

A *Christmas Carol* End of Book Activity: Plot Diagram



The plot of a book is often described as a roller coaster. It starts out slow, gains momentum, reaches a peak, and then descends much more quickly than it ascended. Finally, the ride ends.

Scrooge definitely went on a roller coaster ride in *A Christmas Carol*. Reflect on the main events in the book.

The events in a story are called the **plot**.

There are five sections to plot: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution.

Step 1: The Beginning (Exposition)

The beginning of a story is called the **exposition**. This is where characters, setting, and an initial problem are introduced. The beginning of a story starts off pretty slowly, like the beginning of a roller coaster.

Who are the important characters introduced in the first few pages?

What is the setting? Describe the time and place in 3-4 short phrases.

What is the initial problem? This is called the *inciting incident*.

Step 2: The Middle (Rising Action)

The middle of the story is called the **rising action**. This is where you start to go up on the roller coaster. You go up slowly at first, then you gain speed.

List at least 10 important events that happened from the time the story began.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Step 3: The Exciting Part: Climax

The climax is the most important part of the story. It is the turning point. A good way to think about it is this: once the climax happens, things can never go back to the way they were before. The climax of *A Christmas Carol* occurs at the end of Stave 4.

Which event irrevocably changes Scrooge? (changes him for good)

Why?

This is the climax!

Step 4: Falling Action (Wrapping it Up)

The end is usually much shorter than the beginning. After the climax, list 5 important things that happen.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Step 5: Resolution (The End)

The resolution is usually just one event, or the culmination of everything.

How does the story end?

Step 6: Draw your diagram

Get a piece of poster board, wrapping paper, or large construction paper. On the paper, you are going to draw a plot diagram like this. Use pencil first. Once it is neat, trace it in pen.

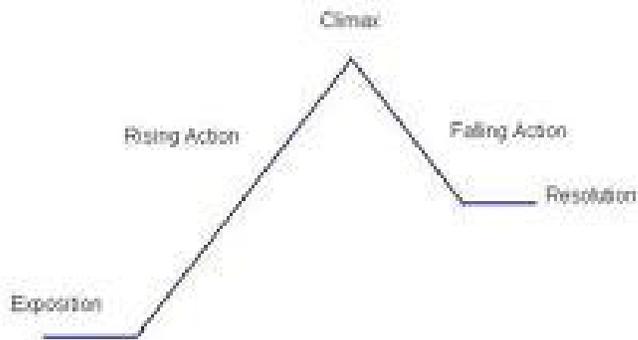


Figure 1. Plot Structure

Once you have drawn it, carefully label the exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution.

Step 7: Record your events

Use this worksheet to neatly write everything from the exposition, the events for rising action, and the climax.

Step 8: Decorate!

For the exposition, rising action, and climax: find or draw at least one picture for each.

You will fill in falling action and resolution next week, when you read Stave 5. 😊