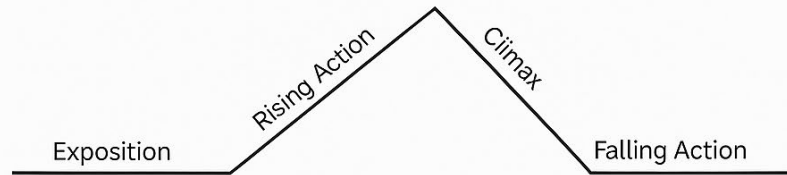
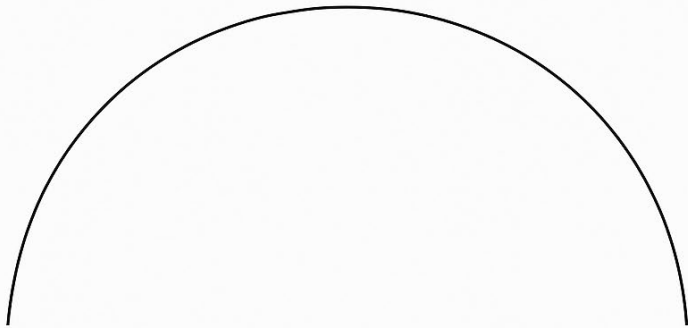


Understanding a Story Arc

The Five-Point Story Arc



Label the arc



Story Prompts

- A youth loses faith and finds it again
- A community struggles with forgiveness
- A friendship tested by truth

What is a Story Arc?

A story arc is the shape of a story — the structure that helps the audience follow emotional and narrative development. Once we know the shape of the story, we can add storylines, characters, settings and then script.

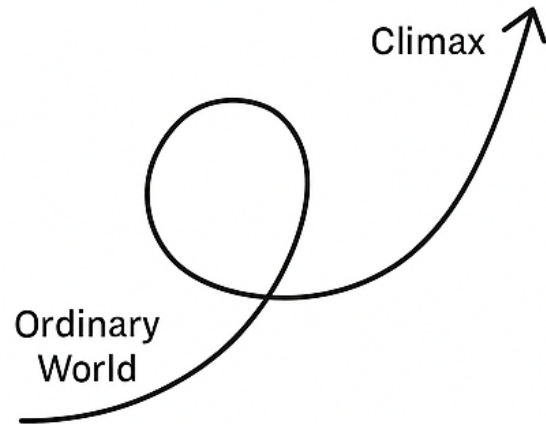
The Classic 5-Point Story Arc (Freytag's Pyramid):

- **Exposition** — Introduction of characters, setting, background
- **Rising Action** — Conflict begins, stakes rise
- **Climax** — The turning point, the height of tension
- **Falling Action** — Consequences of the climax
- **Resolution** — Redemption found, Conflict is resolved, story ends

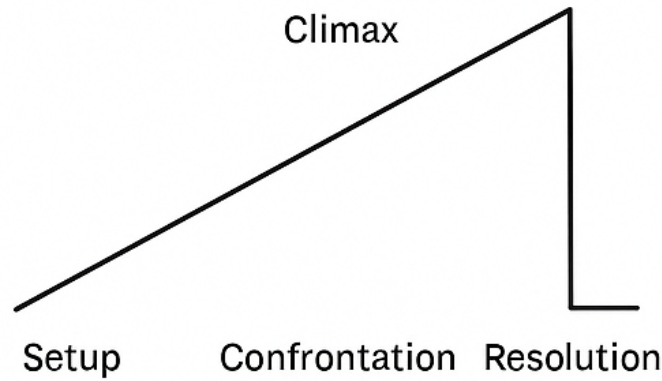
Alternative Arcs:

- **Hero's Journey** (12 stages — great for faith-based narratives (retelling Joseph's life story, or epic narratives such as Star Wars)
- **Three-Act Structure** (Setup → Confrontation → Resolution)
- **Circular/Narrative loops** (e.g. stories that return to their beginning, great example being the Wheel of Time, of even Animal Farm)
- **Redemptive Arc** (common in faith-based storytelling — fall → grace → restoration, e.g. Peter's life, the Prodigal Son)

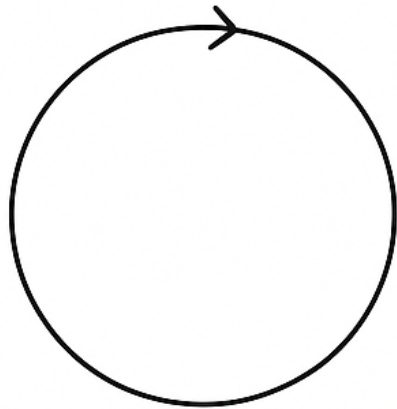
HERO'S JOURNEY



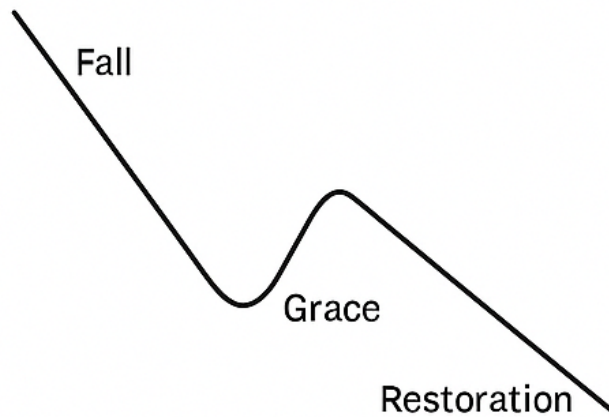
THREE-ACT STRUCTURE



CIRCULAR/NARRATIVE LOOP



REDEMPTIVE ARC



Practice - "So that's a good thing"

This is a group warm-up for developing story arc. In a group setting, we go around the group, introducing ourselves as characters in a story (see below).

We again go around the group, following a lead, as conflict rises, reaches a climax and then is resolved. To test and stretch the story, actors are challenged to flip between the action is a good thing or bad thing. It's theatre sports, it's just practice.

Possible story lines...

- Someone gets terrible news... that turns out to be a blessing.
- A character thinks they're right but learns a humbling truth.
- A group must work together despite conflict.
- A lost item leads to a surprising discovery.
- A character doubts their faith... until a child shows them something simple.