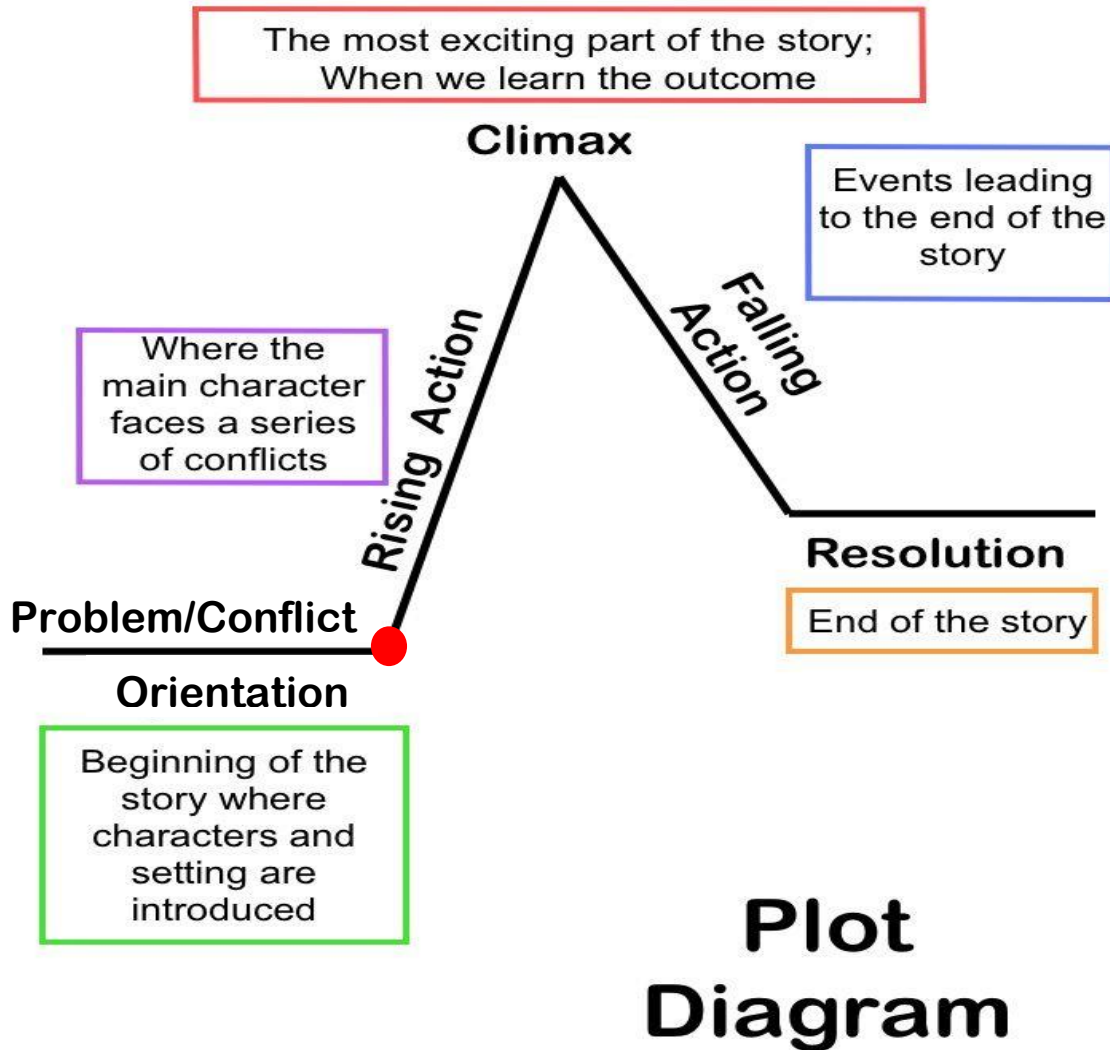


Learning objectives:

1. Be familiar with the narrative plot structure
2. Know the features of a good narrative



Source: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/249105423112306183/>

## Writing Series 1 LESSON 2: PERSONAL RECOUNT/NARRATIVE/DESCRIPTIVE

**Write about** a time when **you caused great disappointment to another person. What did you do about the situation? ('O' Level 2017)**

<p><b>Hook</b> Begin by <u>explaining the keyword</u> 'disappointment' through <u>giving examples and scenarios</u>. This gives</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 60px; width: 100%;"></div> <p><b>Orientation</b> Set the context by</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 40px; width: 100%;"></div> <p><b>Problem/Conflict</b> The problem is introduced. The protagonist's plans are thwarted and he/she cannot get the birthday cake. <u>To make things</u></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 70px; width: 100%;"></div> <p><b>Rising Action</b> This paragraph shows an increase in tension as high expectations slowly crumble.</p> <p><b>Climax</b> The protagonist reacts adversely to his mistake by throwing a tantrum. This <b>high point</b> in the essay is <b>described vividly</b> by the protagonist's actions and how it <b>worsens the disappointment</b> of his</p>	<p>If I look hard enough, disappointment can be found everywhere in life. This morning, I was late for school despite promising the discipline master that I would be punctual; Mr Hashim sighed in exasperation as he sent me for detention class after school. When I went for lunch this afternoon, my heart sank when I found the food sold out; I had been too slow to get to the canteen after Assembly period. Lastly, I noticed that my best friend was unusually <b>reticent</b> all day, and I only just realised why: Harish was upset that I had totally forgotten his birthday yesterday. Indeed, I have often let others and myself down.</p> <p><u>There is one particular case of disappointment that I have not forgiven myself for. Even now, as I write this, I feel a rush of agitation and my cheeks flush with shame.</u> Two years ago on my grandmother's birthday, my family planned a celebratory dinner for the three of us—Grandma, Mum and me. I was to <b>procure</b> Grandma's favourite pandan-flavoured cake; Mum had given me money for it the week before and <b>even reminded</b> me just that morning. <b>I had intended</b> to go straight to the bakery after school—I <b>even wrote it</b> in my planner during detention class—but as I was leaving school, <u>some friends beckoned me to the basketball courts: "Just one game, Kien!" Just half an hour, I thought.</u> <b>Two hours later, I found myself soaked with perspiration and standing before the darkened and closed cake shop.</b> Fumbling in my pockets, my heart sank as I realised that <b>my wallet was missing</b>. I called my basketball buddies. "What wallet? We didn't see anything when we left the courts." I then <b>spent 45 anxious minutes retracing my steps</b> to locate my wallet, but <b>to no avail</b>. Tiredly, I made my way home to Grandma's birthday celebration—<b>bereft</b> of cake and money.</p> <p>I vividly recall the moments that <b>elapsed</b> after. Mum and Grandma were <input type="text"/> at the dinner table, which was set with our favourite dishes. Mum greeted me <input type="text"/>, but when she saw my empty hands, the <b>glimmer in her eyes faded</b> as it dawned on her that I had let her down, and this time, Grandma too. Grandma, sensing tension in the air, gently said, "Kien, where have you been? The food is getting cold." A <input type="text"/> prickled my skin. <input type="text"/> flashed through my mind. <i>Why do I always disappoint Mum? Why does she expect so much from me, anyway? Why does Grandma have to be so nice?</i> Great disappointment was written all over my mother's <b>crestfallen</b> face. <b>Bitter anger welled up</b> in me, and <b>my eyes stung with shame</b>.</p> <p>What I did about the situation next was one of the stupidest things I had ever done. Blinded by emotion, I snapped, enraged. <b>"I'm not hungry! Birthdays are lame."</b> I stormed into my room, slamming the door shut, overwhelmed by resentment and shame. I did not leave my room that night, not even to take a shower. Grandma and Mum were left sitting quietly at the dining table, <b>bewildered</b> and hurt, as the lovingly prepared spread of food turned cold. We never spoke about that incident afterwards.</p>	<p>This serves as a <b>transitional statement</b> – bringing readers from the protagonist's experiences with disappointment to this incident that he/she is particularly ashamed about. This addresses another keyword in the question – <input type="text"/>.</p> <p><b>Building suspense</b> These phrases seem to foreshadow that something contrary to expectations is going to happen. This builds <input type="text"/> in the story.</p> <p><b>Use sensory details to create emotional impact.</b> <i>Can you identify which senses the writer evokes in this paragraph? What emotions do they capture?</i></p> <p>The protagonist's thoughts are surfaced,</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 50px; width: 100%;"></div> <p>Dialogue can serve to amplify attitude and feelings, <b>showing</b> what the character is like. It also dramatises the moment.</p>
--	---	---

Writing Series 1 LESSON 2: PERSONAL RECOUNT/NARRATIVE/DESCRIPTIVE

<p>Mum and Grandma. This is also where the second part of the question is addressed.</p> <p><b>Falling Action</b> The story does not end on a sour note, but shows how the protagonist tries to <input type="text"/>. He/she shows the ability to learn from mistakes.</p> <p><b>Resolution</b> <b>Learning point</b> The protagonist reflects on what this incident has taught him about life in general and how he has applied the lesson learnt to the little disappointments, turning bad situations around for good. This ties in nicely with the introductory paragraph.</p>	<p>I have tried to make up for my mistakes since. <b>I make it a habit to prepare Grandma and Mum oatmeal for breakfast</b> before I leave for school, and I help with household chores daily, even when I get home late from detention classes. <b>I also try to manage my emotions positively.</b> Of course, feeling agitated about disappointment can help us to recognise its causes and make a change. Too much dwelling on disappointments, however, can cause us to feel hopelessness and despair.</p> <p><u>I do not want to define my life by disappointment.</u> Sometimes, disappointment is a choice. If we go looking for disappointment, we will find it everywhere. What would we find if we looked for something else? <u>We could look for lessons learned, the good in ourselves and connections with others.</u> When I am done with the chores today, I will make Harish a belated birthday card. When I am standing in the rain, I will find a way to get myself to a dry place. Sometimes, disappointments are opportunities to learn and grow, and are truly tough lessons we can learn from.</p>	<p>The protagonist's resolution could be a call to readers to <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> in them. This is how your story can <input type="text"/> on your readers.</p>
--	---	---

**Bonus vocabulary building exercise!**

Look up the words bolded in **red** to find out their meaning. Make it a point to use them in your next piece of writing!