

Narration in Comics

Writing Your Story's Plot

A Tale in 3 Acts

The most common narrative structure divides a story into three parts, which are also known as *acts*:

- The first act is called the set-up, or exposition. It introduces the characters and the setting in which the action will take place. The situation is calm and stable. At the end of this act, something unexpected will come to upset the usual order of things, shattering the peace and quiet and forcing the characters to react. It is called the initiating event, and it could be a demon attacking the hero's village, a character falling in love at first sight, someone discovering a dead body, or some other game-changing event.
- The second act is called the confrontation. The main characters have to cope with the event or the conflicts it leads to. This is generally the longest part. It could mean a quest to defeat the demon, an effort to win over someone's heart, an investigation to find the murderer, etc.
At the end of this act, the plot reaches its highest point, the climax. The characters are faced with their trickiest test. They achieve triumph or meet with failure. The hero defeats the demon, declares their love, or arrests the murderer.
- The third act is the resolution, or conclusion. It's the shortest one. The action is over and life goes back to normal.

