



NARRATIVE SHAPE

AUDIO NOTES OUTLINE

The aim of this session is to help you develop and flesh out your story into the shape of a novel.

STORIES HAVE A BEGINNING, A MIDDLE AND AN END

- Different components of a story – different proportions
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- Narrative Interplay – pleasure principle and death drive

PLOT PROPORTION

Beginning –

Middle –

End –

DIAGRAM OF NOVEL STRUCTURE

Listen to the audio from Kim and place on the line below an idea of where the *Beginning*, *Beginning of the Middle*, *End of the Middle* and, *Beginning of the End* will be.



Transition Points –

END OF THE BEGINNING – FIRST TRANSITION POINT

Romeo and Juliet

- *Meet –*
- *Conflict –*
- *Context –*
- *Moment of gear change –*



Macbeth

- *Meet –*
- *Introduction of the premonition and the witches*
- *Conflict –*
- *Moment of great change –*

First transition point is an indicator that the story is set up and ready to rock.

END OF THE MIDDLE – SECOND TRANSITION POINT

Romeo and Juliet

- *Love affair develops and conflict develops*
- *Turning point moment – I am fortune's Fool! –*
- *How can it end?*

Macbeth

- *Macbeth crosses the line:*
 - *Macduff –*
 - *Witches –*

YOUR STORY

What happens in the transition points in your story?

The end of the beginning is usually easier to spot than the end of the middle.

Once you know how the book begins and ends, and how it changes gears, the book is easier to write.

You then need to come up with scenes that negotiate the distance between those plot points.

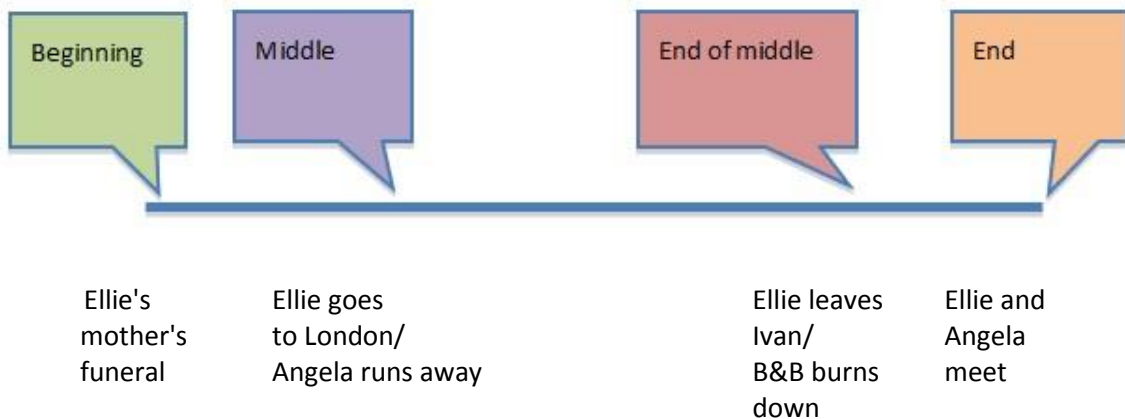
EXERCISE: CREATING YOUR PLOT SKELETON

Narrative shape runs on the psychologically pleasing shape of:

- Beginning;
- Middle, and;
- End

Here is the basic plot skeleton for Kimberley Freeman's novel *Duet*.

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As you can see, the transitions in both plot and subplot are marked. This is optional.

WHAT TO DO:



Draw a plot skeleton for your novel. Don't feel constrained by this: you can change it any time you like. It's about giving yourself a clear plan for how the story will play out. Draw a line in a document and place markers for each of the following.

1. Mark in the opening scene.
2. Mark in the end of the beginning.
3. Mark in the end of middle scene.
4. Mark in the closing scene.

Do you have an idea of how long your novel might be? If so, mark in the approximate word counts for each of the sections.

Work out what are the key issues for each of the sections: Beginning, Middle and End. And write four dot points for each to submit with your plot skeleton. This will help you work out what the 'gear change' moment will be at the end of each section.

- Submit to your tutor by email to this address: submissions@awmonlinelearn.com.au

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