

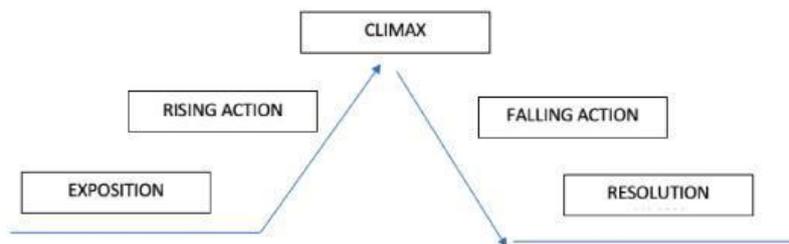
## Identify Plot Stages

### GET READY

The series of events in a story is called the **plot**. Most stories unfold in five stages of plot development:

- **Exposition:** the introduction of the characters, setting, and main conflict
- **Rising action:** the section in which the main character or characters try to solve the main problem they face even while complications may be introduced
- **Climax:** the turning point, or moment of greatest dramatic tension in the story
- **Falling action:** the section in which the consequences of the climax become clear
- **Resolution:** the conclusion that reveals how the central conflict is resolved

You can think of a story's plot by visualizing a plot diagram like the one below:



Whether you're reading a work of fiction or drama, it can be helpful to identify each plot stage as you follow the events of the story through the five stages of plot development.

## PRACTICE AND APPLY

Identify the five stages of plot development in a literary text you have read. Use the chart below to briefly summarize the events of each plot stage.

Title: From Great Expectations	
Plot Stage	Summary of Each Plot Stage
<b>Exposition</b>	We are introduced to Pip, a young orphan living with his sister and her husband, Joe Gargery. Pip lives a modest life in the marshes of Kent. One day, he encounters a convict named Magwitch and secretly helps him, which sets important events in motion. Soon after, Pip is invited to the mysterious Satis House to play with Estella, the cold but beautiful adopted daughter of the wealthy and reclusive Miss Havisham. Pip becomes ashamed of his humble background and longs to become a gentleman to win Estella's love.
<b>Rising Action</b>	Pip unexpectedly receives a large fortune from a secret benefactor and moves to London to become a gentleman. He believes Miss Havisham is his benefactor and that she is preparing Estella for him. In London, Pip befriends Herbert Pocket and begins to adopt upper-class manners, but also grows distant from Joe. Pip's expectations begin to shape his identity, but he remains unsure about his true purpose and future.
<b>Climax</b>	The shocking revelation comes: Pip's true benefactor is not Miss Havisham, but Magwitch—the convict he helped as a child. This revelation turns Pip's world upside down and forces him to confront his assumptions, values, and loyalties. Pip is horrified at first but gradually develops compassion and respect for Magwitch.
<b>Falling Action</b>	Pip risks everything to help Magwitch escape London, but the plan fails, and Magwitch is captured and eventually dies in prison. Pip loses his fortune and falls ill. Joe cares for Pip during his recovery, and Pip begins to understand the value of loyalty, love, and humility. He reconciles with Joe and Biddy and acknowledges his past mistakes.
<b>Resolution</b>	Pip returns to a simpler, more honest life. In the original ending, he meets Estella years later in the ruins of Satis House, where she has changed and become kinder after her own hardships. They walk away hand in hand, with the implication that they may have a future together. (Note: Dickens wrote two endings—the original more ambiguous, the revised one more hopeful.)