Story Structure

Parts of the Story
What is **Story Structure**?

Most stories follow a pattern. We will study the most common pattern. This is a way of identifying parts of a story.
Elements of a Story

Setting: time and place of story.

Conflict: problem in the story.

Plot: events surrounding the conflict.
Exposition

Events before the plot is set in motion.

- Characters and setting are introduced
- Exposition ends when the conflict begins.

Example

Justin has a promising future as an athlete.
Inciting Incident

When the conflict is introduced.

• The inciting incident sets the plot in motion.

Example

Justin injures himself.
Rising Action

Events leading up to the climax.

After the inciting incident and before the climax.

Examples

• Justin sits in bed all day.
• He eats too much
• He watches too much TV.
Climax

The turning point in the story.

- Main character may learn something new
- A change takes place
- Now the conflict can be addressed.

Example

Justin’s sister motivates him.
Falling Action

Events after the climax.
Events leading toward the resolution.

Examples

Justin learned to study with his sister.
He passed his classes.
He got his GPA up.
Moment of **Final** Suspense

The main character is tested one last time.

- Not every story has this.
- May be the most exciting moment.

**Example**

Justin has to score well on the ACT.
Resolution

Events after the conflict is resolved.

How the story ends.

Example

Justin goes to college in Hawaii.
Tips for Identifying

1. First, identify the climax
2. The climax usually isn’t the most exciting part of the story.
3. Watch for a shift in the mood of the story:

   Things go from bad to good or from good to bad.
Review

Not every story follows this pattern, but most do.