

Plot Planner



Nothing fits neatly into a box, especially when it comes to writing a story with infinite possibilities. You spend hours, days, or even months planning out your idea and have everything perfectly planned out, but as you start writing you may notice that your characters are taking you in a whole other direction. But...there is no harm in getting a head start before you main character's and their friends take you down the path less traveled.

Title(s): _____
 Main Character(s): _____
 Antagonist(s): _____

Theme:

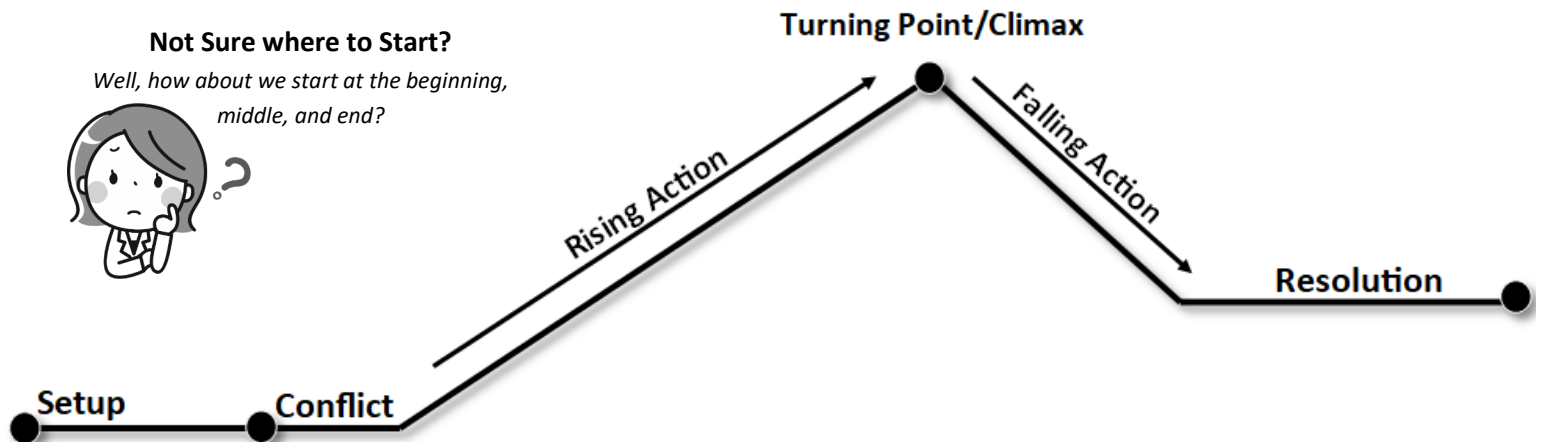
The central idea of the story.
 What is the significance of the Character's Journey?

- Redemption
- Resurrection
- Prodigal Son
- Transformation
- Vengeance
- Innocence
- Justice
- Sacrifice
- Jealousy
- Friendship
- Fate
- Love
- Acceptance
- Self-Discovery
- Empowerment

Other: _____

Not Sure where to Start?

Well, how about we start at the beginning, middle, and end?



The Setup: Introduce the Characters and Setting

The Conflict: The Opposing Forces at work

Rising Action: Events that lead up to the Climax

Turning Point/Climax: The point of no return

Falling Action: Events that occur after the Climax

Resolution: How does it end?

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Some would say that this should be the very first line of the Opening Scene, but as with everything else this is not always the true. It DOES need to be sooner rather than later, otherwise your reader will get bored and never know what wonderful adventures may be ahead. The hook is what makes the reader say, :“Well, that got my attention! I have to know what happens next.”

Set Up: The Hook

A Question: A pondering that is meant to make the reader think and desire an answer

⇒ Example: *Would the world even skip a beat if she decided to jump?*

Your Turn: _____

An Exclamation: A remark of intense emotion that is designed to grab the reader’s attention

⇒ Example: *Nothing could stop him now!*

Your Turn: _____

A Quotation: The use of another’s words to reinforce the POV Character’s frame of thought

⇒ Example: *My Father always said, “Only a fool speaks before he listens.”*

Your Turn: _____

A Metaphor: The Comparison of two unrelated things without the use of like, as, or than

⇒ Example: *Her sobs were daggers in his heart.*

Your Turn: _____

An impactful Description: The use of evocative imagery to elicit the reader’s imagination

⇒ Example: *The early morning sun burned away the evening sky until no star remained.*

Your Turn: _____

A Dilemma: The POV Character has a choice to make, and neither of them are appealing

⇒ Example: *Duty beckoned for him to leave, but the tears in his wife’s eyes begged him to stay.*

Your Turn: _____

A Juxtaposition: Putting two contrasting things side by side for the reader to compare

⇒ Example: *Until today, I never would have believed that heaven and hell could exist in one place..*

Your Turn: _____

A Dramatic Statement: A statement that is startling and attention-getting

⇒ Example: *Should she take one more step forward, everything in her life would change.*

Your Turn: _____

A Simile: The Comparison of two unrelated things using like, as, or than

⇒ Example: *Loving her was like walking down a walkway paved in hot coals.*

Your Turn: _____

A Fact: A use of indisputable information that adds emphasis to the plot or characters

⇒ Example: *Four hundred souls boarded the Emerald Duchess, but only three returned home.*

Your Turn: _____

An Anecdote: The use of the someone’s experiences to emphasis the story

⇒ Example: *When my grandfather was in the war, he flew planes held together by willpower alone.*

Your Turn: _____

A Humorous Statement: A funny approach to achieving the reader’s attention

⇒ Example: *Her dream was to be an actress, not an oversized banana standing on a street corner.*

Your Turn: _____

A Powerful Word or Phrase: To say something strong and capable of evoking emotion

⇒ Example: *Freedom!*

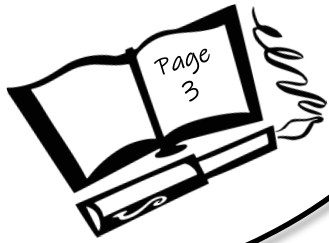
Your Turn: _____

Helpful Reminder:

Start where the action is!
Make them want to know
what happens next.

- * Imply what is to come
- * Raise questions the reader will want answered
- * Evoke the reader’s curiosity

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Many things happen in the opening scene. The Main Character(s) is introduced in his/her normal world. The POV (Point of View) is established. The setting is brought to life. All carefully crafted to draw the reader in and keep them engaged in the story. The Hook and Conflict are also a significant part of the opening scene, but each of those get a page of their very own.

Set Up: The Opening Scene

The Setting

Date: _____

Time: _____

Location: _____

Weather: _____

Mood: _____

Describe the setting of the Opening Scene:

Sights: _____

Sounds: _____

Smells: _____

Does the setting reflect the Mood of the Main Character or story? Yes No

Explain: _____

What is happening in the Opening Scene?

The Characters

Main Character(s) introduced in the Opening Scene:

What is the Main Character(s) doing before the Opening Scene begins? _____

What brings the Main Character(s) into the Opening Scene? _____

How does the Main Character(s) feel in the Opening Scene? _____

What is the Main Character(s) immediate goal in the Opening Scene?

Who is with the Main Character(s) in the Opening Scene?

The POV of the Story

- First person:** Use of "I" or "we"
- Second person:** Use of "you" and "your"
- Third person:** Use of "he," "she," or "it". Can be limited or omniscient

Why should the Reader turn the page?

Main Characters(s) Normal World

What is their life like before the upcoming conflict turns it all upside down? (Routine, constant mood, job, lifestyle, beliefs, etc.)

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Conflict is when the main character(s) has a goal, but something or someone is standing in their way. This struggle between opposing forces can come in all shapes and sizes, and no story is limited to just one. This is a problem caused by another character or a set of circumstances that needs to be resolved.

In the opening scene, the reader met the character they need to root for (most of the time), and now it is up to you to give them a reason to root for them.

Conflict: An Overview

Type of Conflict:

What kind of struggle does your plot revolve around?

- Character vs Character
- Character vs Society
- Character vs Nature
- Character vs Technology
- Character vs Supernatural
- Character vs Self
- Character vs Fate/God
- Other: _____

Explain: _____

The Antagonist

Briefly describe the antagonist and why the antagonist is opposing the Main Character(s).

External Conflict

What does the Main Character(s) **WANT** and who/what is getting in their way?
(Antagonist, Self, Nature, Etc.)

Internal Conflict

What does the Main Character(s) **NEED** and who/what is getting in their way? (Antagonist, Self, Nature, Etc.)

Sub-Conflicts

List some of the smaller obstacles that will occur throughout the story.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

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What we have all been waiting for! Both the writer and reader. The tension has been building and the stakes have been raised as far as they can go, and now it is time for it all to come together in a manner that will leave everyone breathless. This is the WOW! moment. Leave the reader feeling satisfied that their commitment thus far has not been in vain.

The Climax: When It All Hits The Fan

Where does it all take place?

Date: _____

Time: _____

Weather: _____

Location: _____

Describe the setting: _____

Sounds/Smells: _____

Is this place Significant to the Main Character

(s) or the Antagonist? _____

Why? _____

Key Lessons

What has the Main Character(s) have learned to this point?

About themselves: _____

About the Antagonist: _____

About another character: _____

Other: _____

The Surprise

Whatever it is you have been holding back all this time is now revealed.

Why reveal it now? _____

Is this completely unexpected?

Who wins?

The good guy doesn't always win.

How does the Main Character(s) feel about this loss/win? _____

How does the Antagonist feel about this win/loss?

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With the conflict conquered and put to rest, what happens next? The falling action is where all of the loose ends are tidied up and it brings us one step closer to the end. Time to wind down and let the Character's enjoy their win or reflect on their loss. Maybe add a new conflict if writing a series. Though moving away from all the excitement of the Climax, there still needs to be some kind of Action. Even if it means just bringing the hero home after years at war.

Falling Action: What Happens After

Tying up Loose Ends

Resolve any sub-conflicts that are still in need of closure

Loose End #1: _____

Loose End # 2: _____

Loose End # 4: _____

Where has the Antagonist gone?

Now that all is said and done, what happens to the Antagonist now?

Where to go Now?

The Main Character(s) has won/lost. What do they do next?
Where do they want to be?

How has the Main Character(s) Normal world Changed?

Has it been altered in a positive or negative way.

Does the Main Character(s) believe that it was all worth the risk?

What did they wind up losing or gaining? Was it what they thought it would be at the beginning?

Conflict on the Horizon

Is there a problem brewing in the distance?

Is this new conflict a result of the Climax?

Ready to End the Story?

Is there anything else that needs to happen before the story comes to an end?

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After all the tears, rants, and joyous shrieks...it is time for it all to come to an end. As sad as it is to say goodbye, it is an accomplishing feeling to type those last few words. The Characters are where they need to be, the conflict has been resolved, and all of the loose ends have been tied up with a neat little bow. The reader should feel content and bedazzled as they, maybe even a little mournful, as they put your book down. If it is a series, leave them craving more!

Resolution: The End

Type of Ending:

Much like anything else, every ending is different. What kind of ending did you chose?

- Circular Ending** - Story circles back to the beginning with the same words or same Idea
- Surprise Ending** - Story ends you where you didn't expect it to
- Lesson or Moral Ending** - The main character learns a lesson, shows growth, or changes in a positive way
- Warm Fuzzy Ending** - Story that tugs at the heartstrings
- Reflection Ending** - The narrator looks back on an experience and determines it's significance
- Cliffhanger Ending** - Story leaves the reader unsatisfied and wanting more
- Question Ending** - Story ends with a question and keeps the reader thinking
- Humorous Ending** - Story ends with something that makes the reader laugh
- Image Ending** - Story with an important scene and is described through vivid details
- Dialogue Ending** - Story ends with an important conversation

Other: _____

The Last Line

Write four different to endings to your story. Use different tones, point of views, or circumstances.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Is the Main Character(s) the same as in the beginning: Yes No

Explain: _____

Does the Main Character(s) get their Happily Ever After/Happy For Now? Yes No

Explain: _____

How should the Reader Feel as the Story Ends? _____

