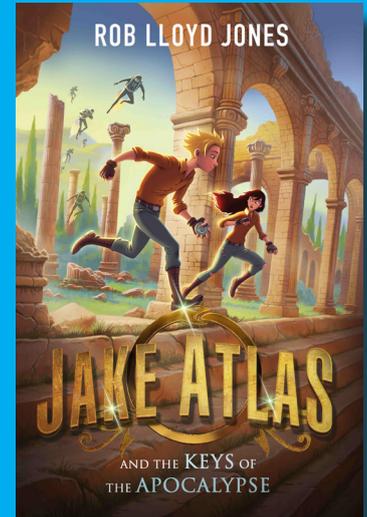


Rob Lloyd Jones's Six Story Challenges

Rob Lloyd Jones is the award winning children's author of over 80 books, including the *Wild Boy* and *Jake Atlas* adventure novels for Walker Books and the best-selling *See inside* and *Look inside* books for Usborne Publishing.

Here he shares six story-telling tips, and sets six simple challenges to help you write your own amazing story.



CHALLENGE 5 – STORY ENDINGS

Hello all,

I hope you enjoyed thinking about the event that gets your story started, thrusting your character out of their normal life and into an adventure. I'm sure you're itching to write what happens next, but first it would help to think a little more about the rest of your story, so you have a clearer guide to where the story is going.

Usually it is good to know how your story begins (which you now do) and how it might end. Once you know those two things, your story map will have two pins in it – the start and the end, and then you can have fun taking your characters from one to the other.

So, for the next challenge, try to write a few sentences about how your story ends.

The most important thing about a story ending is that your main character should have been CHANGED by the adventure they have been on. In fact, I would say that that IS YOUR STORY. When I met my publisher to talk about Jake Atlas, they asked me what it was about. At first I told them all about lost tombs and the cool action and twists. They listened, and then asked me, “But what is it REALLY ABOUT?” I thought for a moment and then replied, “It’s about a boy who learns to be proud of himself.” And that sums up Jake Atlas for me far better than anything else.

All the fun stuff action and adventure is just PLOT – it is the things that happen. STORY is about characters going on a journey that changes them. So that journey – from good to bad, or happy to sad – must always be in your head when you write the story.

So, for this challenge, could you also write one or two sentences how your main character changes in your story? This should be a change in your character’s personality – not in the action. Do they go from being nice to mean, or good to evil maybe?

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TIPS FOR CHALLENGE No. 5...

Usually the hero is the person who changes the most in a story – from good to bad, or from mean to kind, or whatever. A good example is *The Wizard of Oz* – Dorothy seems to be the main character in that story, but in fact she doesn't change at all. The others – the lion, tin man and scarecrow – all learn a lot about themselves on their journey, so I would say they are the main characters.

Also – don't think about sequels! Tell the story you want to tell as if it is the ONLY story. As an example: If your hero is a tough but lonely detective trying to catch a criminal, by the end that character should have caught the criminal and become less lonely. THAT is the ending. Then, if you want, you can reveal that the criminal he caught is just one of many from a huge gang, so we know there will be more adventures to come.

Good luck!

Rob

Here are some books Rob wrote using these tips. His 'Wild Boy' novels are perfect for anyone studying the Victorian times, while the 'Jake Atlas' adventures are ideal for topics on the ancient world. They're also great stories! Find out more at www.robloydjones.com

