The following is a suggested outline for *Stand By Me*

Sitting in his jeep, Gordon Lachance reads an article in a newspaper, which details how well-known attorney Chris Chambers was killed in a recent stabbing. He thinks back and we hear his voice:

“I was twelve , goin’ on thirteen when I first saw a dead body.”

Flashback to 12 year-old Gordon Lachance sitting in his treehouse in the town of CastleRock in 1960. He is playing cards with his friends Chris Chambers and Teddy Duchamp. They smoke and tell each other jokes. They are joined by their friend Vern Tessio, who tells them of how he overheard his brother discussing the whereabouts of the body of a missing boy, which they saw the previous night. Vern’s brother had stolen the car and is more afraid to explain this to the police than report the body.

The boys decide to go and search for the body, creating a story that each of them is staying in one another’s house, to cover them for the 2 days travel that will take them 20 miles outside town. They think that finding the body will make them famous.

Following the railway track which leads near the woods will lead to where the body is rumoured to be. Chris shows Gordie the gun he has brought, which he has stolen from his ‘drunk’ father. Gordie mistakenly fires the gun. The boys run off to the track and are joined by Vern and Teddy. They walk along the tracks. Teddy reveals a disturbing aspect to his character when he stands on the track and waits to dodge an oncoming train. The other boys pull him off onto the embankment.

They climb a fence at the town dump, knowing that the dump gates will be open when Mr. Pressman, the dumpkeeper returns and they will be able to sneak through at that time. However, Gordie loses a bet and has to go and get food in the meantime. Upon returning, Gordie finds that Mr. Pressman is back and the dumpman sets his notorious dog ‘Chopper’ on his. Gordie runs for it, egged on by his friends who have already scaled the fence. Gordie makes it just in time. Outside the fence, they verbally abuse Mr. Pressman, who retorts that he knows who they are - Chris’ family are known around town - a bad breed and Teddy’s father is in ‘the loony bin’. The boys respond angrily, but walk away hurt.

Teddy has been injured by Pressman’s words but the boys decide to continue on. They come to a steep rail bridge which overlooks the local river. The bridge is so narrow, that they have a debate as to whether they should cross it. The alternative is a 20 mile round trip, so they decide to cross it. In the middle of the bridge, a train comes. Chris and Teddy make the other side but Gordie and Vern dice with death as the train bears down on them. They make the other side - but only just.

Chris and Gordie share their personal fears with each other. Chris worries that when he goes to Junior High School, after the summer, he will be put in all the ‘shop’ classes - the classes for the less academically minded, simply because of his family’s bad name. Gordie tells Chris that he thinks his father hates him. His brother Dennis, a high school sports star died only 3 months ago in an accident and Gordie believes that his father would have preferred it if Gordie had been the one who had died.

It’s beginning to get dark, so the boys decide to camp out. Gordie, who is beginning to write some stories, tells them the tale of a fat boy called ‘Lardass’ who gets his revenge on a mocking town. The boys sleep is disturbed by wild animals in the woods, prompting fears of a haunting by the dead boy.

Local gang leader Ace Merrill has also found out about the body and he is also on his way to the location.

In the morning, the boys travel on, coming to a swamp, which looks safe enough but when they trod into it, they find themselves neck deep in water. Added to this is the realisation that they have been attacked by leaches. Gordie has the unfortunate task of having to prize a leach away from his private parts, causing him to faint. This incident sets in motion a debate about whether to carry on. The others begin arguing, but Gordie comes to the fore by saying that he is going on. The others fall in step behind him.

They finally come upon the body. It is the corpse of a boy their age. Viewing his body makes Gordie think about his dead brother and he cries. Whilst debating about what to do now, Ace Merrill and his gang come on the scene. The two groups face each other off.

But Gordie fires Chris' gun in the air, settling the matter. Gordies group will have the prize of the body and the attached fame.

But in voice-over, the narrator describes how they finally made an anonymous call to the police. Facing the fact that it could have been one of them killed in an accident such as the one that caused the death of the boy, they resign themselves to covering the body and making a phone call.

Back in their home-town, the boys split up reluctantly, realising that it may be the last time they are together before going to Junior High School.

In a voice-over, the adult Gordon Lachance tells us of the fate of his three friends, one dead, one in prison and one working back in his home town. He also believes that he never had friends like the ones he had when he was twelve.