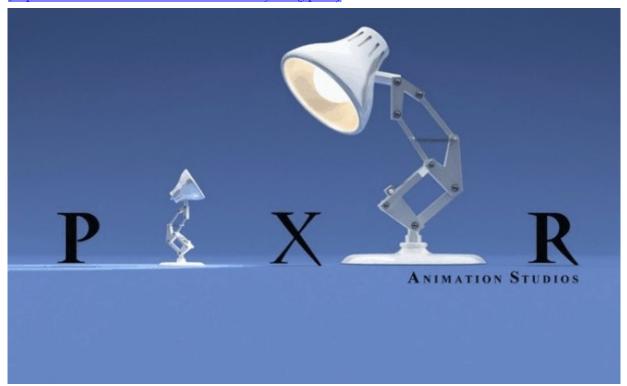
## Pixar's 22 Rules of Storytelling

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Although not everyone strives to to tell Pixar-y tales, the below can be used as a good bench-mark and/or checklist from which to gauge and/or influence your very own stories and storytelling process.

- 1. You admire a character for trying more than for their successes.
- 2. You gotta keep in mind what's interesting to you as an audience, not what's fun to do as a writer. They can be very different.
- 3. Trying for theme is important, but you won't see what the story is actually about until you're at the end of it. Now rewrite.

4. Once u	•	Every		
day,	<u>_</u> .	One day,	Becau	se of
that,		Because of that, _	·	Until
finally				

5. Simplify. Focus. Combine characters. Hop over detours. You'll feel like you're losing valuable stuff but it sets you free.

- 6. What is your character good at, comfortable with? Throw the polar opposite at them. Challenge them. How do they deal?
- 7. Come up with your ending before you figure out your middle. Seriously. Endings are hard, get yours working up front.
- 8. Finish your story, let go even if it's not perfect. In an ideal world you have both, but move on. Do better next time.
- 9. When you're stuck, make a list of what WOULDN'T happen next. Lots of times the material to get you unstuck will show up.
- 10. Pull apart the stories you like. What you like in them is a part of you; you've got to recognize it before you can use it.
- 11. Putting it on paper lets you start fixing it. If it stays in your head, a perfect idea, you'll never share it with anyone.
- 12. Discount the first thing that comes to mind. And the second, third, fourth, fifth get the obvious out of the way. Surprise yourself.
- 13. Give your characters opinions. Passive/malleable might seem likable to you as you write, but it's poison to the audience.
- 14. Why must you tell THIS story? What's the belief burning within you that your story feeds off of? That's the heart of it.
- 15. If you were your character, in this situation, how would you feel? Honesty lends credibility to unbelievable situations.
- 16. What are the stakes? Give us reason to root for the character. What happens if they don't succeed? Stack the odds against.
- 17. No work is ever wasted. If it's not working, let go and move on it'll come back

around to be useful later.

- 18. You have to know yourself: the difference between doing your best and fussing. Story is testing, not refining.
- 19. Coincidences to get characters into trouble are great; coincidences to get them out of it are cheating.
- 20. Exercise: Take the building blocks of a movie you dislike. How do you rearrange them into what you DO like?
- 21. You gotta identify with your situation/characters, you can't just write "cool." What would make YOU act that way?
- 22. What's the essence of your story? Most economical telling of it? If you know that, you can build out from there.