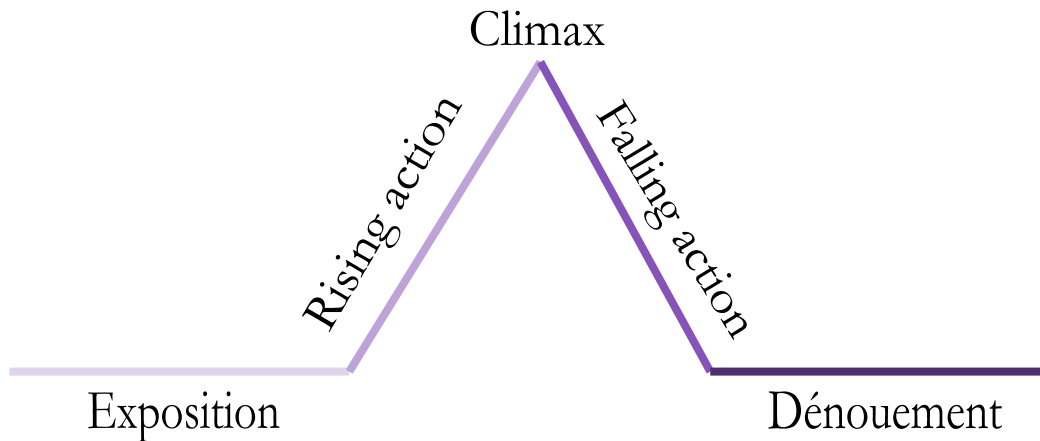


Plotting the rise and fall

The **plot** of a novel is the way a narrative fits together. Each event causes another.

The **structure** of a novel arranges the events of the plot in a particular way. Sometimes this follows the pattern shown in the diagram below. There is also a circular element to Orwell's plot, as the events at the beginning of the novel are duplicated at the end.



Exposition

This is the introduction part of a story where we get to know the characters and setting and the plot itself is set up. In *Animal Farm* this is the first two chapters where the revolution happens and the animals begin to organise themselves.

Rising action

This is the series of events that move a story forward towards the 'high point' or climax. In *Animal Farm* this includes the gradual takeover by the pigs, the Battle of the Cowshed, the expulsion of Snowball, the rewriting of history, the building of the windmill, the Battle of the Windmill and its rebuilding.

Climax

This is the point in a story where there is no return. In this novel it is when Napoleon declares that Animal Farm is a republic with himself as President.

Falling action

This concerns the aftermath of the climax and its results. In Orwell's book, this is the treatment of Boxer and the enslavement of the animals.

Denouement

This is the ending or final event which shows the consequences of the whole story. In *Animal Farm* this is when the pigs turn into humans and the animals realise there is no difference between them and their original oppressors.

Plotting the rise and fall

- Draw the plot diagram on a large sheet of paper and write the main events of *Animal Farm* in the appropriate places. Choose relevant quotations to represent the key points.
- Read the quotations below:

‘Man is the only creature that consumes without producing. He does not give milk, he does not lay eggs, he is too weak to pull the plough, he cannot run fast enough to catch rabbits. Yet he is lord of all the animals.’

(Old Major’s speech, Chapter 1)

‘But still, neither pigs nor dogs produced any food by their own labour; and there were very many of them, and their appetites were always good.’

(Chapter 10)

Activity

Use the two extracts above as the basis for two scenes in a new animated film version of the book.

You will need to write a script for your two scenes, giving actions and camera angles. If you go to <http://www.simplyscripts.com/movie.html> you will be able to download the screenplay from an animated movie called ‘Up’, which will show you how to lay out your script.

Storyboard your scenes, together with dialogue/voice-over as appropriate.

Think about how you could bring out the parallels between the beginning and the ending of the story and choose suitable music to accompany each scene.

Aim for structure in your scenes – use the narrative triangle to help you plan.