



Creative Writing Lesson

Step 3- Add Some Action

Objective

Students will understand the following:

1. The middle of a story includes rising action.
2. Stories reach a climax and then proceed with falling action until the end.

(Note: This lesson follows our writing lesson plans: [Creative Writing Step 1- Creating a Story Idea](#) and [Creative Writing Step 2- Introduce your Character](#), however it can be used independently.)

Grade Level

Grades 3-7

Standards

Supports common core standards in Language Arts.

1. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences. (CCS.ELA.Literacy.W.X.3 - Where "X" is the grade level.)

Materials

1. [Rising and Falling Action Pyramid](#)
2. [Story Structure Worksheet \(Advanced/Grade 4+ or Easy/Grade 3-\)](#)
3. [Plan your Plot Worksheet](#)
4. [Optional: Free Printable Posters featuring the Easy Creative Writing Formula](#)

Vocabulary

This lesson is based on our Super Easy Storytelling Formula. For a full explanation of the formula, visit our [website](#).

Super Easy Storytelling Formula: **Who** wants **What** but **Why Not** = A Fun Story

Definitions:

Protagonist – The main character. Who the story is about. (See [What is a Protagonist](#) for full definition and a printable poster.)

Antagonist—The person or force working against the main character. (See [What is an Antagonist](#) for full definition and a printable poster.)

Rising Action- The events leading up to the climax in the story that build excitement. (See [What is Rising Action](#) for a full definition.)

Climax- The highest point of the action in a story.

Falling Action- The events after the climax of the story that wrap up the plot and lead to resolution. (See [What is Falling Action](#) for a full definition.)

Setting- Where a story takes place.

Procedures

1. Main Character + Plot

From [Creative Writing Step 1](#), we learned that every story has a Main Character (WHO) and a Plot (WHAT + WHY NOT).

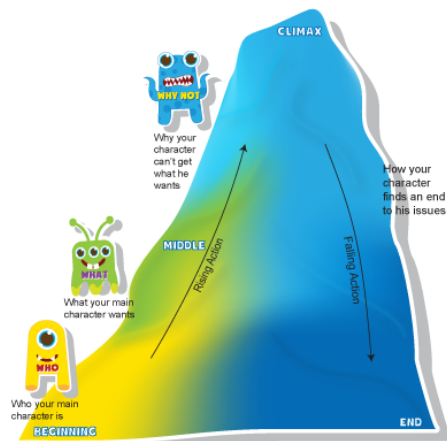
In the plot, the main character (Protagonist) wants something. She can't get it right away or the story would be really short and not very interesting. The character needs to face some challenges in order to get what she wants. Enter the Antagonist. The Antagonist is the person or force that keeps getting in the main character's way. The plot is where the action is.

2. Story Map

(Use the [Rising Action Pyramid Printable](#) to demonstrate.)

A good story doesn't just wander around like a lost hiker. It typically follows a path up a mountain and down a mountain, like it's following a map from beginning, to middle, and to the end to the journey. We call this the Story Structure and it's often represented as a pyramid or mountain.

CREATIVE WRITING STORY PYRAMID



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Beginning- (Also called the **Exposition**) This is where the main character is introduced. The writer shows who the character is, what the person is like in appearance and personality, and introduces the basic problem the

character is facing. We also learn the **Setting**, or where the story is taking place. (See [Creative Writing Step 2 Lesson Plan](#) for more on this.)

In our formula, this is where you describe WHO and give a basic idea of WHAT + WHY NOT.

Middle- Your character is climbing up the mountain now through lots of **Rising Action**. You know how a story gets exciting and you want to keep turning pages to see what happens? That is called Rising Action because the excitement builds as the character faces obstacles and tries to overcome them.

In our formula, this is when your character (WHO) realizes WHY NOT is in the way of what he wants (WHAT) and he tries to figure out how to get past it. For your story to be interesting, your character overcomes one challenge that leads to another challenge and maybe one more... until he reaches a turning point.

Climax- Your character has been climbing and excitement is building and at some point he reaches the most intense point of that excitement before something changes and it's time for things to start wrapping up. The highest point in the action is called the **Climax**.

End- Now it's time to wrap things up. Your character faced his biggest obstacle and is on the way to getting what he wants. Now it's time for **Falling Action**. The excitement slows down and you show the reader how the plot turns out. (The official word for this is Denouement)

In our formula, your character (WHO) is finally getting what he wants (WHAT), or is getting something else that gives him satisfaction.

✓Class Activity

Let's look at how this story follows the Story Pyramid. (Print the [Story Structure Worksheet \(Advanced/Grade 4+ or Easy/Grade 3-\)](#))

Advanced Version

In the story below:

1. Find the **WHO, WHAT, WHY NOT**
2. Find the **Beginning, Middle/ Rising Action, and End/Falling Action.**

The Story:

A tall, florescent green lizard stood admiring his shimmering form in the mirror. Running his bulbous fingers through his wild, blue hair he popped himself into a dance pose he was sure would get the audience screaming. He was born to be a rockstar-- with one teensy problem. The only thing making people scream was his awful singing. When Lizard (he pronounced is Liz- arggh, kind of like a pirate), opened his mouth, the noise that came out had people screaming for him to stop. If he was going to be the rockstar he knew he was born to be, he needed to learn how to sing.

One day while he was browsing through cds at the record store, Lizarggh overheard some rockers talking about a secret grotto at the top of Rockopolis Mountain. Legend says that anyone who drinks from the dark pool in the grotto instantly gains a voice as smooth and deep as its waters. Lizzarggh knew what he had to do. He laced up his combat boots, slipped a power bar in his satchel, and started climbing.

After hours of hacking his way through brush and struggling over boulders, the tip of the grotto peaked above the next hill. With a rush of renewed energy, Lizzargh took off, bounding over rocks until they felt like they were shaking loose under the impact of his feet. Wow, he must have some strong feet, he thought, because they were really starting to tumble now. Oh no! He realized Rockopolis Mountain was really rocking! It was an earthquake shaking loose the stones. He leaped and grabbed for a tree branch, and swung his legs up to capture the bough. He popped his suction cup fingers into action keeping a death grip on the branch.

Finally, the leaves stopped shaking, the ground settled, and Lizzargh lowered one toe, gently nudging the rock beneath him to check for stability. No rocking. No rolling. He straightened his leather jacket, shook his blue hair back into a stylishly wild disarray, and sprinted up the mountain like a pack of biker lizards were after him.

He should have been wary. He should have been careful. But blame it on the rocking and rolling of that mountain, Lizzargh was too amped to hold back. He dove in and gulped down the silky water. He rose above the surface, flung his sodden locks out of his eyes, and wailed his highest note. It was awesome. It soared. It rocked and it rolled. He was going to make it. Finally he could be the rockstar he was born to be.

Answers:

1. Find the WHO, WHAT, WHY NOT

A lizard (WHO) + Wants to be a rockstar (WHAT) + But he sings badly (WHY NOT)

2. Find the Beginning, Middle/ Rising Action, and End/Falling Action.

{Beginning / Exposition} A tall, florescent green lizard stood admiring his shimmering form in the mirror. Running his bulbous fingers through his wild, blue hair he popped himself into a dance pose he was sure would get the audience screaming. He was born to be a rockstar-- with one teensy problem. The only thing making people scream was his awful singing. When Lizard (he pronounced is Liz- arggh, kind of like a pirate), opened his mouth, the noise that came out had people screaming for him to stop. If he was going to be the rockstar he knew he was born to be, he needed to learn how to sing.

{Rising Action} One day while he was browsing through cds at the record store, Lizzargh overheard some rockers talking about a secret grotto at the top of Rockopolis Mountain. Legend says that anyone who drinks from the dark pool in the grotto instantly gains a voice as smooth and deep as its waters. Lizzargh knew what he had to do. He laced up his combat boots, slipped a power bar in his satchel, and started climbing.

{Twist of rising action} After hours of hacking his way through brush and struggling over boulders, the tip of the grotto peaked above the next hill. With a rush of renewed energy, Lizzargh took off, bounding over rocks until they felt like they were shaking loose under the impact of his feet. Wow, he must have some strong feet, he thought, because they were really starting to tumble now. Oh no! He realized Rockopolis Mountain was really rocking! It was an earthquake shaking loose the stones. He leaped and grabbed for a tree branch, and swung his legs up to capture the bough. He popped his suction cup fingers into action keeping a death grip on the branch. {Climax}

{Falling Action} Finally, the leaves stopped shaking, the ground settled, and Lizzargh lowered one toe, gently nudging the rock beneath him to check for stability. No rocking. No rolling. He straightened his leather jacket, shook his blue hair back into a stylishly wild disarray, and sprinted up the mountain like a pack of biker lizards were after him.

{Falling Action leading to End} He should have been wary. He should have been careful. But blame it on the rocking and rolling of that mountain, Lizzargh was too amped to hold back. He dove in and gulped down the silky water. He rose above the surface, flung his sodden locks out of his eyes, and wailed his highest note. It was awesome. It soared. It rocked and it rolled. He was going to make it. Finally he could be the rockstar he was born to be.

Easier Version

In the story below:

1. Find the WHO, WHAT, WHY NOT

2. Find the Beginning, Middle/ Rising Action, and End/Falling Action.

The Story:

Once there was a little green lizard who really, really wanted to be a rockstar. He had the long flowing hair and the super cool dance moves, but he couldn't even sing "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" without the other lizards covering their ears and begging him to stop. He needed to learn how to sing. So...

One day, our adventurous lizard heard about a magic pool at the top of Rockopolis Mountain. If he could get to it, he could drink the water and become a great singer. So he put on some hiking shoes and grabbed a backpack and a snack and set out for the top of Rockopolis Mountain. He climbed all day and finally he could see the top of the mountain.

But just then, he learned why it's called Rockopolis Mountain. It started rocking and rolling, bumping and shaking, and it nearly shook our little lizard clear off the mountain. Lizard grabbed a tree and held on for dear life. Leaves dropped on his head. Rocks rolled down around him. He was so sure he would lose his grip and go tumbling down, down, down.

Then as fast as it started, the shaking stopped. The leaves settled. Lizard's feet stood steady on the ground. As soon as he was still, he took off running. He was going to reach the top before anymore shaking started. Just a few more steps and finally, he reached the pool and took a great big gulp of magic water. He opened his mouth to test the results.

Out came the most beautiful singing he'd ever heard. He'd done it! So he set off down the mountain, singing a happy tune all the way while he dreamed of his next step toward becoming a rockstar.

Answers:

1. Find the WHO, WHAT, WHY NOT

A lizard (WHO) + Wants to be a rockstar (WHAT) + But he sings badly (WHY NOT)

2. Find the Beginning, Middle/ Rising Action, and End/Falling Action.

{Beginning / Exposition} Once there was a little green lizard who really, really wanted to be a rockstar. He had the long flowing hair and the super cool dance moves, but he couldn't even sing "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" without the other lizards covering their ears and begging him to stop. He needed to learn how to sing.

{Middle / Rising Action} One day, our adventurous lizard heard about a magic pool at the top of Rockopolis Mountain. If he could get to it, he could drink the water and become a great singer. So he put on some hiking shoes and grabbed a backpack and a snack and set out for the top of Rockopolis Mountain. He climbed all day and finally he could see the top of the mountain.

{Twist of rising action} But just then, he learned why it's called Rockopolis Mountain. It started rocking and rolling, bumping and shaking, and it nearly shook our little lizard clear off the mountain. Lizard grabbed a tree and held on for dear life. Leaves dropped on his head. Rocks rolled down around him. He was so sure he would lose his grip and go tumbling down, down, down. {Climax}

{Falling Action} Then as fast as it started, the shaking stopped. The leaves settled. Lizard's feet stood steady on the ground. As soon as he was still, he took off running. He was going to reach the top before anymore shaking started. Just a few more steps and finally, he reached the pool and took a great big gulp of magic water. He opened his mouth to test the results.

{Falling Action / End} Out came the most beautiful singing he'd ever heard. He'd done it! So he set off down the mountain, singing a happy tune all the way while he dreamed of his next step toward becoming a rockstar.

3. How to write your Middle and End

From [Creative Writing Step 1](#), you have a character (WHO) and a basic plot (WHAT + WHY NOT).

From [Creative Writing Step 2](#), you've introduced your character and basic plot.

Now it's time to write the middle and end of the story. Look at your WHAT and WHY NOT. What does your story character want and why can't he get it? Now think about how your character might try to overcome the obstacles. Would he need to find someone or something to help? Would he need to go somewhere? Make something?

✓Class Activity

Using this story starter, let's come up with some rising and falling action ideas.

A hippo wants to be a ballerina, but she doesn't know how.

How could she learn to be a ballerina? -- She could go to ballet school, watch You Tube videos, or set up a studio in her cage at the zoo and go wild.

Now we need to keep the story interesting by introducing more twists.

Once you know how she'll learn-- Is it easy for her? Does she struggle? What does it look like, sound like, smell like, feel like while she's learning?

Finally, we want to give our hippo a break and make her happy. How could she finally get satisfaction?

She's finally learned some great moves, but she needs to perform for an audience to really feel like a ballerina. How can she show off her dance moves?-- She could plan out a surprise performance for the unwitting zoo patrons, or set up a You Tube channel and be The Next Big Thing. Eventually she'll have the whole package, perform it for adoring fans and find resolution.

✓Student Activity

Write your own Beginning, Middle and End. Using your main character (WHO) and basic plot (WHAT + WHY NOT) think about how your character could overcome the WHY NOT. What would he/she do? How would he/she do it? What other obstacles would get in the way before the character finds resolution.

1. Map it out – Use the [Plan your Plot Worksheet](#) to create an outline of the action.

2. Write your story – Write a draft of your story. (Optional: use the printable [Story Writing Paper.](#))

More resources to extend the lesson

- [Writing Paper](#)- Printable lined paper that includes the super easy storytelling formula at the top
- [Picture + writing paper](#) – Printable lined paper with a box to draw a picture
- [Story Planning Worksheet](#)- Create a story idea and add describing words
- [Create a Plot Worksheet](#)- Simple way to create plot ideas
- [More writing worksheets, posters, and activities.](#)