

Character Driven Plot Outline

For more information about plot outlines, go to: <https://www.novel-software.com/genrestorytemplates>

Act 1

Incomplete – establish the hero's 'want' and their 'need'	The protagonist is unfulfilled in their normal life. There will be two things missing – one thing that they think they want (like money, fame, a Porsche – you get the idea) and another thing which they haven't thought of, but is the real thing that will give them fulfilment. (compassion, self confidence, etc).
Unsettled – an outside force appears (e.g. invitation or threat)	The protagonist's world becomes unsettled by an outside force. An invitation, threat or attack, perhaps.
Resistant - The protagonist refuses to do the right thing	The protagonist refuses to do the right thing. They are afraid, selfish or just have different priorities. This could be a whole scene dedicated to their reluctance, or it could be a moment's doubt, quickly overcome.
Encouraged – the protagonist is pushed in the right direction	The protagonist gets advice from someone. This meeting should push them on their way, but the advice isn't necessarily good or the giver helpful – it may be an ultimatum or a challenge.
Committed – protagonist burns bridges, so no turning back	Now the main character gets pro-active and does something about that thing that unsettled them. Ideally they should take some action that makes it impossible to go back to how they were in the first scene – some burning of bridges.

+ Add Act Item 🗑 Delete Act

Act 2



Disoriented – navigate to goal facing unfamiliar challenges and new rules.	Now the whole world is different as they try to navigate towards their goal and face unfamiliar challenges and new rules. They will probably fail several times at this stage.
Inauthentic - the protagonist is confronted with their flaw, but they refuse to address it	The protagonist is confronted with their flaw, but they refuse to address it.
Confronted – realise they must face their flaw or lose everything	This is a slap in the face for the protagonist where they finally realise they have to face their flaw and do something about it or lose everything that is worth having.
Reborn – protagonist demonstrates that they have changed	The lead character demonstrates that they are a changed person.
Desperate – complications mean hitting rock bottom	They are not initially rewarded for their personal growth. In fact, it seems everything goes wrong at once. Anything already going wrong gets worse, and anything going right is cruelly snatched away. It seems like all is lost and there is no way to climb out of this hole.

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Act 3

Decisive - climax - protagonist must choose between 'want' and 'need'	Remember right back at the beginning when we said that the character has two things missing from their life - the thing they want and the thing they need? Right here is where you make them face a choice between the two. This is the climax of the story, where the protagonist must actively make their decision. They don't have to choose right, but the consequences of their choice must be poetic.	 
Complete - The protagonist gets what they deserve, based on their choice	The protagonist gets what they deserve. In the vast majority of cases, they will have correctly chosen what they need and will now be fulfilled in themselves.	