



Exercise Five – Positive Change Arc

The Normal World

The characteristic moment is only half of a good character arc's opening. It gives readers a character, but still needs context. The Normal World provides this context. At a basic level, the Normal World is a setting. This is the place where your story opens.

The Normal World plays an important role in grounding the First Act of your story in a concrete setting. More importantly, the Normal World creates the standard against which all the personal and plot changes to come will be measured. Without this opening example of what will change in your character's life, the rest of the arc will lack definition and potency.

Briefly describe the physical setting of the normal world

How does your chosen Normal World symbolically represent the Lie your character believes?





How will the Normal World visibly prove to readers (show them) your protagonist's 'before' state at the beginning of the story?

What setting for the Normal World provides the most logical backstory for why your character believes the Lie?

What is holding your protagonist in the Normal World that has kept her from leaving it before now?

How is your chosen Normal World empowering your character to continue believing his Lie by giving her no reason to look beyond it?





How will the Normal World contrast with the Adventure World that will follow in the next two acts?

When your protagonist is later forced out of the Normal World in the Second Act, how will this begin to shake her belief in her Lie?

Will the character return to the Normal World at the end of the story?

- Yes
- No

If the Normal World remains a pretty good place, how will the protagonist need to change in order to appreciate it?





If the Normal World remains an unchanged destructive place, how will the protagonist have moved past its control over her?

If the protagonist impacted the Normal World over the course of the story, how will it have changed in the end?

