

Plot is the chain of related events that take place in a story. A plot is almost always built around a **conflict**, or a struggle between opposing forces.

Most plots include these stages of development:

- the **exposition**, which gives background information about characters, conflict, and setting;
- the **rising action**, in which suspense builds because complications arise that make the conflict more difficult for the main characters to resolve;
- the **climax**, or turning point of the action, when the reader's interest reaches its highest point;
- the **falling action** and **resolution**, in which the conflict ends and loose ends are tied up.

When you read a work of fiction or drama, use this diagram to outline the plot stages.