**Aspect of a Story**

Basically, there is a beginning, a middle, and an end.

But before you do that, you want to condense the basis of your story to what some call “your elevator speech” - condensing your story down to one to two sentences you could tell someone in an elevator.

You do this because it helps keep you focused, and frankly, people will ask you what you are writing and they don’t want detail, they just want your elevator length explanation.

You also want to pick a point of view (POV) for your story. Are you going to tell it in first person - I said… or second person - You said… (not used that often) or third person - he/she said… or omniscient - all knowing POV. It might be tempting to use the omniscient view, but this is the most difficult to get right, so be careful.

**In the beginning…**

A lot happens in the first sentence/paragraph/chapter of your story. You need to answer some questions for the reader:

* Who are these people?
* What do they want - and most importantly, what does your main protagonist/main character want?
* Why do they want it?
* Who or what is going to stop them? (This may or may not show up in the first chapter.)
* What are the consequences of getting “it” or not getting it?

To do these things, you have to create your world - fictional or not - and it has to be believable (even if it’s set on Mars).

To “hook” the reader into continuing to read your story, you need change/conflict/call to adventure and this should happen to your protagonist. This also means that the reader knows enough about the character/his-her world, attitude, current situation that they know when something changes and what that change might mean for them (the more they have at risk, the more interested the reader will be. The more emotion based this risk is, the more interested the reader will be).

**In the middle…**

In general, the middle of the story’s job is to get you to the end. How your character gets there is entirely up to you. If you have your beginning down, usually your characters and their situations will dictate where the story goes. But there must be “tests” you characters must face (people, situations), and usually allies that will also help them on their way. But above all, there must be change; the characters, the situations must change to keep the reader’s interest and to progress the story to its end.

You might also consider writing in scenes. A scene is a situation(s) that happen to a character that illustrate the change you are working toward. It’s were you create tension which you might or might not relieve. The most interesting scene have some sort of danger/confrontation/fear/conflict associated with them, but not all scenes will be that intense. The conflict may be small (it rains and gets your character’s map wet and they can’t read where to go next), or large (your character meets the bad guy and they fight - your character escaping just before he is set to die).

Most important - your scenes must move the story forward, be there for a reason (maybe to set up something that will happen later). If it doesn’t do that, cut it.

**The End!**

This is where the reader finds out if the protagonist, and the assisting characters, get what they set out to get - their life, their love, saved the world, saved someone else, kept their personality intact… the climax of the story (this usually means you protagonist has to do something to fulfill his/her goal). The end should show how your characters have changed.

Lose ends usually are wrapped up (unless you want to leave questions out there - especially if you’re thinking of doing a sequel).