

2 Plot

Read It, Write It, Tell It Episode: "Ohio Odyssey"

Lesson Overview

The purpose of the lessons in this unit is to help Ohio students in grades 3-7 learn the characteristics of the literary text PLOT indicators that they must master for their respective Ohio achievement tests. Special care has been taken to dovetail the lessons with the indicators and the types of questions commonly asked on Ohio tests.

Ohio Academic Content Indicators

2001.EL.S05.G04-07.BC.L05.I03	Identify the main incidents of a plot sequence and explain how they influence future action.
2001.EL.S05.G04-07.BC.L06.I03	Identify the main and minor events of the plot, and explain how each incident gives rise to the next.
2001.EL.S05.G04-07.BC.G07.I03	Identify the main and minor events of the plot, and explain how each incident gives rise to the next.

Ohio Achievement/Proficiency Tests Plot Question Types

- At Point *X*, what is the main problem?
- What happens just before Event *X*?
- Tell how Character *X* felt at the beginning (middle/end) of the selection and list the event(s) that made him/her feel that way.
- At the beginning of the selection, *X* was happening/was the mood/was the setting. Later in the selection, *X* is different. (The difference is stated for the student.) Write *y* number of things from the selection that caused the change. Write them in the order that they happen in the selection.
- List (or complete a web showing) *x* number of things Character *Y* did to solve Problem *Z*.
- Given a list of incidents/events from a selection, choose the one that directly caused/led to Event *X*.
- What is the major conflict in the selection and how is it resolved?
- In the beginning (middle/end) of the selection, what is the main problem the protagonist/main character faces?
- In the beginning (middle/end) of the selection, what is the main problem the protagonist/main character faces and how does s/he solve it?
- For each of a series of listed events, give the action that resulted from or occurred because of it.
- Describe Character *A*'s problem in the selection and explain how s/he solves it. Then state a way that s/he works toward her specific goal and identify a plot event that demonstrates a sign of progress.
- Identify the main and minor events from the selection and explain how each gives rise to the next.

Ohio Odyssey

Episode Summary

In this episode, Johnny Appleseed meets a giant serpent that fell to earth in a meteor. The snake plans to consume the Earth – boulder, by cave, by mountain. Johnny sends Mike Fink through time to pick up the “Buckeye Heroes” from the other seven episodes and they all join together to defeat the serpent. The Buckeye Heroes are: Johnny Appleseed, Mike Fink, Annie Oakley, Harriett Beecher Stowe, Jesse Owens, Neil Armstrong, and Cy Gattin.

Episode Vocabulary

The following words used by the storyteller in the *Read It, Write It, Tell It* episode “Ohio Odyssey” may be unfamiliar to some students.

boulder	imitating	serpent
coaxed	keelboat	skeptically
debris	meteorite	stargazing
defeat	ornery	suffer
depend	plummeting	thrashed
devour	puny	unbound
frustration	rascal	varmint
humongous	replica	wallop

Before Viewing

1. Say: What event occurred at end of the story ____? [Choose a selection with which the children are familiar such as a childhood tale, a story the class has recently read together or had read to them, a television show or movie that is currently very popular, etc.]
2. Say: What event started the story?
3. Say: What was the most exciting or important event in the story?
4. Say: While you watch the *Read It, Write It, Tell It* episode “Ohio Odyssey” think about the individual events that occur in the story the storyteller, J. D. Williamson, is telling. Be prepared to decide which of the events is the most important to the successful conclusion of the story, that is, the event that is the story’s climax.

After Viewing

Pre/Post Questions: If the students cannot easily answer the following questions, your may wish to use the Lessons (Section 4) and/or the Extensions (Section 5) about plot.

1. What was the major conflict in the “Ohio Odyssey” episode?
A giant serpent/snake wanted to eat the whole Earth.
2. List five or more of the events that lead to the resolution of the conflict.
See the page title “Ohio Odyssey Plot Events and Symbol Suggestions” for a list of the things the characters did to try to defeat the problem.

3. How does Johnny Appleseed feel about Mike Fink? Support your response.
He feels that Mike sometimes jumps into things on his own. Viewers could imply that Johnny does not feel that jumping into things alone is always a good thing because he asks Mike to wait for help from others before the serpent is attacked. Johnny seems to feel that Mike is impulsive.
4. Why didn't Johnny tell Mike everything that the storyteller told us about Mike? Support your response.
Answers will vary. Students may respond that Johnny did not want to hurt Mike's feelings. They may feel that Mike would not listen to Johnny's advice anyway or that telling Mike the truth would cause him to become angry and precipitate an premature attack on the serpent. Johnny needed Mike to get the other Buckeye Heroes and couldn't afford to have Mike impetuously attack the serpent.
5. Annie Oakley's bullets would not pierce the snake's skin. To what event did that lead?
Annie filled her gun with war paint and attempted to blind the serpent.
6. How was the major conflict resolved?
A fake snakehead was put on the real snake's tail. It was partially blinded and tricked into attacking its own tail. It was so hungry and mad when it went after the rival snake that it ate itself.
7. What is the climax of "Ohio Odyssey"?
The serpent consumes itself.
8. What events happen following the climax of the episode?
The heroes discuss the importance of teamwork and friendship and then start home.

Lesson

Materials:

- Display or duplicate: "Ohio Odyssey Plot Events and Symbol Suggestions"
- Display or duplicate: "Ohio Odyssey Plot Line"
- Generate a list of stories, chapters from books or complete books that you wish your students to use for the Ohio Odyssey Plot Line activity. Add three (3) titles to the student page before duplicating the page. Online text resources see:
 - Kids Space: Short Stories, Internet Public Library: <http://www.ipl.org/div/kidspace/browse/rzn3000/>
 - Bibliomania: Short Stories: <http://www.bibliomania.com/0/5/frameset.html>
 - Classic Short Stories: <http://www.classicshorts.com/>
 - Wikipedia Short Stories (scroll to the bottom of the page): http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Short_stories
- Duplicate: "Plot Events and Symbols Planning Matrix"
- Duplicate: "Plot Line"
- Unlined paper 8.5 x 11 inches – or larger. Note this activity could also be completed on a computer using a word processing application such as MS Word or a graphic organizer software application such as Inspiration.
- Drawing materials such as rulers, pencils, colored pencils, and/or fine line markers.

Procedure:

1. Display or give students the handout “Ohio Odyssey Plot Events and Symbol Suggestions.” Point out the relationship between the suggested symbols and the plot events and how the events are grouped into sections.
2. Review the elements of Plot.
 - *The plot is the series of events in a story.*
 - *It is composed of the problem (conflict/exposition), rising action, climax, falling action and resolution.*
 - *The conflict is generally between the main character and another character, fate, him/herself, nature or society.*
 - *The rising action is the series of incidents leading to the climax.*
 - *The climax of a story is the most intense moment in the story.*
 - *The falling action is the series of incidents that occur following the climax.*
 - *The resolution is when the problem has been solved and there is a satisfactory ending to the story. Some descriptions of plot elements group the falling action and resolution into one category.*
3. Display or give the students the handout “Ohio Odyssey Plot Line” so that they may see how the plot event symbols may be displayed on a plot line.
4. Tell the students that they will be creating a plot line.
5. Give the students a copy of the handouts “Plot Line” and “Plot Events and Symbols Planning Matrix.” Direct the students to fill out the numbered lines on the “Plot Line” handout to indicate the major division of a story’s plot and to choose one of the suggested stories.
6. Remind students that not all stories are as linear as the “Ohio Odyssey” episode. Stories may use flashbacks (example: *Hatchet* by Gary Paulson and *Midnight Fox* by Betsy Byars) and parallel plot lines (Example: *Holes* by Louis Sachar and *A View from Saturday* by E. L. Konigsburg.) Have the class brainstorm what a plot line might look like if it had parallel plots or used flashbacks.
7. After the students have chosen a story from the list of generated titles, have the students fill in plot events for their chosen stories on the student page “Plot Events and Symbols Planning Matrix”.
8. After the students have filled in their plot events, direct them to create a plot line using symbols – or text – for their chosen stories.

Read more about plot lines at Plot Profile or Plot Line from the Tasmanian (Australia) government’s education website: <http://wwwfp.education.tas.gov.au/english/plot.htm>

Ohio Odyssey Plot Events and Symbol Suggestions

Introduction/Beginning/Exposition:

- A meteor falls to earth.
 - Symbol – meteor or burning rock

The Conflict/Problem:

- A giant serpent comes out of the meteor and threatens to eat the Earth.
 - Symbol – snake
- The snake eats a boulder, a cave, and a mountain and continues eating more of the earth.
 - Symbol – mountain with a piece missing as if a mouth bit out a chunk

Rising Action/Middle/Steps to solve the problem:

- Johnny uses a golden apple given him by the “ancient people” to signal that he needs help.
 - Symbol – golden apple
- Mike Fink arrives and is sent through time to pick up the other Buckeye Heroes and some of their helpers.
 - Symbol - keelboat
- Mike grabs the snake by the throat to keep it from swallowing any more of the Earth.
 - Symbol – close up of a hand around a snake’s neck
- Cy Gatton and Harriet Beecher Stowe (Hattie) build a fake giant snakehead very quickly.
 - Symbol – hammer or hammer and nails
- Annie Oakley tries to shoot the snake but the bullets do not pierce the snake’s skin.
 - Symbol – bullet
- Jesse Owens creates a whirlwind to rob the snake of air to breathe.
 - Symbol – tornado cloud
- Jesse Owens chases lightening from the sky to strike the snake.
 - Symbol – lightening bolt
- Johnny Appleseed’s bear and Mike Fink both bite the snake in the neck and the snake shrinks.
 - Symbol - bear
- The snake is blinded.
 - Annie Oakley loads her gun with war paint, and has Neil Armstrong’s giant eagle fly her near the snake’s head so she can shoot the paint at the snake’s eyes.
 - Symbol - eagle
 - Hattie (Harriett Beecher Stowe) frees her unruly book and gives it ink to help blind the snake.
 - Symbol - book
 - Johnny uses his apple and Cy uses his shiny, bald head to help blind the snake.
 - Symbol – bald head

Climax

- Jesse tricks the snake into thinking that the fake snakehead now attached to its tail is a rival snake.
 - Symbol – snakehead

End/Falling Action/Resolution

- The giant snake attacks his own tail and devours himself in one bite.
 - Symbol – snake tail
- The heroes agree that teamwork is a good thing.
 - Symbol – seven interlocking rings (something like the Olympic Rings)
- The heroes return to their own times.
 - Symbol - clock

Plot Events and Symbols Planning Matrix

Story Title: _____ Name: _____ Date: _____

Event	Symbol
Exposition:	
Rising Action:	
Climax:	
Falling Action and/or Exposition:	

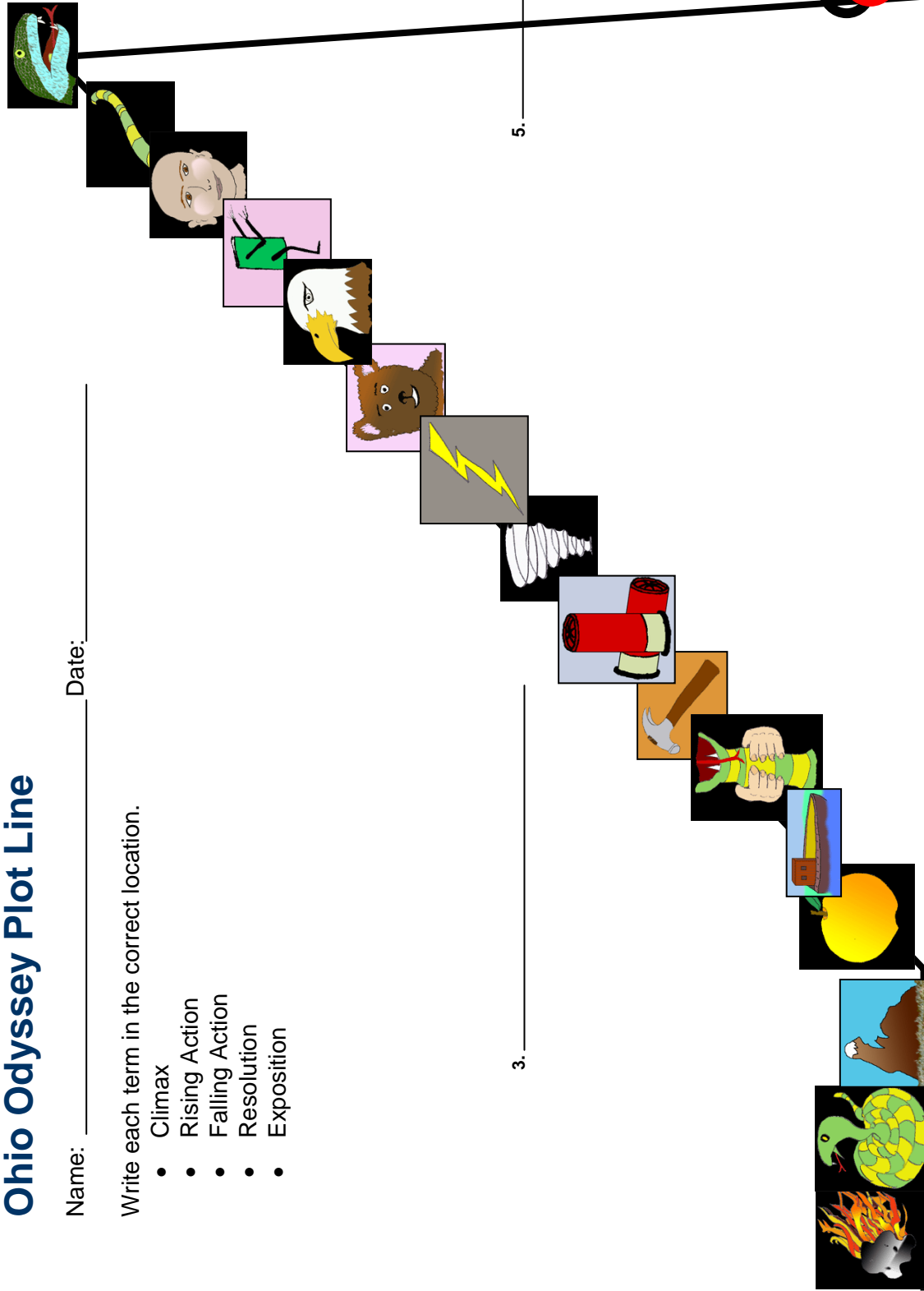
4. _____

Ohio Odyssey Plot Line

Name: _____ Date: _____

Write each term in the correct location.

- Climax
- Rising Action
- Falling Action
- Resolution
- Exposition



3. _____

5. _____

1. _____

2. _____

Plot Line

Plot

4. _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

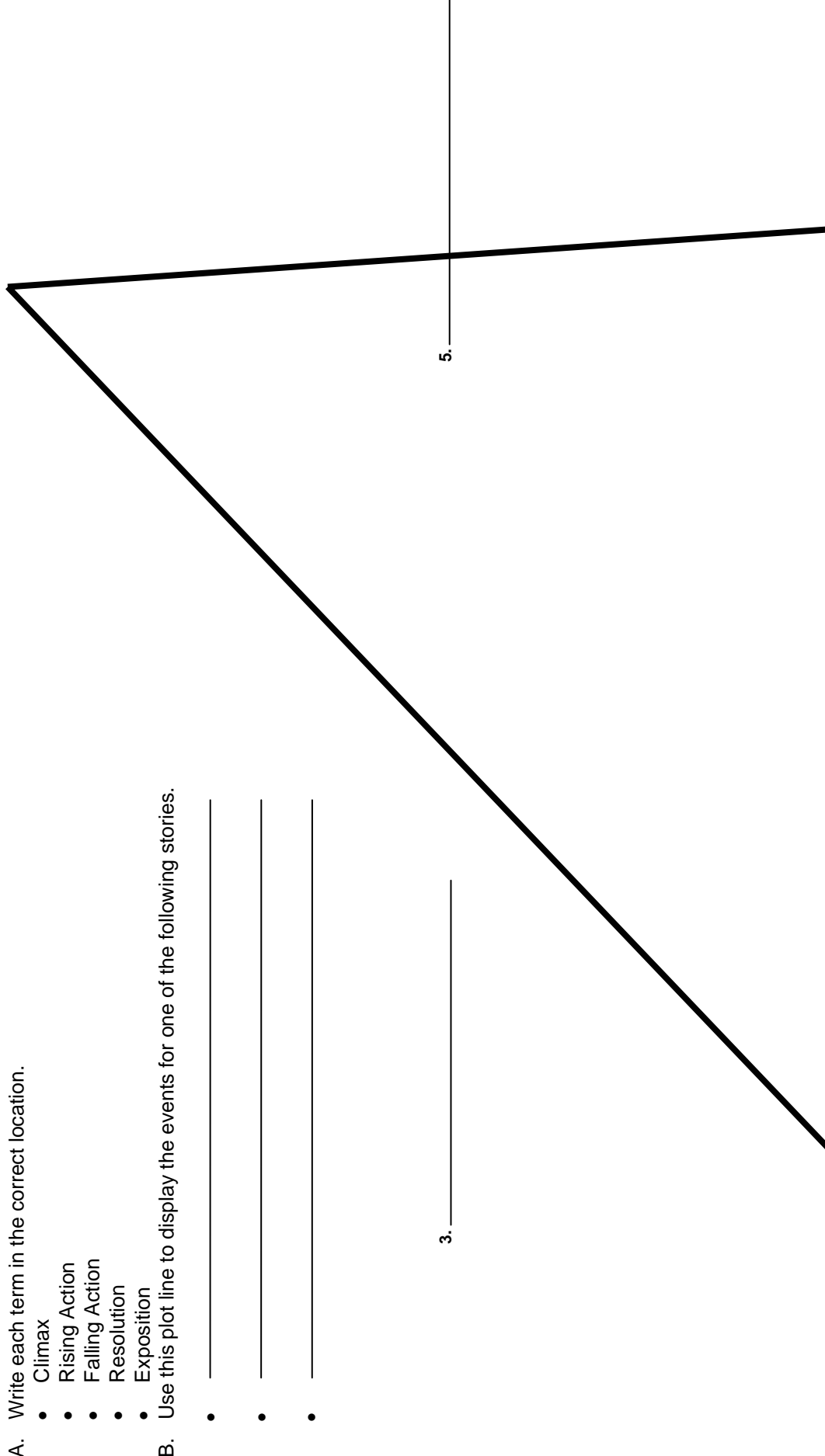
A. Write each term in the correct location.

- Climax
- Rising Action
- Falling Action
- Resolution
- Exposition

B. Use this plot line to display the events for one of the following stories.

- _____
- _____
- _____

3. _____



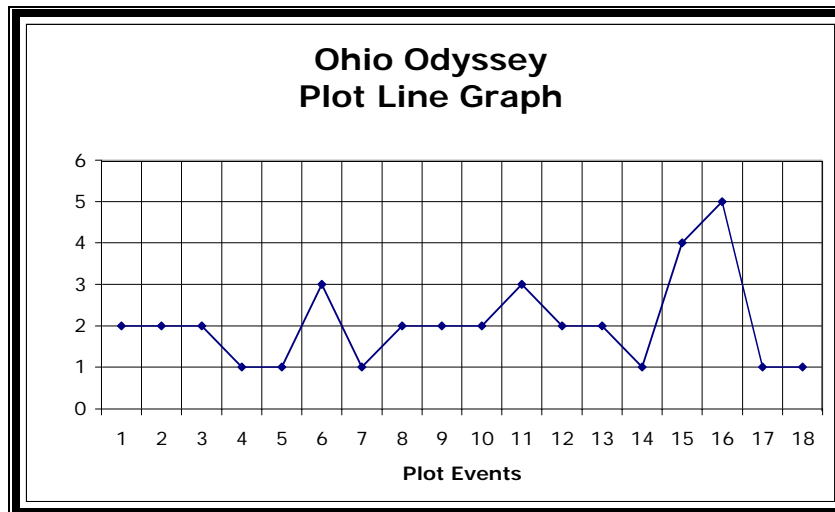
1. _____

2. _____

5 Extension Activities

Plot • Activities Students might focus on plot by doing any of the following activities.

- Plot Line Graph. Have the students make a numbered list of the plot events. Then give each event an excitement rating from 1 to 5 (or 1 to 10). The results can be graphed. An excitement rating for “Ohio Odyssey” might look something like the following example:



- Make a cartoon strip of the main events in a story.
- Paint or draw scenes that provide clues to a story’s plot.
- Create an illustrated picture map of a selection’s main events.
- Create a timeline of the events of a selection.
- Create a storyboard of the main events of a selection.
- Create a map showing where the main character went during the story.
- Create a PowerPoint presentation of main events. Other applications that create slideshows are Apple computer’s Keynote or the free Open Office presentation application.
- Create a slideshow on paper. Use strips of paper taped end to end to show main events
- After reading a selection, have the students explain why different events occur at different times during the story.
- Predict the next event (or next several events) that will take place following the author’s stopping point for the story.

Plot • Internet Resources

“Plot Diagram,” an online interactive tool: <http://www.readwritethink.org/materials/plot-diagram/>

“The Story Man Game:” <http://www.storytreeonline.com/StoryMan.html>

“Elements of Fiction: Plot”

- <http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/virtualit/fiction/elements.asp?e=1>
- This site includes a definition of the literary element plot, plot exercises, and examples of how the plot is developed in Nathaniel Hawthorn’s “Young Goodman Brown,” and Kate Chopin’s “The Story of an Hour.”

“Insight: The Four-Point Plot Line:” http://www.fictionsite.com/in_7.html

Plot Profile or Plot Line

- <http://wwwfp.education.tas.gov.au/english/plot.htm>

Genre Study: The Short Story: Plot Line

- A sample diagram is displayed and a link to an interactive “Jack and the Beanstalk” plot activity.
- <http://www.glencoe.com/sec/literature/course/course1/unit/shortstory.shtml>

Manning, MaryAnn. “Plot.” *Teaching PreK-8*. April 2001.

- http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3666/is_200104/ai_n8949682
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