

StoryMap: A Novel-Structure Tool

Act	Plot Point	Job	Add the details of your scenes
Beginning	Hook—	<p>An interesting or intriguing Statement, question, line of dialog, or mix That makes the reader want to read on.</p> <p>Examples: "Where's Papa going with that axe?" --<i>Charlotte's Web</i> by EB White</p> <p>=====</p> <p>I'm pretty sure my camp knapsack is not supposed to be levitating off the sidewalk of Fifth Avenue. (Mlynowski, <i>Spells and Sleeping Bags</i>)</p> <p>=====</p> <p>"My nightmare started like this." <i>The Sea of Monsters</i> by Rick Riordan.</p>	
	Bridging Conflict—	Optional. May be used if you don't want to start the story-long goal right away. When hero succeeds at overcoming the bridging conflict, it pushes her right into the main story problem.	
	Inciting incident—	<p>An event or happening that creates a change in the hero's normal everyday world experience and causes him to face the opportunity to move into a new course of action. E.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A letter comes • Someone dies • Hero gets drafted • Someone in the story gets fired [must be someone whose life impacts hero] • 	

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	End of the beginning— 25%	The point in the story at which the hero has faced the inciting incident and realizes he must leave his ordinary world and go on a journey of some kind. In some stories, there's an initial problem, which is solved at this point. Its solution leads to a bigger problem, however, which is the story problem. At this point the hero finds himself committed and realizes he must now leave his ordinary world and tackle the story problem. The hero has a clear goal that is important to him. He also has at least one character flaw, which will be taxed during the story.	
Middle	Take off	The scene after the inciting incident in which the hero has formed an initial goal and takes steps to accomplish it. He meets conflict. Individual scenes generally end in setbacks, and scene-to-scene the conflict escalates, making the situation more difficult, more testing for the hero and his sidekicks. We meet enemies, helpers, romantic interest, mentor, adversary minions and fake allies.	
End	Climax— 75-95%	Hero and antagonist are both in the scene and face off against each other. Whatever else he does, the hero uses what he's just learned to defeat the antagonist and achieve the story goal. So doing, hero demonstrates he has really changed.	
	Denouement—	Anti-climatic wrap-up, which is usually very short in modern stories.	