

Plot Roller Coaster

Adapted from the National Novel Writing Month
Middle School Writing Guide
<http://www.nanowrimo.org/>

3. Rising Action – The largest section in a novel, the rising action builds up the anticipation as smaller actions and events lead the protagonist towards the most exciting part of the story. Readers learn more about the characters as we follow them along through smaller events and the suspense builds. (Think about the Jaws music!!!)

Questions to ask: what are some of the important things that happen to the main character? Can you summarize what has happened so far? How do you think this will help or hurt the protagonist?

2. Inciting Incident – Sends the main character (protagonist) into the action or adventure of the story. It is the “no turning back” moment. Without this moment, the protagonist would have continued on with their normal routine.

Questions to ask: What happens to the main character to make their life change? Can you predict how this will change their life? How do you know/what makes you think that? What kind of conflict is the protagonist

1. Set-Up – The beginning of a novel where we hear a little bit about the characters, the setting, and the conflict before the real action begins.

Questions to ask: What is the setting (where and when)? Who are the characters? What do you know about the characters? How do you know that? What problem does the main character have?

4. Climax – This is the moment the reader has been waiting for! All the smaller events in the rising action have led up to this moment. The climax of a story is usually brief and sends the protagonist into quick action. It is the time in the story where we all hold our breath and wonder what could possibly happen next.

Questions to ask: What was the turning point? What caused the character to leap into action? What do you think the character will do next? Why do you think that?

5. Falling Action – This is the fast-paced action of the story. We are nearing the end of the journey everything seems to be in a free-fall. Finally, we begin to see how the protagonist may succeed or fail.

Questions to ask: How does the character react to the climax of the story? What important events happen?

6. Resolution – Readers see how things have worked out for the protagonist. We have a chance to see how they have changed throughout the story and what their new view of the world is after all of the events we have read.

Questions to ask: How does the protagonist make out in the end? What have they learned? How have they changed? How will this affect them in the future? Why do you think that?

