

ENGLISH

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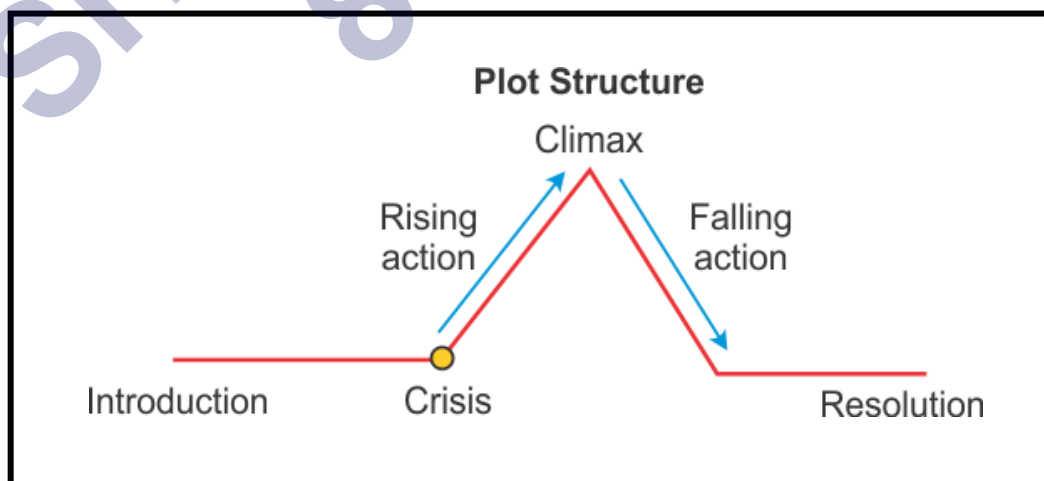
STORY WRITING

What is a Story?

A **story** is an imaginary account about people or situations that is told for **entertainment**. Everybody loves to read or listen to stories. But writing them is not a simple task. In this chapter, we will learn the guidelines to writing a good story.

Components of a Story

- **Theme:** The theme is the main idea around which the story revolves.
 - What idea do you wish to convey through your story?
 - Good versus Evil, Revenge, Love Conquers All
- **Setting:** The surrounding or the time period where the story unfolds.
 - Where is the story set?
 - When do the events in the story take place?
- **Characterisation:** Characterisation is the process of portraying characters.
 - Who is the main character?
 - What are their/its physical/mental attributes?
 - What is the problem faced by the character?
 - How does the character change or evolve in the end?
- **Plot:** The plot comprises the main events of the story.
 - **Introduction:** Introduction of characters and the situation
 - **Rising action** in the story: The events of the story that lead to the crisis
 - **Crisis:** The main problem faced by a/the character(s) of the story
 - **Climax:** The problem escalates
 - **Falling action:** The intensity of the problem lessens
 - **Resolution:** The stage where everything is resolved



Steps for Writing a Story

- Step 1: Fix a theme that you want to write about. What would be the moral of your story?

The theme of the story is
'Hard Work Always Pays'

- Step 2: Establish the setting

- The story is set in a forest.
- The time when the events happen is not specified.

- Step 3: Develop the characters in the story.

- The ant is a sincere and a hardworking character with foresight.
- The beetle is a frivolous and a childish character.
- The two are good friends.



- Step 4: Develop the plot of the story.

Introduction	Once upon a time, there lived an ant and a beetle who were best friends.
	The ant was hardworking, but the beetle was lazy.
Rising action	One day, the hardworking ant senses the approaching rain.
	He starts building a boat out of a leaf.
	The beetle whiles away his time and makes fun of his friend and his seemingly pointless endeavours.
Crisis	A torrential downpour causes many insects to lose their homes.
Climax	The ant sets sail on the boat he built out of the leaf.
	He spots his friend, the beetle, hanging on to a twig in the rain.
	He braves the currents and rescues the beetle.
Falling Action	The ant rows them both to safety, and they wait in their little boat for the rain to let up.
	Soon, the rains stop and the water begins to recede.
Resolution	The beetle realises his folly and apologises to the ant for his behaviour.
	He thus learns a valuable lesson.



Samples and Types

Outline of the Story

- In such questions, the outline of the story is provided. Students are expected to connect the points to form a comprehensive narrative.

Sample 1

Ramu got a phone call – his aunt died – she made a will before she died – left everything she had for Ramu – Ramu ecstatic – started daydreaming – dreamed of a big house and an expensive car – dreamed of marrying a beautiful woman – planned to buy acres of land – Day of procuring inheritance arrived – aunt's only possession – her pet dog – Ramu was disappointed – Don't count your chickens before they are hatched.

Steps to Write

- Read the outline clearly.
- Understand the plot and the theme.
- Do not omit any points.
- Stick to the order of the points.
- Use connectors to join the points.
 - Since, Hence, Therefore, Because
 - And, But, So, For, Or, Nor
- Use appropriate words to denote time.
 - Once upon a time, Long ago, Later that day
- Dialogues should sound natural.
- Use the same tense form consistently.
- Add some details of your own, but do not change the course of the story given in the outline.
- Use a good introduction and conclusion to make your story interesting.
- Use simple language.
- Check for grammatical errors.
- Give it a suitable title based on the main character or the theme of the story.



Ramu's Folly

Ramu got a phone call from a distant relative. He informed him that his aunt had died and had made a will before her death. In the will, she left everything she had for Ramu. Ramu, who was a lazy, fanciful man, was ecstatic.

He started daydreaming about the vast fortune he would amass. He dreamed of buying a big house and an expensive car; he also dreamed of marrying a beautiful woman. He even planned to buy acres of land for farming. He envisioned a bright future for him.

The day of procuring his inheritance arrived. He was shocked to know that his aunt's only possession was her pet dog. Ramu's hopes of being rich were dashed and now the responsibility of taking care of the dog was on his shoulders. He learnt an important lesson that day: Don't count your chickens before they are hatched.



When the Opening Line is Provided

Sample 2

- In such cases, the first line of the story is given. Students are expected to use their imagination and their writing skills to create an interesting story.

I could hear the wind howling as I lay in my bed that night...

Steps to Write

- List the possible things that could be related to the starting line.
 - 📖 Ghosts, Impending storm, Fear
- Pick a theme that you find interesting.
- Plan how the events could unfold in the story.
- Put the character in unusual situations in the story.
 - 📖 Frightened in the night, alone at night
- Help the character come out of that situation.
- Arrest the reader's imagination.
- Do not reveal too much in the first sentences.
- Use humour.
- Make sure the story is logical.
- Conclude the story by adding an element of surprise.
- Use simple sentences so that the chances of grammatical errors are reduced.
- Use the same tense form consistently.
- Stick to simple past or simple present tense for the narrative.
- Stick to the word limit.
- Do not introduce multiple plots without logically concluding them.



Things That Go Bump in the Night

I could hear the wind howling as I lay in my bed that night. I was too frightened to walk across the hall to my parent's room. Suddenly I heard a soft thud as if something had landed on my bed. Fearing the worst, I started shivering. My mind started imagining all the evil things that could have ended up in my room that night. "Maybe, it's a monster" I thought. "No, I think it is a vampire or maybe ...it's my Math teacher", I managed to guffaw to myself despite being frightened.

The shadows of trees swaying in the wind were playing on my walls. Suddenly I felt something creep into my blanket. I wanted to shout and run out of my room, but I was paralysed with fear. The thing inside my blanket crept higher and higher. I was about to let out a giant scream when I heard a tiny mewing sound. I lifted my blanket; to my surprise, it was only Fifi our cat. It looked like she was also frightened of the weather outside. I felt relieved now that we had each other for company!



When the Closing Line is Provided

Sample 3

- In such cases, the concluding line of the story is given. Students are expected to use their imagination and their writing skills to create an interesting story.

... And that's how I managed to get to school on time.

Steps to Write

- Understand the crisis the person is facing in the given line.
 - He/she could be running late for school.
- Imagine why the person could have been in the above-mentioned situation.
 - He/she overslept, he/she missed his/her bus, his/her vehicle broke down
- Now imagine all the possible ways in which the person may have resolved the crisis he/she is facing.
 - Rushed through the morning rituals, Asked a friend for a ride, Helped by a kind soul
- Arrest the reader's imagination.
- Use humour.
- Make sure the story is logical.
- Use simple sentences so that the chances of grammatical errors are reduced.
- Use the same tense form consistently.
- Stick to the simple past or simple present tense for the narrative.
- Stick to the word limit.
- Do not introduce multiple plots without logically concluding them.

My Treacherous Alarm Clock

I was sleeping cosily in bed dreaming about riding on the back of a flying horse, slaying evil dragons and rescuing damsels in distress. I woke up with a start and looked at my alarm clock. The hands were stuck at 3: 20 am. Desperately, I pulled the curtains apart and it was bright and sunny outside. My treacherous alarm clock had deceived me; it was already 9 am! I had only 15 minutes to dress up for school as the bus arrived exactly at 9:15. I brushed my teeth with one hand, while polishing my shoes with the other. I rushed to the bathroom and stood under the shower for 3 minutes soaping myself vigorously. After drying myself, I took out my freshly washed uniform. Unfortunately, It was not ironed and I had exactly 7 minutes left. I plugged in the iron box and rushed to the kitchen to grab a bite. After a quick breakfast, I rushed back to the iron box; it was sufficiently hot. I pressed my clothes neatly and wore them. At that very moment, I heard the honking of my school bus. I wore my shoes and rushed out of the house. And that's how I managed to get to school on time.



Samples of Story Writing

Story Outline

Sample 4

A shoemaker – very poor – he and his wife left with leather for one pair of shoes – he cut it out for a pair – he retires to his bed – in the morning he finds shoes already stitched – the pair stitched perfectly – customer pays double the amount for it – shoemaker has money for more shoes – he cuts leather and goes to sleep – he finds two pairs of shoes ready – he and his wife stay awake spying – two elves come at night and stitch shoes for the shoemaker – to show gratitude shoemakers wife stitches clothes for them – the elves find tiny clothes – sings merrily in happiness – the shoemaker and his wife never see them again – are prosperous for life

The Shoemaker and the Elves

Once upon a time, there lived a shoemaker who was very poor. He lived in an old, rickety house with his wife. He was so poor that he only had enough leather left for one pair of shoes. At night, he cut it out to stitch it into shoes. But he was too tired that night, so he retired to his bed. In the morning, to his surprise, he found the shoes already stitched! He was puzzled since he clearly remembered cutting the leather and leaving it at his work table. He admired the shoes for their craftsmanship as they were perfectly stitched.

In came a customer who was immediately enamoured by the shoes. She was ready to pay any amount of money for the beautiful pair. The shoemaker who was still puzzled by the unexplained appearance of the shoes was a little reluctant to part with them. The customer offered to pay double the amount for the pair. The shoemaker, who was well aware of his financial problems, accepted the offer. With the money, he bought more leather enough for two shoes. After cutting them out, he went to bed hoping for a second miracle.

His wish came true when he found two pairs of shoes ready on his work table in the morning. He and his wife were overjoyed but befuddled. They decided to stay awake at night spying on his work station. To their surprise, they found two elves come in through the open window. For the next couple of hours, the duo sang as they stitched the leather into two pairs of shoes. The couple was moved by the elves' selflessness so they decided to stitch clothes for them to show their gratitude towards them. The next night, the elves were surprised to see the sets of tiny clothes, shoes and mittens stitched for them. Overjoyed, they sang merrily and jumped and skipped their way out of the house. Even though the shoemaker never saw them again, he and his wife were prosperous for life.



Sample 5

A crocodile and a monkey were friends – monkey treats crocodile to delicious fruits every day – crocodile valued monkey's generosity – treated him like his own brother – crocodile's wife asks him about the fruits – tells her about monkey – crocodile's wife expresses desire to eat the monkey's heart – crocodile reluctant to betray friend but wife kept insisting – crocodile tries to lure monkey under pretext of introducing him to his wife – crocodile carries monkey on his back – he swims to his house – monkey learns of crocodile's plan – monkey tells crocodile his heart is kept inside the trunk of a tree – takes crocodile there – jumps off his back and escapes – the crocodile realises he lost a good friend

The Monkey and the Crocodile

A crocodile and a monkey were best friends. The monkey would treat his friend the crocodile to delicious fruits every day. He would painstakingly collect them from the deep regions of the jungle. The crocodile was very fond of his friend. He valued the monkey's generosity and treated him like his own brother.

One day, the crocodile's wife asked him about the fruits his friend served him every day. He said that they were delicious and juicy and that the monkey took a lot of pains to procure it for him. The wife said, "The monkey may be eating the fruits every day. I am sure his heart is also as sweet as the fruits he eats." The crocodile did not understand the meaning of his wife's words. She said, "I want you to lure the monkey to our house. I will attack him when he least expects it. You and I can then feast on his heart." The crocodile was reluctant to betray his friend, but his wife kept insisting. Eventually, the crocodile fell prey to his wife's relentlessness and he agreed to lure the monkey into their house.

The next day, he said to the monkey, "Greetings brother. My wife wants to meet you as you have been such a good friend to me. She wants to repay you for all the hospitality and love you have extended towards me." The monkey said, "Surely brother. I would also like to meet her." The crocodile carried the monkey on his back as he swam towards his house. During the journey, the crocodile suffered from a slip of tongue and he absent-mindedly divulged his wife's plans to the monkey. The quick-thinking monkey said, "If it's my heart she wishes to eat, we are moving in the wrong direction. I keep my heart in the trunk of a tree that we left behind on our way. Let us go back and retrieve it." The gullible crocodile fell for the monkey's act. When they reached the tree, the monkey jumped off his back and escaped into the thicket. It took a while for the crocodile to realise that his act of betrayal had cost him a good friendship.



When the Opening Line is Provided**Sample 6**

Rahul stepped on the creaky floor...

Rahul stepped on the creaky floor and was startled by the sound it made. A small rat scurried across the room and he jumped up in fright. The old house smelled musty and there were cobwebs everywhere. Two boys outside yelled, "Did you find the ball yet?" "Not yet. I am still looking" he yelled back. The house has been a source of fear and curiosity for Rahul and his friends. Some elder children in the colony had frightened the younger ones about a mysterious old woman living in the house. According to their accounts, she was responsible for the many inexplicable disappearances of children in the locality.

The bullies Varun and Arjun had forced him to retrieve their cricket ball that had fallen inside the house through a broken window. Rahul was petrified of the house, but today, he found himself inside his worst nightmare. He moved carefully trying to locate the bright red rubber ball that had bounced into the bedroom of the supposedly evil woman. As he stood at the dark entrance of the house, he could feel the glimmer of the red ball in the darkness. The boys yelled again, "What is taking you so long?" "I am almost there!" Rahul yelled back.

He walked carefully into the room and grasped at the red shiny ball. Something clammy touched the back of his hand. He screamed loudly and ran out of the house with the red ball in his hand. The bullies standing patiently outside the house saw him rush out. They were impressed by Rahul's feat of entering the infamous house and staying there for a full 15 minutes. He was now their hero. Rahul revelled in the admiration, but he couldn't forget the cold feeling of the touch on his back for a long time to come.

Sample 7

Once upon a time, in a far off kingdom, there was a theft of royal proportions...

Once upon a time, in a far off kingdom, there was a theft of royal proportions. The queen's necklace was stolen. The king called upon his intelligent minister to look into the case. The minister studied the movements of the queen and her maids and concluded that no one except the maids had the access to the queen's chamber. He was of the opinion that one of the maids may have perpetrated the crime. But there were ten maids working in the chamber.

The minister then thought of an ingenious plan to bag the culprit. He called them to the court and offered them an ointment to apply on their noses. The maids applied the ointment as directed. The king asked the minister, "Why have you made them apply the ointment on their noses?" The minister replied, "It is an enchanted ointment given to me by the court magician. " He turned towards them and said, "The real culprit's nose will grow by a centimetre on the application of the ointment." One of the maids broke into a sweat and touched her nose involuntarily in fright.

The minister knew who the thief was. He approached her and told her in a low voice to surrender the necklace or be thrown into jail for the rest of her life. Nervously, she opened a small pouch attached to her apron and surrendered the necklace. The queen and the king were overjoyed. They fired the maid and rewarded the intelligent minister generously.