Plot

A plot should look kind of like this:

Let’s go through each step:

1. **Over-arching Theme**—At the top, you see that each story has a theme. We will go over this in more detail in another guide, but keep in mind that the theme should go throughout the whole story and drive the story on. It is not just a lesson people learn, but a truth about the world.

2. **Tension**—Notice that as the story progresses, the tension increases. As the story goes along, there should be greater and greater conflict. Remember, without conflict, there is not story.

3. **Stasis**—The actual plot starts with what people call stasis. It is the state before the real action begins, point 0. Stories often take time to develop the scene and characters with a hook and intro before moving on.

4. **Trigger**—Something happens that the protagonist cannot control that triggers the start of the story. This is the first conflict, or first point of real action. This is often called the inciting incident.

5. **Quest**—The protagonist must react to the inciting incident somehow. Their reaction to the trigger puts them on a quest, which can be a fun thing or a struggle itself.

6. **Obstacles**—Throughout the middle part of the story, the protagonist faces obstacles. They have roadblocks and choices to meet. This takes them up and down a bit of a rollercoaster of action.

7. **Critical Choice**—The protagonist must make an important decision sometime. It is the point of real change within the protagonist, and since all main characters must change throughout the story, this is important. This must be a decision the character makes, not something that happens to them.

8. **Climax**—This is the highest peak of tension in the story. All the story has been building up to this moment of ultimate intensity.

9. **Consequences**—There should be immediate consequences of the protagonist’s choice. These can be good and empowering for the character, but can include some negatives.

10. **Resolution**—This is the point when everything goes to a new sense of normal. The character has changed, hopefully grown wiser, and the story is complete.