

# **KEY ELEMENTS OF A SHORT STORY.**

**ESLDO - Unit 4**

# What is a Short Story?

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**A short story is usually a fictional narrative that has a fully developed theme, but is much shorter to read and less detailed than a novel or book.**

## A Short Story:

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- Tells about a single event or experience
- 500 to 15,000 words in length
- It has a beginning, middle and end
- Can usually be read in one sitting
- Creates an impression on the reader

## 5 Key Elements of a Short Story

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1. **Characters** - *the people, animals or creatures in the story*
2. **Setting** - *the time and location where the story occurs*
3. **Plot** - *the series of events that make up the story*
4. **Conflict** - *the problem that presents itself to the characters*
5. **Resolution** - *how the problem is fixed or solved*

# #1. CHARACTERS



# The protagonist

*Every story needs a “protagonist” or good guy!*



# The antagonist

*Some stories also include “antagonists” or bad guys.*



# Characterization

Characterization is the way in which the author shows the personality of the character.

**Think about your favourite book, TV, or movie character.**

- How can you describe his or her appearance?
- What kind of personality do they have?
- What do they like or dislike?
- What other traits or qualities do they have?

# Characterization Continued...

An author can tell the reader directly about a character:

*“Freddy was a very competitive boy.”*

OR

An author can tell the reader indirectly about a character:

*“Two days before the soccer game, Freddy gathered his teammates and told them they would win... even if it meant risking everything.”*



# Character Traits

Consider how you might use adjectives to describe the traits or qualities of your characters.

- Honest
- Demanding
- Strong
- Fancy
- Stern
- Plain
- Proud
- Courageous
- Pretty
- Messy
- Selfish
- Angry
- Kind
- Boring
- Brave
- Poor
- Smart
- Lazy
- Helpful
- Shy
- Short
- Lovable
- Confident
- Clean
- Wild
- Funny
- Intense

# Character Motivation

**Character Motivation** is the reason why the character makes the decisions that he or she does. This means that there is a reason or purpose for the character's actions.

## **Ask yourself:**

1. What does the main character want? (main goal)
2. What do the other characters want? (main goal)
3. What conflicts, struggles, or relationships exist between characters?

# #2. SETTING



# Setting

The setting describes where and when the story takes place. It helps create imagery and sets the tone or the mood of the story.

## **Setting can describe:**

- Time of Day
- Time of Year
- Time in History
- Scenery or Location
- Weather

# Using the FIVE Senses:

A good setting helps the reader visualize the places in the story.

To help you create your setting(s), consider using the five senses:

- ★ Sight
- ★ Smell
- ★ Taste
- ★ Touch
- ★ Hearing

# Describe this Setting:



**Look at these two descriptions. One of them uses the five senses, the other does not.**

1. The castle was beside the water.
2. The waves crashed loudly against the rough and rocky shoreline. The ocean air tasted salty but fresh, and I felt excited about my new surroundings. The fog started to lift ever so slightly as we approached the island, and the old castle came into view. I could smell the smoke from the crumbling towers in the distance.

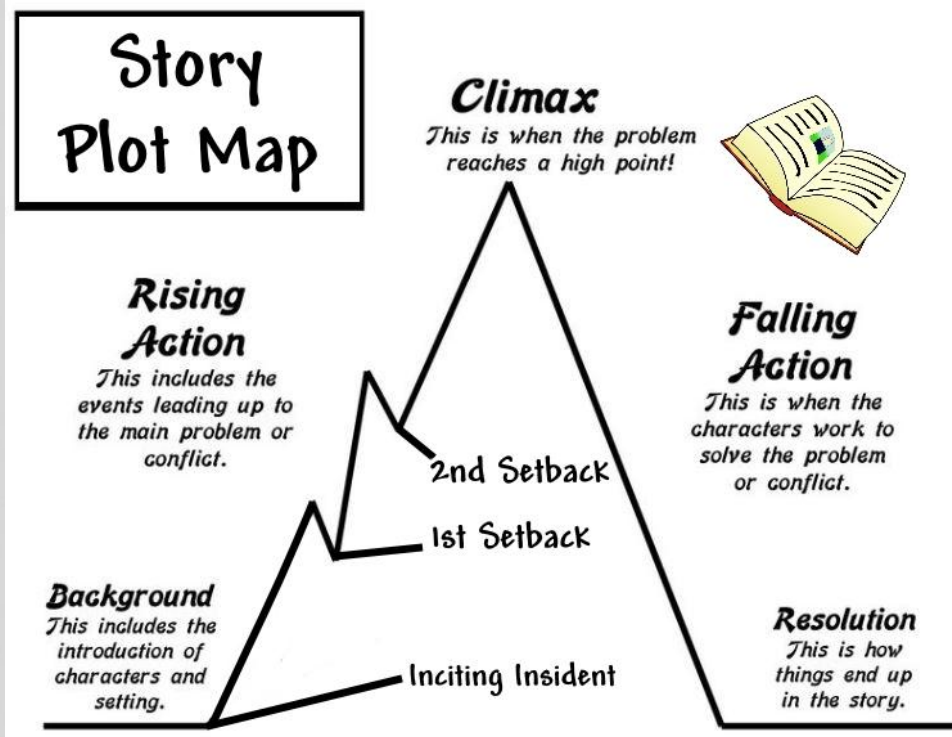
# #3. PLOT





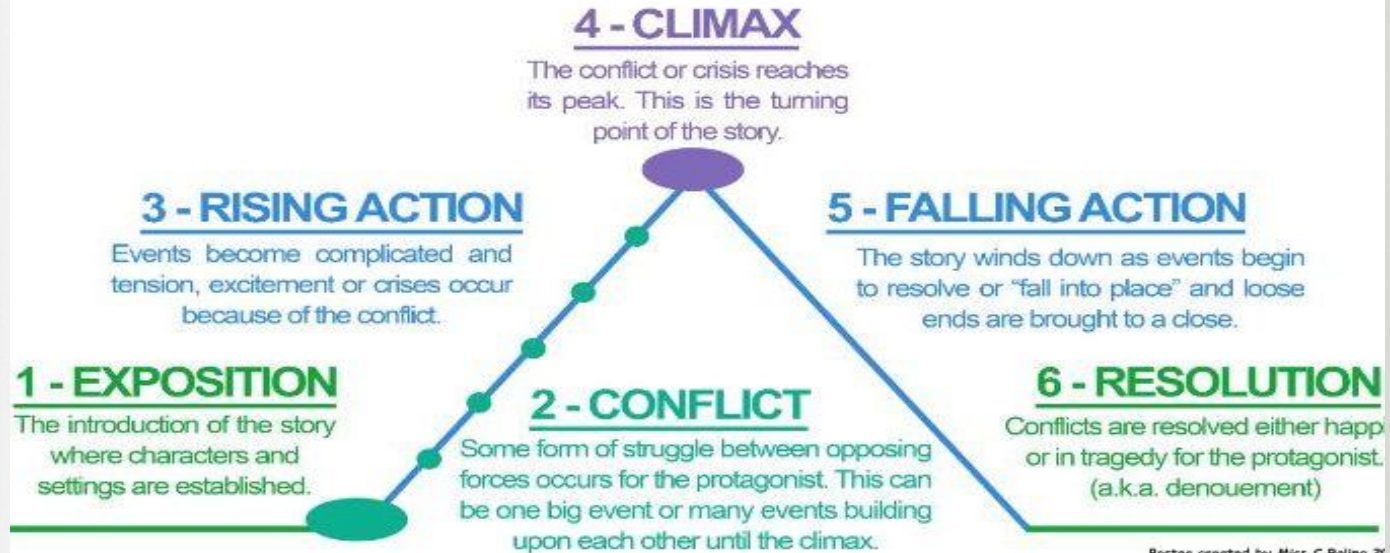
# Plot

The plot is the series of events that take place in a story. A plot is made up of different parts.



# PLOT DIAGRAMS

A plot diagram is used to organise a story into segments. This mapping of plot structure allows readers and writers to visualize the key features of stories. It also gives a common framework for analysing and understanding literature.



Poster created by Miss C. Beling 20

# #4. CONFLICT



# Conflict

Conflict is the battle, problem, or struggle between two or more different things in the story. Without conflict, there is no plot.

## Types of Conflict:

- Character vs. Character
- Character vs. Nature
- Character vs. Society
- Character vs. Themselves

# Types of Conflict:

- **Character vs. Character** - there is a problem with another character.
- **Character vs. Nature** - there is a problem with a force of nature.
- **Character vs. Society** - there is a problem with the laws or beliefs of a group or a problem with the members of society.
- **Character vs. Themselves** - there is a problem or confusion and the character is having trouble deciding what to do or how to think.

# Guess the conflict type!



# Guess the conflict type!



# Guess the conflict type!





# Guess the conflict type!



# **#5. RESOLUTION**



# Resolution

The conflict is resolved or fixed. There is a solution to the problem(s) and the story has a conclusion.

## **Things to consider:**

- The conflict can be resolved in a positive way or in a negative way.
- Often there is a lesson that is learned.
- The reader should feel at peace.

**THE END!**