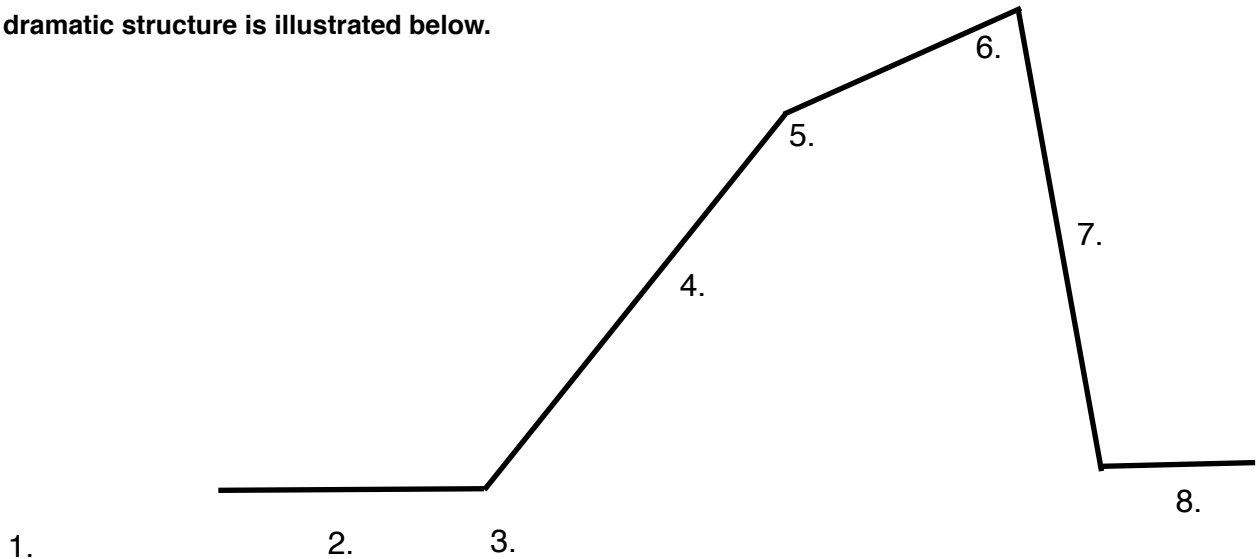


Plot (Dramatic) Structure: Freytag's Pyramid

Dramatic structure is the structure of a dramatic work such as a play or film. Many scholars have analyzed dramatic structure, beginning with Aristotle in his *Poetics* (335 BC). Today, the plot structure of plays is generally analyzed using Gustav Freytag's analysis of ancient Greek & Shakespearean drama.

This dramatic structure is illustrated below.



1. **Inciting Incident** - what happens _____ the dramatic work begins. We see the _____ of it in the play/movie, but we don't necessarily see that event.
2. **Exposition** - the _____ of the play; provides the background information needed to properly understand the story, such as the protagonist, the antagonist, the basic conflict, and the setting
3. **Conflict** - the first _____ event; "the key that _____"; this incident sets the story in motion
4. **Build** - this is the " _____ action" of the story that builds toward the climax; secondary conflicts and characters are introduced; in plays, the build is made up of "beats" (units of action with specific intentions)
5. **Crisis** - a _____ in the plot that leads to the _____ of the play; often after this incident/moment, characters are not the same
6. **Climax** - the _____ in the story/plot
7. **Denouement** - the _____; immediately follows the climax; this often happens _____
8. **End**

Most plays follow a _____ Plot Structure.

Why is it called this?

(Fill in the bubbles below with the characteristics of this type of structure.)

has few...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

requires character

stage time =

carefully constructed

If a playwright chooses to begin very early in a character's life, and shows **episodes** throughout that character's life over great expanses of time, (instead of a story leading up to one climax), (s)he will tell the story with...

Plot Structure

(Fill in the bubbles below with the characteristics of this type of plot structure.)

Can cover many

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Overall effect is...

Has shorter

May have parallel or

plots happening at the same time in the telling of

Often has

_scenes.