

Elements of
Fiction
SPM
Continuous
Writing

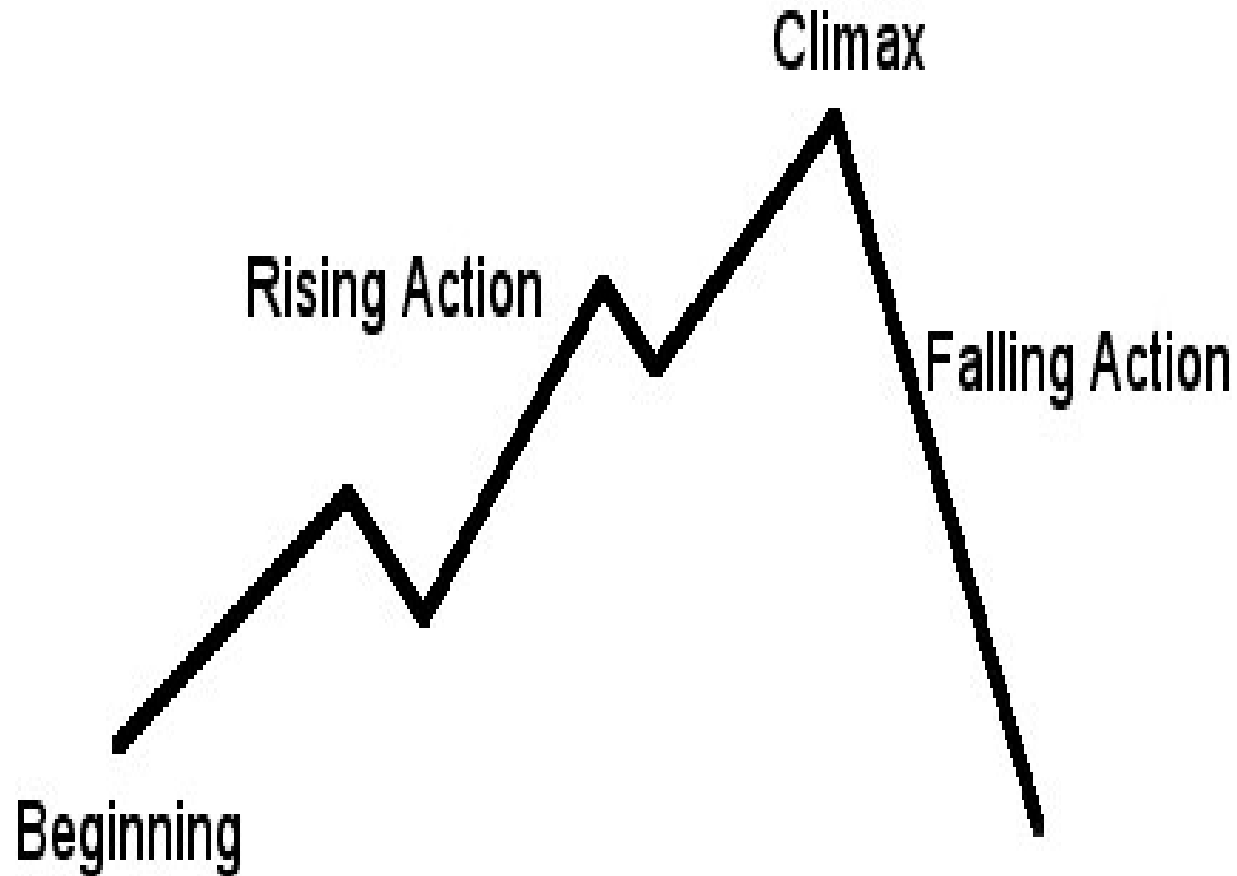


Plot

- **Definition of Plot:** Events that form a significant pattern of action with a beginning, a middle and an end. They move from one place or event to another in order to form a pattern, usually with the purpose of overcoming a conflict. The plot is more formally called a **narrative**.



- **Elements of Plot:**



- **Beginning**

1. **Plot Line:** a graph plotting the ups and downs of the central character's fortunes. A very conventional plot might look like the one above.

- **2. Initial Situation**

- i. Characters: Who are the central characters? What do they aspire to?

- ii. Setting: Where/when do the characters live? Does the setting contribute to the narrative?

- iii. Conflicts: What are the challenges facing the protagonist(s)? What are the conflict(s) that he or she (or they) will have to overcome?

- The beginning is often called the **introduction** or **exposition**. By establishing the characters, setting and initial conflicts, the beginning "sets the scene" for the rest of the narrative.



- **Rising Action**

- 3. **Incentive Moment:**

- i. Which event thrusts itself into the tension of the characters' situation and triggers the action of the story? A new event frequently jostles the smoothness of things and changes the course of action.

- 4. **Episodes:** After the introduction, a story usually presents a series of separate events in the plot, building from one situation to the next. A new episode (or scene) begins when the place and time change, or when something really important interrupts what has been happening. With each successive episode, the conflict becomes more and more intense, demanding some sort of resolution.



- **The Climax**

5. **Climax:** The critical point at which the central character is about to win or lose all. When the probable outcome of the main conflict is finally revealed (i.e. the turning point), the story has reached its climax.



- **Falling Action**

6. Falling Action (or Resolution): The events that occur after the climax that tie up "loose ends"; they perform the necessary plot actions to fulfill the protagonist's fortunes that are now clear after the climax. It is a tricky part of a narrative to write as the author has to decide which parts of the plot to tie up and which to leave as questions for the reader to think about (or leave for a future story). Part of the decision regarding what to tie up and what to leave open often depends on the extent to which the author wants to satisfy the reader's need for a sense of justice or closure.



- 7. **Epilogue:** the part that tells the reader what happens to the characters well **after** the story is finished. It's seen in longer narratives (like novels and movies) rather than short fiction, but even then, it is only used occasionally.

