

ACT I : THE BEGINNING

Back Story

How the World Works. Main character and their current situation.

Inciting Incident

Problem is stated, causing the character to take action (with lasting consequences)

Point of Attack

Central Conflict and Character Motivation appear. Primary action can get moving.

Central Conflict

Character and plot present main conflict, the “how to fix it” is presented to them.

Lock-In (End of Act I)

Quest is established, the hero goes to quest it.

ACT II

First Culmination

Troubles mount as the conflict kicks into high gear. What keeps the protagonist going? Character proves themselves capable under the circumstances.

Midpoint / Reversal

(Not always the middle) A surprise event that wrecks the protagonist's plan and raises the stakes, often after a temporary triumph. Something, positive or negative is gained.

Main Tension

There is fallout from the midpoint, continuing the conflict as problems pile up. New tension is created for Act III.

ACT III

Main Culmination

A moment when everything goes wrong and the goal appears impossible. The protagonist's lowest point.

Twist in Act III

The focus shifts from final tension. The stakes are raised higher than ever before.

Climax

The protagonist comes face to face with the antagonist or main obstacle and is victorious... or fails.

Denouement

After the climax, the protagonist and/or world have changed. A final scene provides closure to the story. In a series of stories, the volume's immediate issues are resolved.