to breathe before The End. Many endings that feel rushed or unsatisfying are missing this. Work it in after the Finale, before the Final Image (or pair with Final Image).