

## GUIDEPOST 2. STORYTELLING

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Aristotle postulates that a story must have a beginning, middle and end, and that the sequence of events must naturally arise one from the other.

To break it down a little bit more, here are the main elements of dramatic structure.

The *protagonist* is the main character of the story, the person who wants something. The *antagonist* prevents the protagonist from reaching their goal.

We start with the back story, or the given circumstances. This is called *exposition*. This is the status quo of the main character, their everyday life.

Next, a conflict is introduced. This can also be called the *inciting incident*. It is the single thing that interrupts the status quo and sets the story in motion.

The inciting incident introduces a question—will the character achieve what they want or not? This is the *major dramatic question*. The answer to this question concludes the story, or else adds other complications.

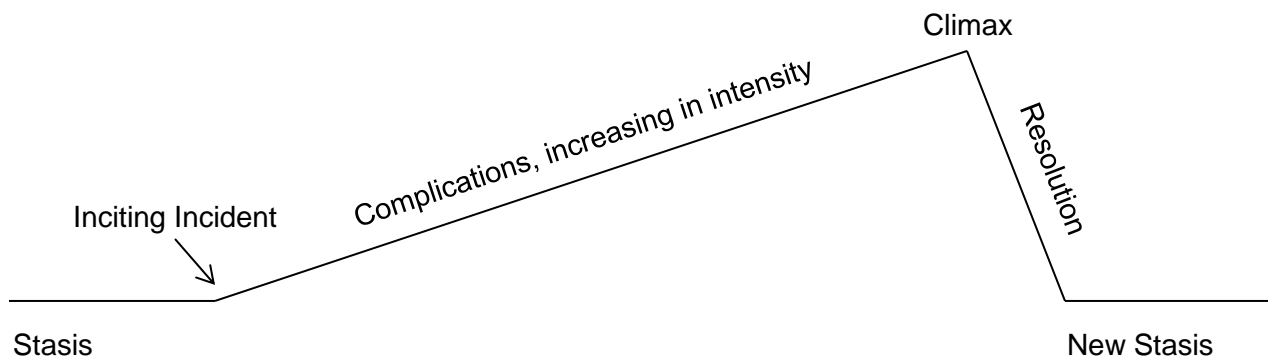
The obstacles that prevent the protagonist from getting what they want create the *rising action*, or a series of complications increasing in intensity.

The *climax* is the peak of the story, where we will discover once and for all whether the protagonist will reach their goal.

After the climax, there are usually a few loose ends that need to be tied up. The denouement is the resolution of any outstanding questions.

The last stage is the *new status quo*. After the resolution, things will either return to normal, as they were in the beginning, or life will be different for the protagonist. This is how the story ends.

Here is a diagram of the story arc we have described:



Tarot readings which take into consideration the natural cycle of a story are most likely to address all the issues, answer all aspects of the question, and feel fulfilling to the querent. Understanding the parts of the story let you guide the reading and understand what the querent needs.