

Continue



It really depends on what you are studying. If 'structure' is used in reference to a particular text e.g. novel, it is how the story is told: sequencing of events (linear/non-linear), 'turning points' in plot. If 'structure' is used in reference to a play, once again it is how the plot unravels (significant events? linear/non-linear narrative? symmetry of plot?), how skilfully the playwright employs tension and light humour, entrances and exits etc. In other words, what dramatic devices are used? Consider dialogue, setting and the interaction between the play and the audience. If 'structure' is used in reference to a poem, then you need to look at the rhyme scheme to classify the different types of poems. For example, a poem of fourteen lines with rhyme scheme abbedcdeffgg is a Shakespearean sonnet. Do not forget to link your analysis of 'structure' in your given text to how the work functions as a whole: how significant is the author's way of organising his or her story effective in bringing about the poet's view of a particular theme/atmosphere? A film, or any story for that matter, is either linear or non-linear. Before we dive into the benefits of a non-linear narrative, let's look at the non-linear plot definition and how it differs from more conventional, linear films. A non-linear plot is a storytelling technique in which a narrative is told out of chronological order. Non-linear plots come in various forms. They can jump back and forward in time avoiding any linear pattern. Non-linear plots can weave multiple plot lines and time lines together to create a cohesive story. Pulp FictionMementoCitizen KaneForrest GumpNow that we have the basic definition laid out, let's run through the various applications and benefits of this type of storytelling.**Non Linear Narrative Components**Develop charactersCharacter development is one of the most important components of a successful television show. It is the driving force behind an audience's investment in the show. Screenwriters often use dialogue to lay out the exposition of a character. But an effective visual tool to establish a backstory is non-linear storytelling.Take Mad Men for example. Don Draper's past is a central point of conflict in the show. Establishing his past through dialogue is not as effective as the non-linear technique that the show employs.In this scene, the audience learns about Don's true past and identity. Matthew Weiner, creator of Mad Men, jumps back in time to show us this pivotal event in Don's life rather than simply telling us One can only imagine how this crucial piece of information would not be as impactful if executed solely through dialogue. Mad Men uses non-linear storytelling throughout the series to continuously provide backstory for characters. The more the audience learns about these characters, the more invested they become. "A story should have a beginning, a middle and an end... but not necessarily in that order." - Jean-Luc Godard What is a non-linear plot used for? It has ascertains to emotional impact on an audience? When audiences find themselves teary-eyed watching a scene, it is likely due to their empathy rather than sympathy.If an audience relates to a person's heartache on an experiential level, the emotional impact will be greater.Screenwriter Charlie Kaufman and Director Michel Gondry force this empathy through non-linear storytelling in Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind. In this scene, Joel (Jim Carrey) explains how he attempts to resolve a break-up with Clementine (Kate Winslet). But his expectations betray him in the worst possible way. Firstly, Kaufman's decision to jump back in time allows the audience to experience this heartbreaking moment alongside Joel. Imagine if Joel simply explained the event to his friends. It would fall short.Secondly, Gondry makes us feel the fresh pain Joel feels through creative direction. Rather than cutting, Gondry illustrates moving forward in time by moving through space and back into the living room. This makes the sting of rejection feel fresh, just as Joel feels it. These decisions ramp up the emotional impact of the scene. If the scene played chronologically with Joel explaining his encounter with Clementine, we may sympathize with him, but not empathize. Lastly and perhaps most importantly, non-linear plots draw an audience in. How? By making them ask questions. TV screenwriters often use non-linear plots to engage an audience through a teaser. A teaser, or hook, is the opening scene of a TV episode designed to grab the audience's attention.Vince Gilligan's Breaking Bad executes this brilliantly. The opening scene of the Breaking Bad pilot episode grabs the audience's attention immediately. We brought the pilot script into StudioBinder's screenwriting software to analyze how the non-linear plot creates a brilliant opening hook.The opening immediately entices the audience's curiosity. Who is this man in his underpants and gas mask? Did he kill the guys in the RV? Will he get arrested or shot? When the episode ends with a resolution to the opening scene, Gilligan creates a full circle that satisfies all of the audience's questions while also leaving them wanting more. This is exactly what a pilot should achieve.Check out our entire TV Writing and Development course including this analysis of what makes Breaking Bad one of the best pilots in TV history. As we've laid out in this article, non-linear plots are an incredible storytelling device. But they work most effectively when the story calls for it. Many stories are meant to be told chronologically. The best way to know if a non-linear structure will help your story is by analyzing your favorite non-linear films and TV shows. Take note of how and why they work. Up NextHow to Master Dramatic Plot StructurePlot structure is the backbone of a film's narrative. It determines the pace and flow of a film. If you're writing a drama, be sure to check out our article in which we analyze the most effective plot structure to dramatic films.Up Next: Dramatic Plot Structure - scoresvidoes Have you ever come across a story or movie that doesn't follow a chronological sequence, where the events are presented out of order or in a non-linear fashion? This storytelling technique is known as a non-linear narrative. In this article, we will explore what non-linear narratives are and how they are used to engage and captivate audiences. Non-linear narratives can be found in various forms of media, including books, films, and TV shows. By deviating from the traditional linear structure, where events unfold in a straightforward manner from beginning to end, non-linear narratives aim to create intrigue and suspense. They often challenge the audience to piece together the story's timeline and make sense of the plot twists. Throughout this article, we will delve into the world of non-linear narratives by providing examples of sentences that demonstrate this unique storytelling approach. These examples will showcase how non-linear narratives can add depth, complexity, and excitement to a creative work, leaving a lasting impact on those who experience it. Learn To Use Nonlinear Narrative In A Sentence With These Examples Is it possible to create a nonlinear narrative for our company's marketing campaign? Can you explain the concept of nonlinear narrative in a business presentation? Let's brainstorm innovative ways to incorporate a nonlinear narrative in our product launch. Have you ever seen a successful company use a nonlinear narrative in their branding strategy? Why do you think a nonlinear narrative can be effective in storytelling for businesses? We should consider using a nonlinear narrative approach to engage our audience on social media. What are the key elements of a compelling nonlinear narrative for our annual report? Let's analyze how a nonlinear narrative can enhance the user experience on our website. Have you received any feedback on implementing a nonlinear narrative in our training materials? How can we measure the impact of a nonlinear narrative on customer engagement? It's crucial to maintain a consistent tone throughout our nonlinear narrative storytelling. Let's experiment with different formats to showcase our company's nonlinear narrative. How can we ensure that our nonlinear narrative is clear and easy to follow for our target audience? Could you provide examples of businesses that have successfully used a nonlinear narrative in their advertising campaigns? Why do you think a nonlinear narrative can set our brand apart from our competitors? Let's collaborate with a storytelling expert to develop a captivating nonlinear narrative for our brand. Have you explored any software tools that can help us create a dynamic nonlinear narrative? What are the potential risks of implementing a nonlinear narrative in our company's communication strategy? Let's gather feedback from our employees on how they perceive the nonlinear narrative in our internal communication. How can we tailor our nonlinear narrative to resonate with different demographic segments? Is there a specific platform where a nonlinear narrative works best for reaching our target audience? Have we considered the ethical implications of using a nonlinear narrative in our business storytelling? Let's map out the different touchpoints where we can introduce elements of our nonlinear narrative. How can we leverage data analytics to optimize our nonlinear narrative for better results? Have you encountered any challenges in implementing a nonlinear narrative in our sales presentations? Let's track the engagement metrics to see if our nonlinear narrative is resonating with our customers. What are the long-term benefits of cultivating a nonlinear narrative for our compelling company story. See also How To Use One Way Valve In A Sentence? Easy ExamplesHow To Use Nonlinear Narrative in A Sentence? Quick Tips Have you ever felt like your writing is missing a little something? Like it's not quite as exciting or engaging as you want it to be? Well, it might be time to shake things up with nonlinear narrative! Tips for using Nonlinear Narrative In Sentence Properly When you're using nonlinear narrative, it's essential to keep a few things in mind to ensure that your writing is clear and effective. One essential tip is to provide clear transitions between different time frames or plot points. Without these transitions, your readers might get lost in the timeline shuffle. Another tip is to use formatting techniques such as italics or different text colors to signal shifts in time or perspective. This simple trick can help guide your readers through the non-linear structure of your story. Common Mistakes to Avoid One common mistake when using nonlinear narrative is introducing too many timelines or perspectives. While non-linear storytelling can add depth to your narrative, juggling multiple timelines can confuse your readers if not done correctly. It's crucial to strike a balance between complexity and clarity. Another mistake to avoid is failing to provide enough context for each time frame or perspective. Make sure to give your readers enough information to understand how each piece fits into the larger puzzle of your story. Examples of Different Contexts Nonlinear narrative can be used in various contexts to enhance your storytelling. For example, in mystery or suspense genres, jumping back and forth in time can create tension and intrigue as readers piece together the clues. In literary fiction, nonlinear narrative can be a tool for exploring complex themes such as memory, trauma, or personal growth. Even in non-fiction writing, nonlinear storytelling can help capture the messiness and interconnectedness of real life events. See also How To Use Aquatic Fauna in A Sentence? Easy ExamplesExceptions to the Rules While there are some general guidelines for using nonlinear narrative effectively, it's essential to remember that writing is an art form, and rules are meant to be broken. Some writers excel at creating intentionally confusing or disjointed narratives that challenge readers to think in new ways. If you're feeling adventurous, don't be afraid to experiment with nonlinear storytelling techniques and push the boundaries of traditional narrative structure. Now that you have an understanding of how to use nonlinear narrative in your writing, why not put your skills to the test with a fun quiz? Quiz Time! Which of the following is a common mistake to avoid when using nonlinear narrative? A) Providing clear transitions between different timelines B) Introducing too many timelines or perspectives C) Giving too much context for each time frame D) Using different text colors to signal shifts in time In order to continue enjoying our site, we ask that you confirm your identity as a human. Thank you very much for your cooperation. Each of Ray's four new shows is spare, nonlinear, and choreographed down to the square inch. — New York Times, 26 Jan. 2022 Even if the story is linear, the writing of it can be nonlinear. — Brendan O'Meara, Longreads, 19 Dec. 2022 The further the light travels through the glass, the stronger the resulting nonlinear effects, and the larger the problem. — IEEE Spectrum, 7 June 2022 All three main actors ace their arcs and changing looks over time - that's key in a nonlinear film like this that's all over the place. — Brian Truitt, USA TODAY, 24 Apr. 2024 Not all nonlinear effects arise from new physics, of course. — Daniel Garisto, Scientific American, 30 Sep. 2020 There are twists aplenty, but the viewer never loses the thread of the nonlinear plot, and the look and feel of the film harkens back to Gilliam's 1985 masterpiece Brazil. — Jennifer Ouellette and Sean M. Carroll, Ars Technica, 24 Nov. 2023 With its sprawling sound and nonlinear editing, the album is sure to make a statement. — Luke Whelan, Outside Online, 15 June 2017 The rest are scattered in a nonlinear format in a grove of trees in front of the building entrance, close to bordering S Street NW. — Mark Jenkins, Washington Post, 14 July 2023 But her conduct and motives soon become as nonlinear as so much else in the story. — Gary Goldstein, Los Angeles Times, 13 July 2024 This is in part because the stories follow nonlinear plot lines. — David James, Anchorage Daily News, 2 July 2022 And again, remember that careers and day-to-day life in music are nonlinear. — Tara Klein, SPIN, 29 June 2023 The journey of grief is nonlinear, strange, glorious, and awful at times. — Alex Wagner, SPIN, 4 May 2022 While Tarantino has gone on to direct countless other films, his nonlinear crime thriller grips the zeitgeist to this day. — Hannah Jackson, Vogue, 14 Oct. 2024 Costa is a director who builds images more than scenes, which suits the nonlinear nature of this show. — Joshua Barone, New York Times, 15 Feb. 2024 In medicine, the outputs are nonlinear and unpredictable. — WSJ, 22 Sep. 2021 The film is presented in a nonlinear format, which allowed the director and stars to cover a wider scope of time and emotions. — Christian Holub, EW.com, 18 Oct. 2024 This is despite the lens having a nonlinear manual focus response, a method that is meant to support minute changes to the plane of focus with slow turns of the ring. — PCMag, 15 July 2024 The leaders who thrive in a nonlinear world think small, embrace uncertainty, and act fast. — Kevin Kruse, Forbes, 3 Mar. 2025 If the reality were nonlinear, the odds of getting low delta-F scores would be even more unlikely. — Neuroskeptic, Discover Magazine, 6 May 2014 The heires gives a nonlinear and contradictory account of the events that took place in the previous book, and readers aren't given clues as to why. — The New Yorker, 12 Mar. 2025 In the new role, Mendoza will be in charge of linear and nonlinear platforms, with strategy and planning teams will now be aligned into one. — Caroline Brew, Variety, 28 Feb. 2024 The result is a weird, moving and resonant work about grief and trauma and the nonlinear path of navigating both. — Scottie Andrew, CNN, 6 Mar. 2021 For the past few years, the game designer Sam Barlow has been perfecting a fresh, nonlinear form of storytelling, which bridges the gap between film and games. — Simon Parkin, The New Yorker, 2 Dec. 2022 From superb acting to nonlinear puzzles to trap doors, this will feel like much more than a typical escape room. — Vicki Salemi, Chron, 15 Apr. 2023 The goey, bittersweet drama goes through their love story in a nonlinear fashion as the two face high highs and devastating lows. — Savannah Salazar, Vulture, 19 Oct. 2024 While 2019's version included a nonlinear narrative that went alongside the walk, Lorraine said this year's goal was to find a way to invite the audience to be the guide. — Jerald Pierce, chicagotribune.com, 1 Sep. 2021 The 16 tracks also take listeners on a nonlinear journey of falling in and out of love, as Elish croons about heartbreak and the painful, uncertain process of healing. — Editors, USA TODAY, 30 July 2021 This allows laser light to interact with the electrons inside the material in a nonlinear way that keeps their phases in sync. — The Physics Arxiv Blog, Discover Magazine, 31 Mar. 2025 The Sound and the Fury is known for its stream-of-consciousness narration and nonlinear structure, and it's celebrated as a pivotal Modernist text. — Ellen Wexler, Smithsonian Magazine, 30 Dec. 2024 Because the nonlinear, non-cerebral forms that are art speak on a different frequency. — Catherine E. Shoichet, CNN, 28 Feb. 2021 The nonlinear narrative is a common feature of contemporary movies (and TV as well). It has become such a familiar screenwriting quirk it often verges on the edge of a trope. This familiarity obscures how thrilling and dynamic a nonlinear narrative can be. 'Nonlinear narrative: a narrative where events are portrayed out of chronological order or in other ways where the narrative does not follow the direct causality pattern of the events featured.' A nonlinear narrative will typically jump around in time. It will take the subject at hand as a whole and put together pieces to tell an overall story. Nonlinear narratives can be used to tell a wider version of the story at hand. For example, a nonlinear narrative will not just tell the chronological story of one romance but instead tell a story on the theme of romance. A nonlinear narrative can often be used to speak more generally on a theme. Rather than just focusing on the facts of what happened in a story, it will focus on the why and how of that story. But how does one avoid using a nonlinear narrative in a way that feels overused? Or to put it another way, how does a screenwriter get the best out of a non linear narrative? Firstly... Why Use a Nonlinear Narrative? Answering this question is essential to giving your use of a nonlinear narrative purpose. It will help you avoid using a nonlinear narrative for purely superficial reasons. Audiences can often tell when this is the case, particularly when the structure has become such a widely used storytelling technique. Make sure your use of a nonlinear narrative is inherently tied to the purpose of your story. Moreover, make sure the use of a nonlinear narrative is tied into your story's theme. This is a surefire way to protect your nonlinear narrative structure. If telling the story without it means you will be missing a core theme, then you know your nonlinear structure is essential to your screenplay. It's also worth noting, however, that a nonlinear narrative can be used stylistically. This style will speak to the tone and feel of the movie at hand. For example, a nonlinear narrative could be used to amp up tension in a thriller. Or it could be used to disorientate audiences in a mystery. So a nonlinear narrative can serve a stylistic function. But this is still not an affectation, it is inextricably linked to the purpose and definition of the screenplay. To help illustrate the best ways to use a nonlinear narrative, we're going to take a look at nonlinear narratives around four different themes - Romance is Dead, Haunted by the Past, Stronger Together and Styling it Out. We'll take a look at the films that fall under these umbrellas and how they use nonlinear narratives in different ways. This isn't the only ways that nonlinear narratives are used, but they are some of the most common examples. 1. Romance is Dead Films focused around relationships often employ a nonlinear narrative. We may do this for a wide variety of different reasons. Particularly in contemporary cinema, it feels not enough to just tell a straightforward love story. The audience except a twist on this traditional narrative. Let's look at how a number of different examples do this in a number of different ways. The End is Nigh - Blue Valentine Blue Valentine (2010) Official Trailer - Michelle Williams, Ryan Gosling Movie HD Blue Valentine uses a nonlinear narrative primarily to show the contrast in the beginning of a relationship and the end. There is a tragedy in this that makes the film powerful. We see the hope in the dawn of the two characters' relationship and the roadblock they've reached later on. Youthful hope and energy clashes with later life regret. Dean struggles with alcoholism. Whilst Cindy can't help but mourn for a life she thought she would have but doesn't. There is a poignancy to this, making the story more than one just of a romantic relationship but one about ageing, regret, lost ambition and paying the price for youthful naivety. But in flashing back and forward we also see the things about the relationship that cause it to unravel. Blue Valentine uses a nonlinear narrative to take a forensic look at one relationship. In doing so it presents a full view of this relationship but also touches on wider, relatable themes. Love is Doomed - Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind (2/11) Movie CLIP - Erased From Her Memory (2004) HD Not only does Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind contrast the beginning and end of a relationship, it also employs science fiction to say something deeper about the fate of a relationship between two characters both destined to be together and destined to break apart. Clementine and Joel seek to wipe each other from their memories, literally. But in doing so there is a morsel of memory that remains in their brains. This morsel brings them back together to meet once again. But they realise the truth of their meeting and find themselves facing the reality that even if they get together again they will break up again. There is something inherent in their personalities that will always doom the prospect of a long and happy relationship. 'You will think of things. And I'll get bored with you and feel trapped because that's what happens with me' The nonlinear narrative here is ingenious in how it presents a view of how memory works. Indeed, the narrative reflects the process of memory more than it does a straightforward narrative arc. We're often disorientated watching this film (particularly at the start), struggling to place where we are in the relationship. But this touches on the nature of memory. The futility of trying to erase memories shows how they both trap us and serve us. Expectations vs Realities - Annie Hall/500 Days of Summer Annie Hall (2/12) Movie CLIP - Where My Classmates Are Today (1977) HD Both 500 Days of Summer and Annie Hall take a broad view of a relationship, presenting it in a wider context. In Annie Hall, the relationship Woody Allen's Alvy has with the titular Annie Hall is presented as summing up so much of Alvy's personality. The relationship is a reflection of Alvy's characteristics at their best and worst. It's a place at which all his neurosis comes out and affie this relationship. In 500 Days of Summer, Tom's relationship with Summer is presented as more than just a meet, relationship and breakup, it's presented as a whole period of time in his life. The 500 days represent the time in which Tom was preoccupied with Summer, from meeting her to meeting someone else (symbolically called Autumn). Both these films employ nonlinear narratives to illustrate how relationships can reflect a crucial time in a character's life. We wouldn't get as much of a sense of both these protagonists if their relationships were presented merely from start to finish. Instead, the relationships are presented in context. This gives us both richer protagonists and more meaningful commentary on the nature of romantic relationships. 2. Haunted by the Past Nonlinear narratives are also often employed to tell a whole picture of a character's life. They do this by juxtaposing the past and present, showing how the former affects the latter. Solving a Mystery - Citizen Kane/Memento Citizen Kane - Famous Last Words Scene (1/10) | Movieclips Citizen Kane employs a nonlinear narrative to present the life of Charles Foster Kane as somewhat of a puzzle to piece together. The film starts with Kane uttering 'Rosebud' on his death bed. A reporter, Jerry Thompson, is then tasked with figuring out what this might mean. He conducts a series of interviews to learn about Kane's life. We don't just see these interviews, we see their content come to life. In piecing together the past, we seek to understand what 'Rosebud' really means and who this man we are seeing dying, really was. It's a picture of a powerful man told through intimate clips at his life. In knowing where the story will end, we desperately want to know what led to this point. A similar technique is employed in Memento. Only this time, it's not an objective party looking for answers, it's the protagonist himself. Memento has to be told through the structure of a nonlinear narrative. This is the structure of the protagonist's mind as someone battling amnesia. It's not just us seeking to solve the mystery, it's the protagonist. The use of a nonlinear narrative in this way makes the mystery all the more tantalising and rewarding, whilst keeping the action at an exciting and dynamic pace. We've Come so Far - Once Upon a Time in America Once Upon a Time in America (1984) Official Trailer #1 - Robert De Niro, James Woods Gangster Drama Once Upon a Time in America is an example of a film that had to wrestle with its use of a nonlinear narrative. Sergio Leone originally constructed the narrative in a nonlinear way, only to have it recut by the studio, who were concerned by its length. Different re-editions and releases of the film kept its original nonlinear structure. Once Upon a Time in America is a perfect example of a kind of nonlinear narrative that treats the past and present as two distinct time periods, with the latter reflecting on the former. Gangster David Aramson (played by Robert De Niro) returns to Manhattan, thirty years after fleeing it. He must look to the past in order to understand where his future lies. The two existing versions of the film, nonlinear and linear, show the virtues of a nonlinear narrative perfectly. So much is added by having the story told in a nonlinear format. Nostalgia is an additional theme touched on by having David triggered into remembering his past. There is a poetry in this that is lost by having the story evolve in a linear way. 3. Stronger Together Another kind of nonlinear narrative is one that weaves together a number of different stories around a singular theme. Sometimes these stories will interconnect, sometimes they won't. On their own they tell one story. But together they tell a wider story. A Link in the Chain - Alejandro González Iñárritu's 'Death Trilogy' Amores perros (1/10) Movie CLIP - The Crash (2000) HD Alejandro González Iñárritu exemplifies the use of this kind of nonlinear narrative in his 'Death Trilogy' (Amores Perros/21 Grams/Babel). All three films employ a nonlinear narrative in a slightly different way. Amores Perros tells the story of three different characters linked by one car crash. This car crash is the only thing that links them together and it does so very briefly. The different characters' stories speaks to an important theme, the patchwork of people of different socio-economic standings in Mexico City. This nonlinear narrative utilises the best the form has to offer - raising tension, creating a mystery the audience want to solve and varying the scope of the characters on show. Of the three films, it's Babel that is the loosest in terms of its nonlinear narrative. Iñárritu pushes the boundaries of what a nonlinear narrative can look like. The different stories take place on different continents, in different languages, and only briefly, if ever, meet. But the film consequently touches on some profound themes. Much more so than it could if the narrative was told in a more straightforward or expected way. In presenting characters so far apart in every sense, but still maintaining they are connected, the film suggests the world's interconnectedness. Small moments have large effects and in turn, the film provokes the audience to interrogate how their actions effect others in the globalised world we live in. Circling Around - Pulp Fiction Pumpkin and Honey Bunny - Pulp Fiction (1/12) Movie CLIP (1994) HD Pulp Fiction demonstrates one of the most well-known and well-loved examples of a nonlinear narrative. There are three different stories unfolding, all interrelated. As well as nonlinear, the structure can be defined as a 'circular narrative'. This is because the film starts and ends in the same place, with the same characters. What happens in between is often hard to piece together and make relevant, with only small clues linking it all together. One of the reasons Pulp Fiction's nonlinear narrative is so beloved is because its meaning is hard to pin down. All stories revolve around crime and redemption. But these are loose themes. How rich and entertaining the stories are is what makes the themes that unite them both less relevant and more desirable to know. Pulp Fiction shows how much fun can be had with a nonlinear narrative. It has a purpose and it would be missing the point to suggest otherwise. It's not just stylistic, it has something to say. But its purpose is elusive and lost primarily to how engaging the actual story is. To tell Pulp Fiction chronologically would be to lose its beguiling elusiveness, sense of mystery and its musings on the nuances within a life of crime. 4. Styling it Out Whilst their use of nonlinear narratives do have a thematic purpose, there are some films which make a nonlinear narrative a key part of their style and tone. The nonlinear narrative is still crucial to the story. But it's executed in a way that puts style at the forefront. Run Lola Run and the two Kill Bill volumes are exemplary of such films. In Run Lola Run, the protagonist, Lola, is given multiple attempts to write a narrative. When things continually go wrong for her, we see her start the sequence of events again. She is given the chance to have another go. In a sense this is a linear narrative. Trying to get the story from A to B. But in continually restarting and doing things differently each time, the narrative becomes nonlinear. The use of a nonlinear narrative here is a clever way of raising the tension. It plays on the theme of free will vs. determinism and takes the film from being a simple thriller, to something altogether more philosophical and profound. Furthermore, it demonstrates how a nonlinear narrative can add to a genre piece. Style is at the forefront of the film, but within this style is elevation of the genre's potential. A similar dynamic is at work in the two Kill Bill films. The narrative jumps back and forth in time continually. It's a way of spreading out the action. But it also keeps the mystery as to who the protagonist, The Bride, is and what she wants revenge for. The films could still exist in a linear way. And they would still be great. But telling the story via a nonlinear narrative only heightens the film's dynamism. It's a stylish film made all the more stylish by its structure. Kill Bill: Vol. 1 (1/12) Movie CLIP - Hello Vernita (2003) HD In Conclusion Getting the best out of a nonlinear narrative means focusing in on the why. Why use such a screenplay structure? Nonlinear narratives have the potential to make your script touch on themes larger than the genre to which it belongs. Whether it be a romance, thriller or meditative drama - using a nonlinear narrative can open your script up. Not only will it make the audience cry, laugh or perspire with tension, it can touch on themes larger than the characters within it. How it can do this means connecting it to the root of your story. Challenge yourself as a writer to think beyond the basic elements of plot, character and theme. By connecting the dots in a different way, what can you touch on? It's a familiar aspect of contemporary cinema. But its power comes from its malleability. Nonlinear can mean lots of different things to different stories. Make sure your nonlinear narrative is innately connected to the purpose of your story, and it could be the thing that sets your script apart, makes it fly and gives you strength as a writer. What did you think of this article? Share it, Like it, give it a rating, and let us know your thoughts in the comments box further down... Struggling with a script or book? Story analysis is what we do, all day, every day... check out our range of script coverage services for writers & filmmakers.