

Write-a-Story Contest

A Checklist for Writers

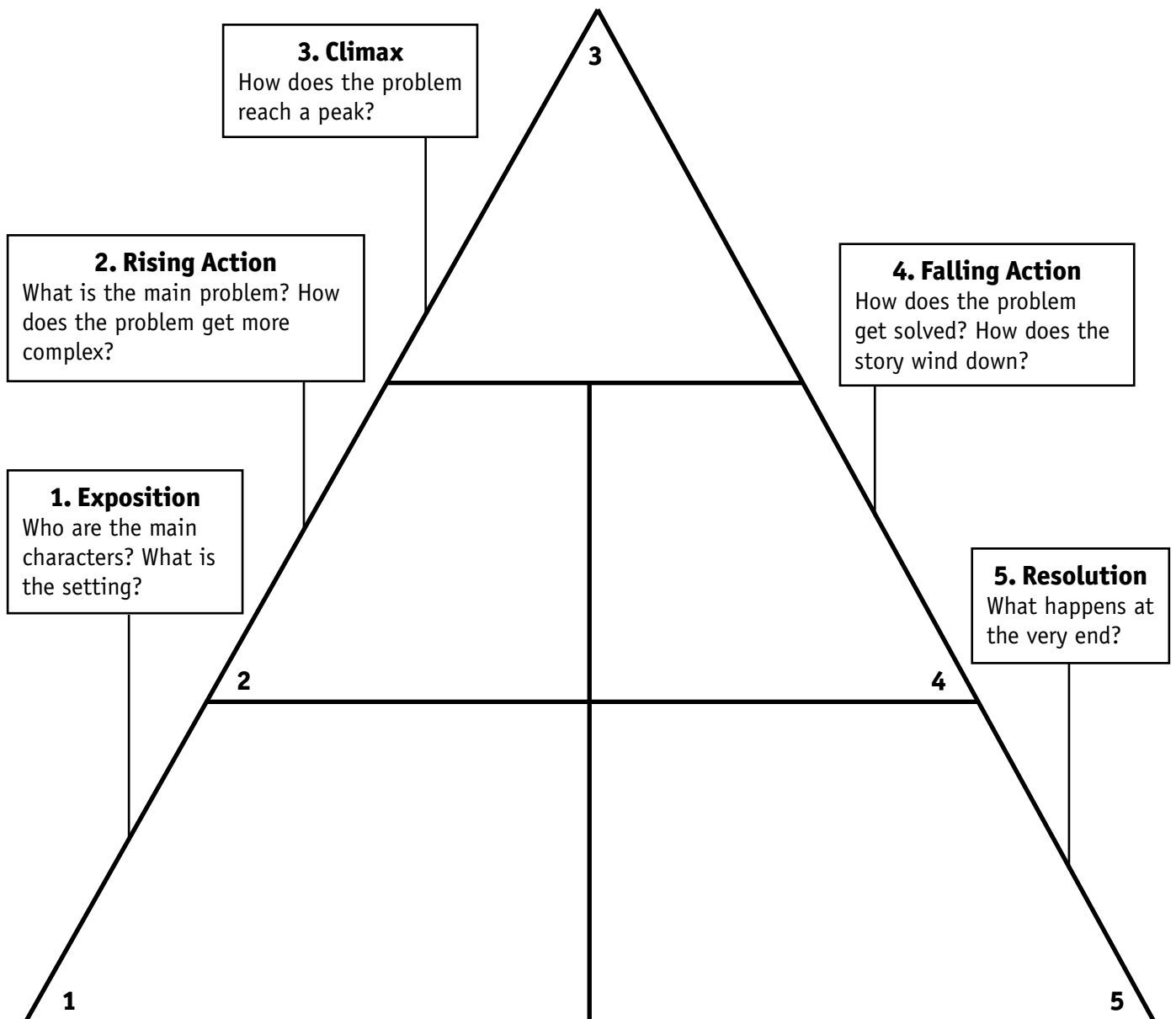
<input type="checkbox"/>	PLOT My plot has a beginning, middle, and end.	Here is a summary of my plot:
<input type="checkbox"/>	CHARACTER I have created a character who is interesting and compelling—a character my readers will come to care about.	Why readers will care about my character(s):
<input type="checkbox"/>	WRITING STYLE My writing will draw my readers in. For example, I might use sensory details, a cool point of view, or a twist ending.	How my writing will draw my readers in:
<input type="checkbox"/>	REVISION I have revised my story at least once, paying attention to word count, style, and development of plot and/or character.	What I did when I revised my story:
<input type="checkbox"/>	GRAMMAR I have checked grammar, spelling, and punctuation.	Here are a few mistakes I fixed:
<input type="checkbox"/>	PROOFREADING I asked someone to proofread my story.	The person who proofread my story:
<input type="checkbox"/>	WORD COUNT My story is between 800 and 3,000 words.	My final word count:

SKILL: Understanding Plot

Building Blocks of Plot

Every story is different, but most stories follow a similar pattern. In the exposition, we meet the characters and learn about the setting. Then the plot thickens—the main problem is introduced and things get more complicated during the rising action. The climax of the story happens before things wind down during the falling action. Then comes the resolution, when the problem is straightened out (or not) and the story ends. These different parts of a story are known as “plot points.”

Directions: Each block in the pyramid below is one part of the plot of the story you are reading. In each block, write the answer to the question. When you’re done, you’ll see the main plot points of the story.



SKILL: Punctuating Quotations

Quotation Punctuation

We use quotation marks to show where a quotation, or the exact words of a speaker, begins and ends. Here are some basic rules about the punctuation and capitalization of quotations:

- 1. Quotation marks ALWAYS come in pairs, at the beginning and end of the quotation. If a quote is more than one sentence, use closing quotation marks at the end of the last sentence only.**

Example 1: "This is the best pepperoni pizza I've ever had," Shelby said.

Example 2: Marcus exclaimed, "Don't turn the TV off! This is my favorite show!"

- 2. A quotation begins with a capital letter.**

Example: Mrs. Rubin asked, "How long does it take you to get to school in the morning?"

- 3. If a quoted sentence is divided into two parts by words that tell who is speaking (like *he says* or *I asked*), the second part of the quoted sentence begins with a lowercase letter.**

Example: "I spent 45 minutes on that algebra problem," Eric said, "but I just couldn't figure it out."

- 4. The quotation's ending punctuation goes inside the ending quotation marks.**

Example: The captain announced, "Ladies and gentlemen, we will be landing in Chicago shortly."

- 5. A comma separates the quotation from the words that tell who is speaking. When appropriate, a question mark or an exclamation point can be used in place of the comma.**

Example 1: "I finished my homework," said Suraj.

Example 2: "Did you finish your homework?" asked Suraj.

Example 3: "My dog ate my homework!" cried Suraj.

- 6. Use single quotation marks for quotations within quotations.**

Example: "Did Mrs. Ellis just say, 'Feel free to chew gum in class?'" whispered Tina. "Or am I crazy?"

Directions: Correct the punctuation and capitalization in the sentences below.

1. "My mom's favorite movie is *The Princess Bride*. "actually, I like it a lot too. said Ariella
2. "Could you please tell me where 3rd Street is asked Ed. I'm trying to find the Magnolia Bakery."
3. "The only way to get there" explained the policewoman "Is to go down Fairfax and then turn left."
4. "When are you going to show me your art project"? "I'm really looking forward to seeing it"! Mom said.
5. Jake shouted Whoa! That was awesome. He almost broke the bat with that home run."
6. "If you don't have anything nice to say" said Mrs. Lewis "then it's best to not say anything at all."
7. "Wait until you hear this" Dani exclaimed. Hailey just ran by and said, Free ice cream in the cafeteria until 3:00. Then she disappeared around the corner.
8. Lily chattered, "it's freezing in here. Can someone turn the heat on"?

Write-a-Story Contest

Read page 32 of the November 2017 issue of *Scope*. Choose one of Gordon Korman's three story starters and use it to begin your own original short fiction story. If Gordon picks YOUR story as the winner, you'll win \$100 and have your story published on our website (plus prizes for your teacher and classmates)!

Entries will be judged on:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| ⇒ character and plot development | ⇒ originality |
| ⇒ grammar, spelling, and punctuation | ⇒ length (800-3,000 words) |

My name: _____

My home phone number: _____ My grade: _____

My teacher's name : _____ My teacher's email: _____

School name: _____

School address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

School phone number: _____

Students under age 18 must include the following:

My parent or legal guardian consents
to my participation in this contest.

Parent's or legal guardian's signature: _____

Parent's or legal guardian's email: _____

Include this sheet with your typed short story and send both to: scopemag@scholastic.com
Or mail to: Write-a-Story Contest, c/o *Scope*, P.O. Box 712, New York, NY 10013-0712

ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY MARCH 1, 2018!