

9th Grade Summer Reading and Writing Assignment:
“Comedy” Plot Pattern
***The Princess Bride* by William Goldman**

ASSIGNMENT INSTRUCTIONS (READ THESE CAREFULLY!):

- Read through the explanations below of **plot** and **plot patterns**.
- Read the questions you will need to answer.
- Read the novel, looking closely for and marking passages in the text that may help you answer the questions.
- Answer all questions in paragraph form.
- Assignment formatting: typed, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12 font, MLA heading (see below for example). Don't forget to check your spelling and grammar!
- Turn in all work by August 10th.

What is Plot?

There are six main elements in a plot:

1. The **EXPOSITION** or introduction.
 - Beginning of the story. Includes background information.
 - Main characters are introduced.
 - Setting (time and place) is established.
2. The **INCITING INCIDENT!**
 - Every story has a MAIN PROBLEM. The inciting incident is the event that introduces the main problem into the story.
 - It signals the end of the exposition and the beginning of the rising action.
3. The **RISING ACTION.**
 - The main problem of the story is developed.
 - This is usually the longest part of the story.
 - Many events take place which eventually lead to a point of high tension. We are building to a crisis!
4. The **CLIMAX!**
 - The main problem reaches a turning point!
 - The moment of highest interest!
 - The moment of highest emotion!
 - What will happen next?!?!?
5. The **FALLING ACTION.**
 - Things start to wind down.
 - The main problem starts to be resolved.
6. The **RESOLUTION** or conclusion.
 - The end of the story.
 - The main problem has been resolved.

What are the Basic Plot Patterns?

In literary theory, some critics have identified seven basic plot patterns into which most stories fit. The seven basic plot patterns are: Rags to Riches, Voyage and Return, Rebirth, Comedy, Tragedy, Overcoming the Monster, and Quest. As 9th graders, your focus this summer will be on the Comedy plot pattern.

What is the Comedy Plot Pattern?

A comedy is usually characterized by a set of problems which seem ridiculous or absurd. Often, there is a hero and heroine who are destined to get together, but some dark force is preventing them from doing so. In addition, there is a sense of misunderstanding and confusion about what is true. At the end of a comedy, the misunderstandings and confusion are cleared up when everyone is shown for who he really is, truth is brought to light, and the problems are resolved in ways that usually seem miraculous and unrealistic.

Comedy meta-plot structure:

1. **Under the Shadow**

The characters live in a little world in which they are under the shadow of confusion, uncertainty, and frustration. They do not have all the correct information, and they do not understand people's true character. This leads them to make decisions that they would not make if they understood the truth. Their decisions then cause even more confusion or complications.

2. **Tightening the Knot**

The confusion gets increasingly worse until the pressure of darkness is at its most acute, and everyone is in a nightmarish tangle.

3. **Resolution**

With the coming to light of things not previously recognized, people's perceptions are dramatically changed. As people see the truth, the situation is miraculously transformed, and the little world is brought together in a state of joyful union.

Works Cited

Booker, Christopher. *The Seven Basic Plots: Why We Tell Stories*. Bloomsbury Continuum, 2016.

Be reminded that our school's policy regarding plagiarism will be administered and applied to this and all other essay assignments throughout the year.

Questions to Answer About the Text

1. Identify the main problem in the story. What is the event that introduces this problem (inciting incident)? What are some situations that complicate the problem even more (rising action)? What is the turning point or moment of highest tension in the story (climax)? How is the main problem resolved? Use specific examples with page numbers.
2. Write a paragraph about Princess Buttercup. What is she like (looks, personality)? Use specific examples from the text. Find one thing that Buttercup **says** and one thing that she **does** that you think are important. What do these things tell you about her? Be specific. Use examples from the text with page numbers.
3. Explain how this story fits the Comedy plot pattern. Be thorough and specific in your explanation. Use specific examples with page numbers.
4. Make a connection between this story and a story or character you have read about in the Bible. Explain the connection.
5. Identify a message the author of the book might be conveying. Does this message line up with a biblical worldview? Or does it contradict what Scripture teaches? Use specific verses to explain.

MLA Heading Sample

Smith 1

John Smith

Mrs. Valdeperas

English 9

30 May 2018

The Princess Bride Questions and Answers