

Story Structure Elements

A story told with the five story elements results in a fully formed narrative. While a story with these elements may be very short, it will feel and sound complete. In fact, more complex stories generally contain a repetition of the second and third structures (complication and action). Thus, this model fits most stories, both simple and complex.

When children develop skills centering on the foundational parts of a story, they learn how a story is organized. Such story work results in increased comprehension and improved story grammar. This story framework also helps children grow as storytellers. Whether they are retelling a favorite book or writing a story of their own, they will develop a communication framework that will serve them throughout life.



1. Orientation Character & Situation

The launching point of a story where the characters are introduced and their current circumstances are presented.



2. Complication Problem

The problem or condition that arises and upsets the norm, pushing the main character(s) to act.



3. Action Steps Taken

The efforts or steps taken by characters to transform the situation and meet their story goals.



4. Resolution Victory!

The point in a story where the complication is worked out or resolved.



5. Ending Wrap-up

The signal that a story is over, often tying up loose ends, adding commentary, or enhancing the resolution.