

Name: _____

Important Other

Date: _____

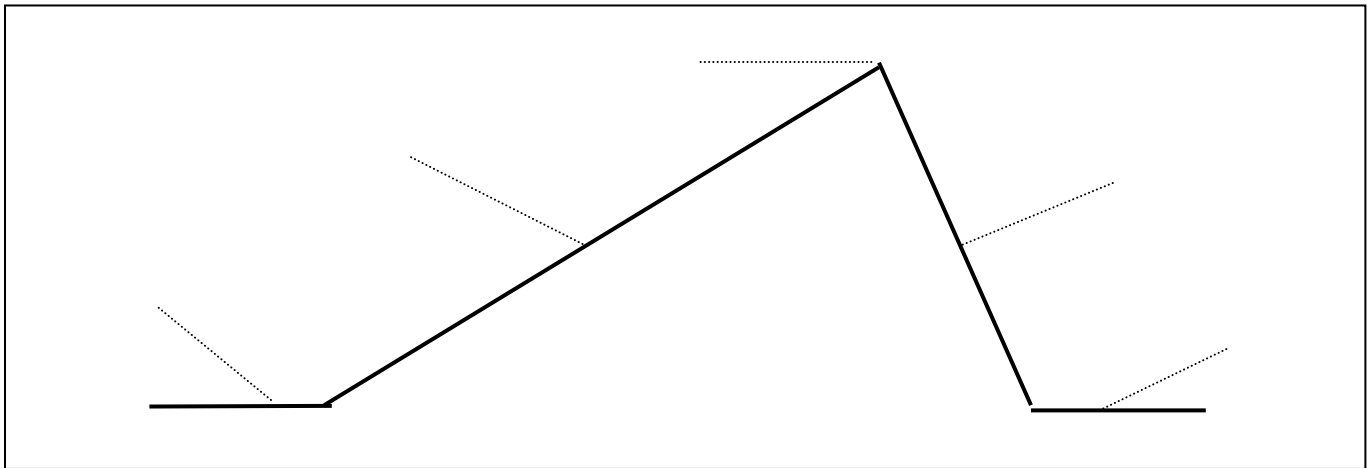
Team: _____

Structure of a Story

The structure of a story includes the plot, the theme, the point of view- basically an overview of everything about a story!

First of all: the **plot** of the story-the sequence of events that gives the story structure and direction. The plot is also referred to as the story line.

Although not every story follows a distinct plot that is that same as every other story, the basic sequence of events in a story are:



- 1) **Exposition:** a fancy word for the beginning of the story- where the author "sets the stage"- in this part, the situation of the characters in the story is explained and it leads up to the further development of the plot- the point of view and the setting (the where and the when) is also explained
- 2) **Rising Action:** the series of action, or complications, that sets up the conflict for the main character of the story- in this part of the story tension builds, and the story works its way up to the climax
- 3) **Climax:** the high point in the story - the turning point where the conflict comes to a head and is decided for one side or the other- usually the most exciting point in the story

Conflicts are problems or complications.

- Man vs. man – two people arguing or fighting
- Man vs. himself – a person who has problems within, such as depression, unresolved anger or love, feelings of rejection, etc.
- Man vs. nature – a person against a natural disaster or Mother Nature, i.e. a storm, blizzard, hurricane, etc.

Conflicts Continued...

- Man vs. supernatural – a person against things that are not easily explained or "normal", such as ghosts, evil forces, gods, etc.
- Man vs. society- a person against the common, accepted popular beliefs.

4) **Falling Action:** events that happen after the climax - usually wrap up the story and lead to the conclusion- sometimes the falling action is almost non-existent because the conclusion occurs immediately after the climax

5) **Resolution:** the point of closure- also called the conclusion or denouement- when the conflict is worked out- the end

Other Things to Think About

Often, authors will start in the middle of a story and use **flashbacks** (narration of events which occurred earlier. Flashbacks sometimes make a story more interesting and builds more **suspense** (uncertainty or anxiety in the reader about what will happen next). **Foreshadowing** (hints in a story about what happens later) may also be used to build suspense.

Another important part of a story is the **theme**- in fact in some stories, it is the most important part. The theme is the story's central concept, or the controlling idea. Many times the theme will make a statement about life, or the human character-or it will make some other statement based on the views of the author. Not all stories have a theme, however- for example, mysteries usually don't make a statement, they just give you a good puzzle to figure out.

A few other things you might like to know about:

Characterization: the way an author creates the people in their story and brings them to life- characters may be **flat** (one-dimensional, i.e. the good guy is always the hero and the bad guy is also the villain) or **round** (complex, characters that have many sides to them-good, bad, everything), as well as **static** (they don't change at all during the story) or **dynamic** (they change or grow during the story, so they are somewhat different at the end)

Point of View: the perspective or angle that the story is being told from- there are three main types, listed in the table below.

First Person	where the story is told by someone who identifies himself as "I," and may or may not be a character in the story (but usually is) -allows you to know the mind of that one character but no others
Third Person	where the story is told by someone who is not a character in the story and identifies the characters as "he," "she," or "them"- you don't find out anything more than can be seen, heard or know by an observer
Omniscient	where the story is told by someone who is not a character in the story but can know everything about every character in the story- what they think, what they feel, as well as what they see and hear