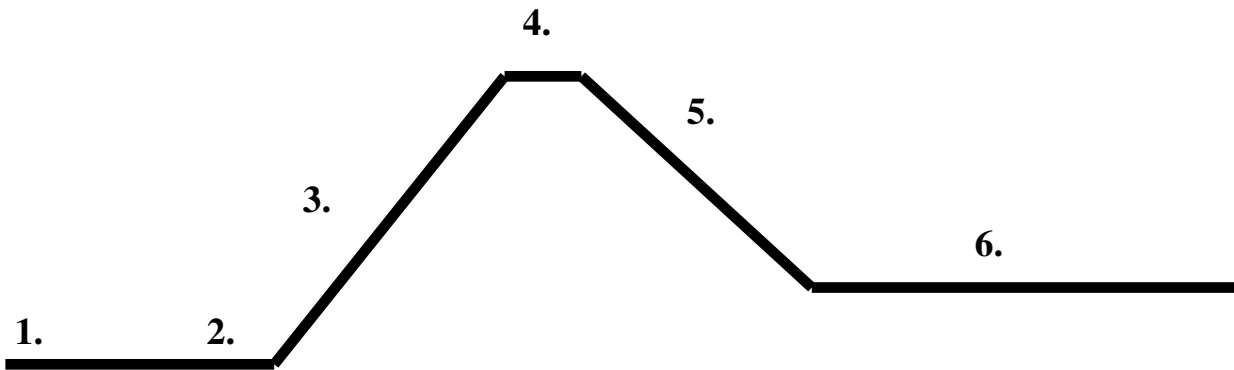


Plot Layout



key

1. Exposition: setting it up; introducing the characters; what's the "problem"
2. Narrative hook: how does the author get our attention and make us want to continue. At what point does the author set up the basic conflict that must be resolved in the story?
3. Rising action: how does it build; how does it get worse? what does the antagonist or protagonist do?
4. The climax, or "turning point": what brings it about? what's the "final straw": what's the most important part of the story?
5. Falling action: how is everybody dealing with it; any final surprises or "twists"? Anything still need "fixed"?
6. The end, or the "anti-climax": where are they all now? How have the characters changed or been changed? What's the final "message," if any?

Fiction “Classifications”

The *Vignette* (pronounced “vin-yet”) is a very brief piece of fiction, often less than 1,000 words, which often paints a vivid picture or short scene with words, but has no fully developed plot. This form has also been called a “slice of time” story.

Short stories range from 1,000 words to as many as 15-20,000, with the average at about 5,000 words.

The *novella*, or “short novel”, runs anywhere from 20,000 to 50,000 words. Some critics make a further distinction here, by starting with a *novelette*, of 15,000 to 30,000 words.

The **novel** is generally considered to be anything above about 60,000 words.

Elements of fiction:

The first five of the elements listed below are applicable to fiction in general, while the last two are more important of the short story.

Tone: the author’s attitude towards what he/she is writing

Mood: attitude of characters towards what is happening

Atmosphere: the general emotional effect of a story or scene from within that story

Theme: the meaning or message of the story

Symbolism: things that stand for something else

Allegory: a story that has an obvious meaning on the surface, and a deeper, less obvious meaning as well.

Unity of impression: no wasted words or ideas, no excessive descriptions or characters.

All things in the story contribute to its final meaning or effect.

Credibility of actions: are the events in the story and the actions of the character believable? Is this how life really is?

Point of View

<i>If</i>	<i>Then the story can Be told in the</i>	<i>By</i>	<i>Pronoun</i>
The main character’s Thoughts are to be Revealed in the story	FIRST PERSON	Main character	“I”
	THIRD PERSON (omniscient)	Omniscient observer	“S/he”
The main character’s Thoughts are not to be Revealed in the story	FIRST PERSON	A minor character	“I”
	THIRD PERSON (limited)	An observer (narrator)	“S/he”
The reader him/herself is to be involved in the story	SECOND PERSON	A character An observer (narrator)	“You”