

# Cooking a Fiction Cake

## A Guide for Writing Prose

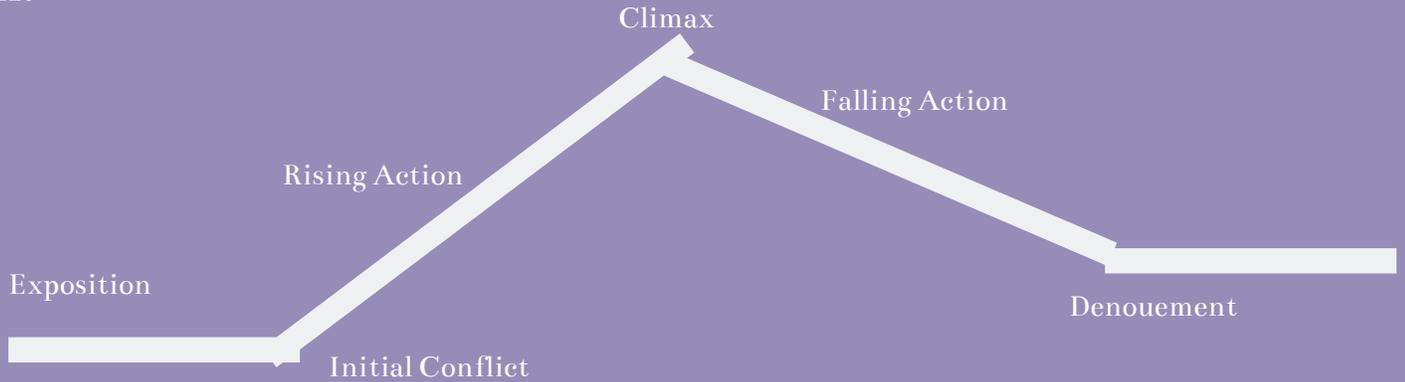


A lot goes into making a fantastic piece of fiction. Use this guide as a reference for all of the different pieces and steps when it comes to writing narrative.

**Ingredients:** To write a story, you first need all of the elements that will go into it.

- **Protagonist-** the character that sustains the story; the one that is necessary for the story to even exist. The character that is undergoing change due to the events of the story. Or simply, the 'main character.'
- **Antagonist-** the force that is actively opposing the protagonist. This doesn't have to be a person. It can be a monster, a thought, a force of nature, or even the protagonist, themselves. From the protagonist's point of view, this force should be the "bad guy"—even if the protagonist can't see this themselves.
- **Supporting/Secondary Character(s)-** these are all other characters needed to create and further the story. For a short story, generally there shouldn't be too many of these or else characters become flat, trope-y, unnecessary, or simply names on paper.
- **Setting-** this is the location of the story which extends to physical place—from both a grand scale (country, planet, state) and a small scale (beach, alley way, grandma's house)—time, year, season and more. It is important to choose a setting that is ideal and authentic to your characters and conflict, AND to be aware of tropes. How many scary stories take place in an big dark empty house, for example?
- **Point of View-** This is the lens from which you decide to tell the story. Where and how is the audience getting information. You have four options for this: First person (I jumped, I said, I walked), Second person (You jumped, you said, you walked), or Third Person (He jumped, she said, John walked). There are two different types of Third person—limited (one character's thoughts) and omniscient (multiple characters' thoughts)
- **Conflict-** This is the struggle of opposing forces in a story. **A STORY MUST HAVE CONFLICT.** Things must happen. The protagonist must experience something, and their experiences must be depicted.
- **Plot-** The sequence of events in a story that lead to the protagonists arc and/or realization.
- **Theme-** This term is a little bit harder to nail down. What is the aura? The overarching subject? What would you like readers to take away? Or, what is the author arguing.

Preparation: Making your story fit this outline will ensure that it cooks all the way through and even tastes like a story to begin with.



Cooking: When writing a successful story, you have five different ways to present the narrative; to shape it, slice it, stir it, sift it. Here is what they are:

Dialogue  
Action  
Thought  
Exposition  
Description

The blend/ratio of DATED is up to you but all of these elements can and probably should have a role in your story. Certain ratios will give a different feel to the story. For example, a lot of dialogue might make the story feel more rushed, more urgent. While more description could make the story more flowy and languid. These are the basic elements to creating a short story. However, there are different ways to frost your fiction cake, different flavors, different plates to put it on. But, this is a good place to start.