

The Five Parts of Plot (Freytag's Pyramid) p. 88

1. **Exposition** - the first part of the plot; introduces the characters, their situations and usually, a time and place, giving us all the basic information we need to understand what is to come. Usually reveals some source or seed of potential conflict in the initial situation, of which the characters may be as yet unaware.
2. **Rising action** - exposition blends into the second phase of the plot, suggesting a conflict. Begins with an **inciting incident** or destabilizing event which incites open conflict; the action keeps rising with complications.
3. **Climax / turning point** - the moment of greatest emotional intensity; the moment when the outcome of the plot and the fate of the characters are decided. Tends to be a literally pivotal incident that turns things around. Often involves a discover or new insight (an **epiphany**), a sudden revelation of truth inspired by a seemingly trivial event.
4. **Falling action** - brings a release of emotional tension and moves us toward the resolution of the conflict(s). Sometimes the resolutions achieved through an utterly unexpected twist. (ex: **deus ex machina** - "god out of the machine"; any improbable plot contrivance introduced late in a literary work to resolve the conflict).
5. **Conclusion / resolution** - a destabilized plot; presents us with a new and somewhat stable situation that gives some sense of closure because the conflict(s) have been resolved.
6. **Epilogue** - a final section that ties up loose ends left dangling in the conclusion proper and updates us on what has happened to the characters since their conflicts were resolved.

