Plot Structure Through Short Stories
Freytag’s Pyramid is often modified so that it extends slightly before and after the primary rising and falling action. You might think of this part of the chart as similar to the warm-up and cool-down for the story.
How to identify plot?
Exposition

- Start of the story which introduces the **characters**, setting, and the basic situation.

**Example**: *Snow White lives with her stepmother, the wicked queen, who was so vain that she insists on being the most beautiful woman in the whole land.*
Conflict

- The dramatic struggle between two forces in a story. Without conflict, there is no plot.

Types of Conflict:

- Interpersonal conflict: Human vs. Human
- Human vs. Nature
- Human vs. Society
- Internal Conflict: Human vs. Self

Example: Snow White's beauty eventually outshines that of the queen. The jealous queen hires a hunter to kill Snow White. Let's watch a video!
Rising Action

- The series of events that enlarge the conflict in the story that lead to the climax
- Builds tension
- Increases the reader’s interest

Example: The hunter tells Snow White to run away. She hides in a cottage with seven little men. The queen tricks her into biting a poison apple. The men chase the queen to her death and guard Snow White's sleeping body.
Climax

- The turning point, the most intense moment—either mentally or in action

*Example:* A handsome prince learns about the sleeping princess. He finds Snow White and kisses her.
Falling Action

- All of the action that follows the climax
- Any unresolved conflicts are mopped up
- Any loose ends are tied together

*Example:* Snow White wakes up with love’s first kiss from The Prince. The two of them return to the kingdom.
Resolution

- The **ending** of the story

*Example*: Snow White and the prince live happily ever after.