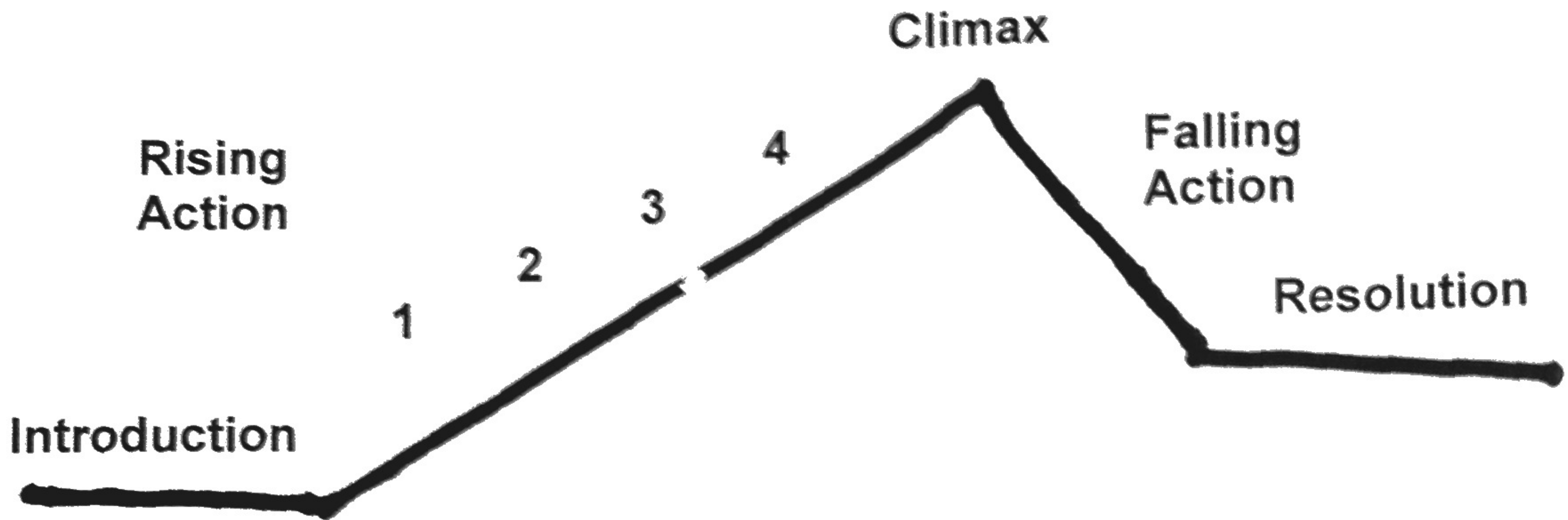


Short Story Skills

1. Plot Diagrams

Be able to identify plot events and the following features of plot:



2. Characters -- Types

There are many types of characters found in stories, plays and movies. You should be able to recognize and identify the following types of characters.

- | | | |
|-----|--------------------|---|
| → a | Round | A 3 dimensional character. You see the person, warts and all, in good times and bad times. |
| or | | |
| → b | Flat | A 2 dimensional character. You only see one side of the character, only the nice side, or only the mean side. |
| | | |
| → c | Protagonist | The main character who faces some kind of challenge. |
| or | | |
| → d | Antagonist | Any force or person working against the protagonist, e.g. weather, a person. |

- e **Static** The person who does **not** change, learn or grow.
- or
- f **Developing** The person who learns from the experience, who changes and grows as a human being.
- or
- g **Dynamic** changing personality
- h **Foil** A kind of antagonist. The sidekick (friend or enemy of main character) who has things happen to him. Helps reader better understand protagonist (main character) because the foil is the main character's opposite.
- or
- i **Stock** Commonplace, familiar character: The policeman who eats donuts, The Redneck Racist, The Jock (Sports Star), The Vain Woman, The Class Clown.

Characters – Description

When you describe the character of the story, you need to talk about three parts of the character. Tell us about this person **physically, emotionally and intellectually**.

Physical Description (what character looks like – from the story words not the pictures)	In your own words	Evidence from story
Emotional Description (what character feels, types of emotions character shows)	In your own words	Evidence from story
Intellectual Description (type of thinker the character is, how smart, how deep)	In your own words	Evidence from story

3. Setting

Be able to describe the setting of the story. When and where does it take place. **Don't** just name it with a noun e.g. Kitchen. Describe it clearly with concrete, specific nouns, adjectives and adverbs. If you can, give a short direct quote or two from the story as evidence.

Make sure you talk about **Time and Place**.

Time: of day, day of the week, season, year, length of time.
past, present, future.

Place: where in the building, type of building, inside or outside, city or farm, countryside, rural, forest, desert, mountain, hillside, near lake, river or ocean, above or under water, which continent or country, real or imaginary place, on earth or another planet, in outer space.

example: The story takes place during the 1930s, in a sleepy, rural, farming community. We first see the family at home in their tiny, white kitchen. Everything is small, clean, and white, just like the family themselves.

4. Mood: Atmosphere, state of mind.

Mood is a state of mind, feeling or attitude. A writer uses atmosphere to create a feeling or frame of mind at the start of a play, poem, novel or short story to create a sense of expectation about what is to follow, about what will happen. So the first scene, first chapter, first stanza or first few paragraphs are where the writer creates the mood.

Some adjectives to describe MOOD:

Fictional, imaginary, fanciful, idealistic, romantic, realistic, optimistic, pessimistic, gloomy, mournful, sorrowful...

5. Tone: Style or manner or expression in speech or writing.

Tone is shown in the attitude taken by the speaker to the listener---when looking at a novel or short story you look for the author's attitude towards the work, events, characters, or the reader/audience --, gathered and understood from the kind of syntax and vocabulary used.

Some adjectives to describe tone:

Formal, informal, serious, humorous, amused, angry, playful, neutral, satirical, gloomy, conciliatory, sad, resigned, cheerful, ironic, clear, detailed, imploring, suspicious, witty...

6. Conflict

The main struggle in a story (usually one of: person vs. person, person vs. environment, person vs. self)

7. Themes in Literature

Here are 8 themes often repeated in literature. Decide on one or two main ones that apply to the story or novel you are reading and then explain why you see that theme in the story. So name the theme, explain why you see it and give evidence (short quotes) from the story that show or prove why you see the theme.

The themes are:

- 1. Good triumphs over evil.**
- 2. People get what they deserve—good or bad.**
- 3. Love conquers all!**
- 4. Coming of Age the protagonist learns or becomes experienced.**
- 5. Fulfillment, acceptance of one's purpose in life.**
- 6. The small can be powerful, the mighty may fall.**
- 7. "Carpe diem" (which means) make the most of your opportunities.**
- 8. Life just happens. Some things don't work out the way you want them to.**

Theme	Explanation	Evidence from Story
#1		
#2		