

four modes of writing

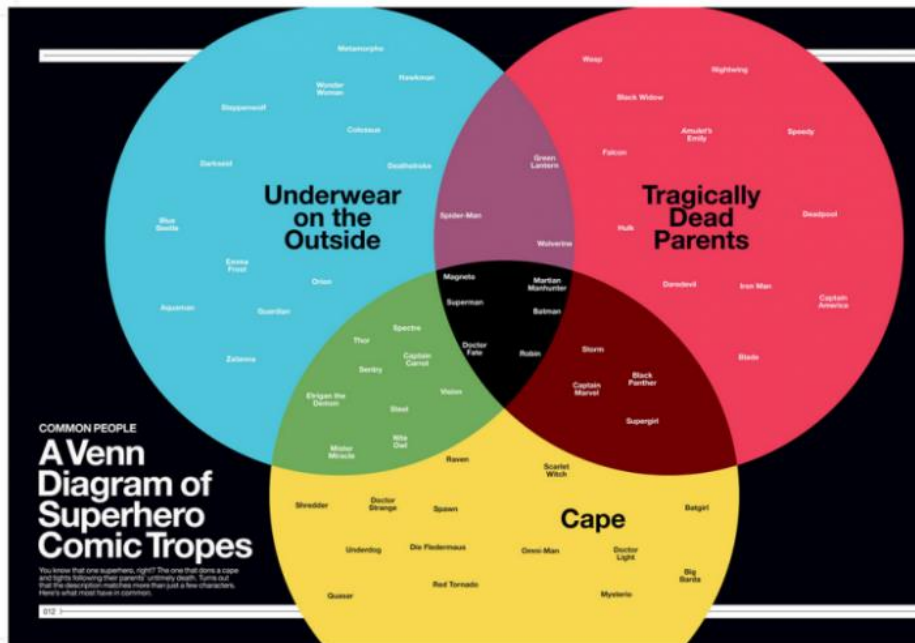


Description / descriptive writing / to describe



Writing that attempts to re-create a sensory experience: to accurately convey what something looks like, or smelled like, or sounded like, etc.

Exposition / expository writing / to expound



Writing that attempts to explain how something works, to show the connections between things, to help someone understand something better.

Persuasion / persuasive writing / to persuade



Writing that attempts to convince the audience that something is true, to win the audience over to a certain idea, belief, or view of the world.

Narration / narrative writing / to narrate

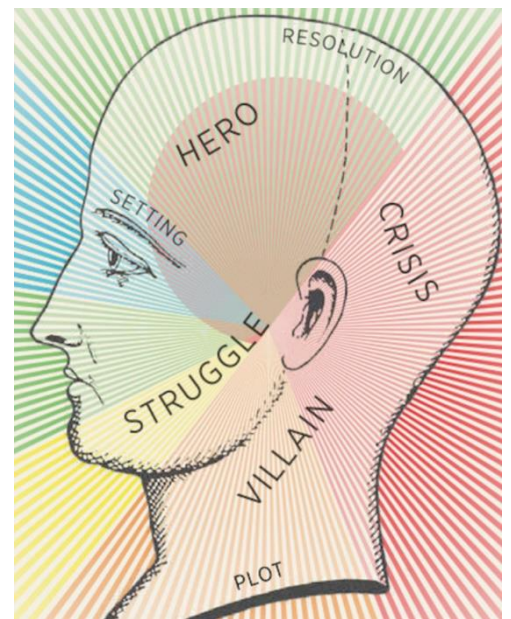


Writing that attempts to tell a story—either a true story (non-fiction) or an imaginary story (fiction).

***Of these four, the most powerful
is probably NARRATIVE.***



We experience life itself as a STORY in which WE are both NARRATOR and PROTAGONIST. We USE description, exposition, and persuasion, but we ARE narratives.



“If we wish to know about a man, we ask 'what is his story--his real, inmost story?'--for each of us is a biography, a story. Each of us is a singular narrative, which is constructed, continually, unconsciously, by, through, and in us--through our perceptions, our feelings, our thoughts, our actions; and, not least, our discourse, our spoken narrations. Biologically, physiologically, we are not so different from each other; historically, as narratives--we are each of us unique.”

– Oliver Sacks, *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat and Other Clinical Tales*

What's your story?

