

KEY STORY COMPONENTS

1. Who is HERO?
NEARA
2. Why does audience EMPATHIZE with hero? (sympathy, jeopardy, likable, funny, powerful)
Likable, eccentric individuals who have been marginalized by institutions
3. What is the SETUP (day to day existence) before change?
History has all been clearly defined
4. What is the OPPORTUNITY that changes everything?
Discovery of structures that do not conform to established history
5. What is the hero's OUTER MOTIVATION (win, stop, escape, retrieve)?
Retrieve definitive evidence
6. What is the CONFLICT?
NEARA must overcome its own cultural biases, fantastical thinking and sloppy scientific methods
7. What is the character's ARC? (journey from safety to risking everything to find one's destiny)
Put their reputations and careers on the line to pursue research
8. What are deeper ISSUES (social, political) that the story touches on?
Discrimination against Native Americans and their culture
9. What are successful ANTECEDENTS to this type of story?
Nicholas Cage - fascination with origins of America.
10. What is your PASSION about this story? What makes it special or different?
This is an unsolved mystery of historical proportions where the possible evidence can be found underfoot in the forests and backyards of New England.

60 second verbal pitch

The best way to tell you about this story, is to tell you how I came upon the idea. I'm fascinated by historical stories like St. Brendan's Journey and The Viking Sagas, where ancient explorers battle their fears, and venture across vast oceans in search of new lands. New England is full of history, so my uncle took me to a site called America's Stonehenge. There, preserved only by a chain link fence, was supposedly one of America's greatest pre-historical mysteries...a hilltop with standing stones and chambers which looked very similar to sites in ancient Europe!

So, it made me think, what if you had a mysterious setting like this, that was hiding some kind of evidence of ancient travelers having been here thousands of years before? Then, add a small group of scientists who make this their life's work. They begin to follow a string of evidence, like discovering ancient text carved into rocks or ancient astronomical calendars built onto hilltops. Soon, they begin finding this stuff all over the place! Their findings seem so fantastical, that their research is first questioned, then shunned by the academic establishment. They get pushed out to the "fringe." These scientists could rewrite history, if they can just find that piece of definitive evidence to make everyone believe.

And, what if I told you this whole story was true. That for fifty years, this small group of scientists HAS been struggling for the answers to what happened in America long before Columbus arrived...and that they may have found the answer.