

Three-Act Structure Template

	Plot Point	What Must Happen	Synopsis	Synopsis Example
ACT I	Exposition	Establish your protagonist, their everyday life, and their 'desire'.	Write here...	<i>Young Dorothy Gale lives in rural Kansas and dreams of something more.</i>
	Inciting Incident	An event forces a change in your character, setting their adventure in motion.	Write here...	<i>A tornado whisks Dorothy away to the magical land of Oz, ripping her from the comfort of her everyday existence.</i>
	Plot Point One	Your protagonist crosses the point of no return.	Write here...	<i>Realising that her only way back is by finding the Great and Powerful Oz in the Emerald City, Dorothy sets off down the Yellow Brick Road.</i>
25% through your story				
ACT II	Rising Action	The protagonist encounters roadblocks on the way to achieving their goal.	Write here...	<i>Dorothy befriends the Scarecrow, the Tin Woodsman, and the Cowardly Lion. Together they encounter minor obstacles (e.g., apple-throwing trees).</i>
	Midpoint	The hero faces their biggest challenge, which threatens to completely derail their mission.	Write here...	<i>Dorothy discovers that the Wizard is a charlatan.</i>
	Plot Point Two	The protagonist — who has so far been reactive — makes a choice to become proactive.	Write here...	<i>So that she may have a chance to go home, Dorothy and her friends decide to take on the Wicked Witch by themselves.</i>
75% through your story				
ACT III	Pre-Climax	As the protagonist faces their final challenge, it would seem that all is lost.	Write here...	<i>On the way to the castle, Dorothy is captured by the witch who reveals her plans to kill Dorothy.</i>
	Climax	The protagonist manages to overcome whatever is holding them back. They triumph over the antagonist.	Write here...	<i>Dorothy defeats the wicked witch!</i>
	Denouement	Our hero returns to their previous life, having changed. Loose ends are tied up and tension is released.	Write here...	<i>Dorothy waves goodbye to her new friends and returns to Kansas, grateful for the life she has there.</i>

Note: Use this 'Overview' tab to define all nine of your story's major plot points. Once complete, you can use the 'Scene-by-Scene' tab (below) to plot out your entire story. As you write, revise, and edit, return to this template and update the structure to reflect your latest draft.