

## ELEMENTS OF A STORY

### PLOT

The plot is how the author arranges events to develop his basic idea; it is the sequence of events in a story or play. The plot is a planned logical series of events having a beginning, middle and end.

#### Essential Elements of a Plot

1. Introduction – The beginning of the story where the characters and setting are revealed.
2. Rising action – This is where the events in the story become complicated and the conflict in the story is revealed. These are the events between the introduction and the climax.
3. Climax – This is the highest point of interest and the turning point of the story. The reader wonders what will happen next; will the conflict be resolved or not?
4. Falling action – The events and complications begin to resolve themselves. The reader knows what has happened next and if the conflict has been resolved or not (events between the climax and final outcome)
5. Resolution – This is where the final outcome is revealed.

Think of plot this way:

1. The main character receives new information
2. He accepts this information (realizes it but does not necessarily agree with it)
3. He acts on this information (makes a choice that will determine whether or not he gains his objective).

#### Conflict

Conflict is essential to plot. It is the opposition of forces which ties one incident to another and makes the plot move. Conflict is not merely limited to open arguments, rather it is any form of opposition that faces the main character.

Conflict can be

1. external – a struggle with a force outside of one's self
2. internal - a struggle within one's self; a person must make some decision, overcome pain, quiet their temper, resist an urge.

Conflict can be:

1. Man vs man (physical) – The leading character struggles with his physical strength against other men, forces of nature, or animals.
2. Man vs circumstances (classical) – The leading character struggles against fate or the circumstances of life facing him
3. Man vs society (social) – The leading character struggles against ideas, practice, or customs of other people.
4. Man and himself (psychological) – The leading character struggles with himself; with his soul, ideas or right or wrong, physical limitations, choices, etc.

## SETTING

The time and location in which a story takes place is called the setting. For some stories the setting is very important, which for others it is not.

There are several aspects of a story's setting to consider when examining how setting contributes to a story (some, or all, may be present in a story)

1. Place – geographical location
2. Time – when
3. Weather conditions
4. Social conditions
5. Mood or atmosphere

## CHARACTER

1. The person in the story
2. The characteristics of the person

Protagonist: clearly central to the story with all major events having some importance to this character

Antagonist: the oppose to the main character (the villain)