

Cambridge International AS & A Level Literature in English 9695

Introduction to Literature – Lesson 3: Plot		
Learning objectives:	By the end of this lesson learners will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> understand how a plot or a section of a plot has been structured by the writer. analyse the ways in which choices regarding structure create a distinct style. 	
Lesson objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners will understand and describe the plot or a section of a plot. Learners will identify significant shifts in focus. 	
Vocabulary:	exposition, inciting incident, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution, denouement, foreshadowing, motif, flashback, montage, framing, artefact, race against time, <i>deus ex machina</i> , red herring, cliff-hanger.	
Previous learning:	Learners have explored aspects of context and character in earlier lessons.	
Plan		
	Activities	Guidance
Beginning	<p>As a class, list some well-known traditional tales. Choose one and ask learners: What happens? Learners outline the key events in the plot of this familiar story.</p> <p>Ask learners: Does something have to happen?</p> <p>Learners give examples of texts, films, TV series where very little actually happens.</p> <p>Discuss if learners consider language and characterisation to be more important than other elements of a story such as plot or setting? Why?</p> <p>Discuss how the choice of genre can impact on the plot. Learners identify genres they are familiar with, e.g. crime, horror, romance, fantasy, detective. In pairs/groups, learners pick one genre and consider the storytelling conventions of that genre. Ask learners how that impacts on a story's plot.</p> <p>Resources: Some examples of fairy stories, folk tales, myths, or legends could be provided.</p>	<p>Remind learners that lyrical writing, dynamic characters and formal structuring and method on the part of the writer all require plot. It is the events and actions of a story that are often the primary point of access for readers.</p> <p>Tell learners that there are three main literary genres – prose, drama and poetry which can then be broken down further into sub-genres.</p>
Middle	<p>Give learners a short story, or an extract from a short story or novel to read.</p> <p>In pairs/groups, learners sequence the key events in the correct order to demonstrate an understanding of the plot's structure.</p> <p>Ask learners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What impact would it have on the plot if the key events were placed in a different order? How far do action and events help us to understand the structure of a set text? 	<p>Tense and verb forms can be a key part of the presentation of action. Writers may shift into the present tense to give immediacy to the writing. The past tense can be used to reflect memories or completed actions. Adverbs can modify the way action is revealed. Learners will often choose to answer passage questions in their final examinations. If they look for sections of action to comment on,</p>

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	<p>In pairs/groups, learners consider how each of the key events in the text move the narrative along. Does each key event constitute a key moment or turning point in the extract or short story?</p> <p>In groups, learners discuss how the writer has used the plot to reveal themes, context and character traits. They should consider how each key event foreshadows what is to come, what we are learning about a character and whether our opinions change as we read the text.</p> <p>When studying short stories, there are several plots to remember. Learners consider stories in pairs that have similar plots. Are there similar lines of development?</p> <p>Resources: Extract or short story (a story which includes specific actions is helpful for this exercise.)</p> <p>Cut up sections of the summary of key events in the plot.</p>	<p>this will help them to identify useful evidence for their responses.</p> <p>Explain to learners that the author is gradually revealing the plot and that therefore reading/watching any short story, novel or play is a process of revelation. Learners should see character and situation as fluid and not fixed as the plot unfolds. Learners who are sensitive to the ambiguities revealed by plot structure and context will produce more highly-developed responses.</p>
<p>End</p>	<p>Ask learners to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What impact does the beginning or ending of the short story or extract have on the reader? • How do these contribute to the structure of the plot? • How do repeated ideas, words, imagery, or phrases impact on the plot? • Where are the key shifts in focus in the extract or short story? 	

Additional information

Differentiation	Assessment
<p>Select extracts that are more accessible or more challenging in terms of language choices for learners. Different pairs/groups can work on different extracts or different sections of an extract.</p>	<p>Learners write a quiz on the events in the text for other learners to answer. This can be a competition; where learners compete in teams to answer questions on the plot of the text.</p> <p>Learners could design and draw/annotate story boards or cartoons of the plot of the text.</p>

Follow-up work

Research the conventions of different genres. Each learner/group could write a summary of the conventions and plot devices of a genre, e.g., tragedy, horror, comedy, romance, to share with the rest of the class. These can be linked to the set works that they will be studying.