

## Emotional Plot/Suspense Plot Guide

<p><b>Point of Attack:</b> What is the story leading up to the beginning of the drama? What happens right before the beginning of the play to bring characters together? What is the situation in which they find themselves?</p>	<p><i>You need to discern some history that happens before the play begins. There's a reason why characters come together and why they are in the circumstances they find themselves. What is it? Often, this is revealed in the play as <b>exposition</b> – when characters talk about their past.</i></p> <p><i>Describe the historical reasons why characters come together, why they have their attitudes, and the situation in which they find themselves right before the drama begins.</i></p>			
<p><b>The Beginning:</b>  <i>You get this from the stage directions in the text.</i></p>	<b>Time:</b>	(year)	(season)	(time of day or night)
	<b>Place:</b> (Abbreviated, one sentence)			

<b>Inciting Incident</b>		
<p>Something happens near the beginning of the play that begins the action. What is it? What happens? Because of this action, the drama begins. (Do not rely on exits or entrances.)</p>	<p><i>Describe the inciting incident. This happens near the beginning of the drama and begins the action.</i></p>	
<p>A character gains a superobjective (what he wants from the beginning of the play through to the end of the play) because of what happens near the inciting incident that ties to the climax. What does he want?</p>	<p>Character name: <i>This is the main character's name – the protagonist if you will.</i></p>	<p>Superobjective: What does he/she want? <i>Because the inciting incident ties to the superobjectives of the main characters, describe the superobjective of the main character here. A superobjective is what a character wants from the beginning of the play to the end of the play. Scenes, units, and beats reveal separate, detailed character objectives. Only indicate the main character's superobjective here. A key to help determine a superobjective is to look at the character's point of view under character analysis.</i></p>
<p>An opposing character wants to block the character's superobjective. What does this character want? This may or may not connect directly to the inciting incident.</p>	<p>Opposing character name: <i>The antagonist.</i></p>	<p>What does he/she want? <i>The main opposing character also has a superobjective. Often, it is in opposition or counters or blocks the main character's superobjective.</i></p>
<p>The audience begins to ask "What will happen?" "Who did it?" or anything that ties to the climax. Specify the question the audience asks.</p>	<p><i>A mark of the inciting incident is that it not only begins the action, but also poses a question in the audience's mind. This ties to the Suspense Plot. The key here is to think of the audience instead of the characters.</i></p>	

<b>Suspense Plot</b>		<b>Emotional Plot</b>
<p><i>The suspense plot ties directly to the audience. A question is raised in the inciting incident, and the action taken helps change or answer that question either in part or in whole. Through objectives, the suspense plot ties to the characters.</i></p>		<p><i>The emotional plot ties to the reactions of the characters. A focus on the emotional life of characters is needed here. If performed well, the audience identifies with the emotional life of the characters and often audience members will feel or think as they do.</i></p>
<p>Who makes a decision to take action?</p> <p><i>Any character can take action.</i></p>	<p>What does he/she do?</p> <p><i>Specify what the character does to take action. It could be physical. It could be as subtle as making another character feel guilty. It could be that the character tells another character what to do.</i></p>	<p>How do characters react emotionally and/or intellectually? Characters' point of views, attitudes, and your themes are revealed here.</p> <p><i>Sometimes characters like the action the character takes and sometimes they don't like it. Specify who reacts and how they react. Sometimes the reaction is physical, sometimes the character just complains, sometimes the character berates, sometimes the character blocks – tries to make the action not happen. Sometimes the character "following orders" does not succeed in doing so very well.</i></p>
<p>Is there a reversal in this plot segment? What is it?</p>	<p><i>I'm asking you to look at the play in very broad strokes. So look for any kind of revelation or reversal in the play. Smaller units, scenes, or beats are looked at a different way. A director, for instance, would look at the small beats, usually in terms of what any character wants at any time, for that changes from beat to beat.</i></p> <p><i>A reversal is anytime that the audience and/or the characters do not expect what happens and it changes the direction of the plot. For instance, in a mystery play, the investigator rules out a suspect.</i></p>	
<p>Is there a revelation in this plot segment? What is it?</p>	<p><i>A revelation is more common than a reversal, and this is what you need to concentrate on. Segment the play according to what is revealed – either to the audience or to the characters or both. What comes up that you did not know before? A revelation changes both the action and the suspense question. Often, it indicates an ending of an action, but because it causes more questions, it causes another action to begin.</i></p>	

<b>Climax</b>	
<b>Suspense Plot</b>	<b>Emotional Plot</b>
<p>At the climax, everything comes together. Characters are in high crisis and the crisis is resolved. The climax relates directly to the inciting incident. Describe your climax.</p> <p><i>Between the inciting incident and the climax has been "rising action." In the climax, the question is answered that was posed in the inciting incident. Again, this ties more to the audience than the characters, but here the characters resolve the conflict created by the rising action.</i></p>	<p>At the end of the climax, a character will change irreversibly. Who changes? In what way does he /she change?</p> <p><i>Because the conflict is resolved and the suspense question is answered, the main character (usually the main character) will change in such a way that the character cannot return to who he or she was before. Sometimes, the character who changes comes to an understanding, sometimes he maims himself, sometimes he's banished, and sometimes he absolutely makes up his mind about something. Sometimes the character dies, but that is usually AFTER the climax as it comes by a climax action where he understands something or loses perspective completely. Nevertheless, the character changes irreversibly.</i></p>

<b>Denouement</b>
<p>The audience wants to know what happens to characters after the climax. They want to know the ending. What happens to the characters at the end of the play? (Sometimes this is left for the audience to ponder.)</p> <p><i>The audience really does want to know what happens to the characters once the suspense question is resolved in the climax. The denouement, or "falling action," wraps this up and finishes the play.</i></p>