



Narrative Writing

Module 1: Understanding Plot

Day 4 – Resolution and Looking Back

Bell Ringer

Review Yesterday — Discuss with a Partner

Take a few minutes to discuss the following questions with a partner. Think carefully about what you learned yesterday and be ready to share your answers with the class.

What is the climax?

Recall the definition and think of an example from *The Necklace*.

Why is it the turning point?

What changes in the story after the climax occurs?

What is the falling action?

What events follow the climax and lead toward the end?



Learning Objectives

By the end of today's lesson, you will have a clear understanding of how stories conclude and how skilled authors craft their endings. Here is what we are working toward today:

01

Define the resolution

Understand what the resolution is and its role in a story's structure.

02

Explain how a story concludes

Trace the path from conflict to conclusion in a narrative.

03

Distinguish resolution from denouement

Learn the difference between these two important literary terms.

04

Analyze *The Necklace*

Examine how Guy de Maupassant brings his story to a close.

05

Review Freytag's Pyramid

See the complete six-part structure of plot from start to finish.



We Have Reached the End

Every story eventually answers its central conflict. No matter how complicated the journey, readers always want to know how things turn out. As we near the end of a story, three big questions hang in the air:

What finally happens?

How do all the events add up to a conclusion?

How does the conflict end?

Is the problem solved, or does it remain unresolved?

What have characters learned?

Have they grown, changed, or been forever altered?

This final stage — the moment all those questions are answered — is called the **resolution**.

What Is the Resolution?

Definition

The resolution is the conclusion of a story. It is the moment when the central conflict finally comes to an end and the narrative reaches its closing point.

A strong, satisfying resolution gives readers a sense of completion — a feeling that the story has truly ended.

By the resolution, readers should understand:

- **What finally happened — the last major events of the story**
- **How the conflict was resolved — the central problem is addressed**
- **How the characters have changed — growth, loss, or transformation**

Guided Reading

The Final Paragraph of *The Necklace*

Return to the final paragraph of Guy de Maupassant's *The Necklace* and read it one more time — carefully and slowly. As you read, keep the following questions in mind:

How does Mathilde respond?

What does her reaction tell us about her character after ten years of hardship?

How does Madame Forestier respond?

What does her reaction reveal about what Mathilde's sacrifice truly meant?

How do you feel as a reader?

Surprised? Sad? Frustrated? What emotion does the ending create — and why?



Resolution in *The Necklace*

"Oh, my poor Mathilde! Mine was imitation. It was worth at most five hundred francs!"

With those two sentences, Maupassant delivers one of literature's most famous twists. Madame Forestier's revelation changes everything — and nothing can ever be undone. Consider what this moment accomplishes:

Everything becomes clear

Ten years of poverty, sacrifice, and suffering were based on a terrible misunderstanding.

The conflict is over

The mystery of the necklace — which drove the entire plot — is finally resolved.

The story ends

Maupassant gives readers no comfort — just the cold, stunning truth.

What Is a Denouement?

Beyond the Resolution

Sometimes a story does not end the moment the conflict is resolved. Authors may choose to add one more section — called the **denouement** (pronounced "day-noo-MON") — to show what life looks like after the main events have concluded.

The denouement comes from a French word meaning "to untie." It is the final untying of all the story's loose ends.

A denouement often shows:

-  **Life after the conflict**
How are things different now that the problem is resolved?
-  **The characters' futures**
Where do the characters go from here?
-  **How the world has changed**
What is permanently different as a result of the story's events?

Does *The Necklace* Have a Denouement?

Not really. After Madame Forestier's shocking revelation, the story ends immediately — with no follow-up, no explanation, and no comfort. Maupassant leaves readers holding the weight of that one devastating truth.

📄 Maupassant leaves readers with one unforgettable final thought — and then silence. This abrupt ending is a deliberate artistic choice.

This raises a powerful question worth discussing as a class:

Why do you think Maupassant chose to end the story so suddenly? What effect does the abrupt ending have on the reader? Would a denouement make the story stronger or weaker?



Theme

Now that we know the ending — what is the story really saying?

Now that we have analyzed the complete plot of *The Necklace*, we can step back and ask the deeper question: What message does this story communicate about life, human nature, or society? Consider these possible themes:



Pride & Vanity

Mathilde's desire to appear wealthy drives every decision she makes — with devastating consequences.



Appearance vs. Reality

Both the necklace and Mathilde's social status are illusions. Nothing is what it seems.



The Cost of Deception

A single moment of dishonesty — not admitting the necklace was lost — destroys an entire life.



Contentment

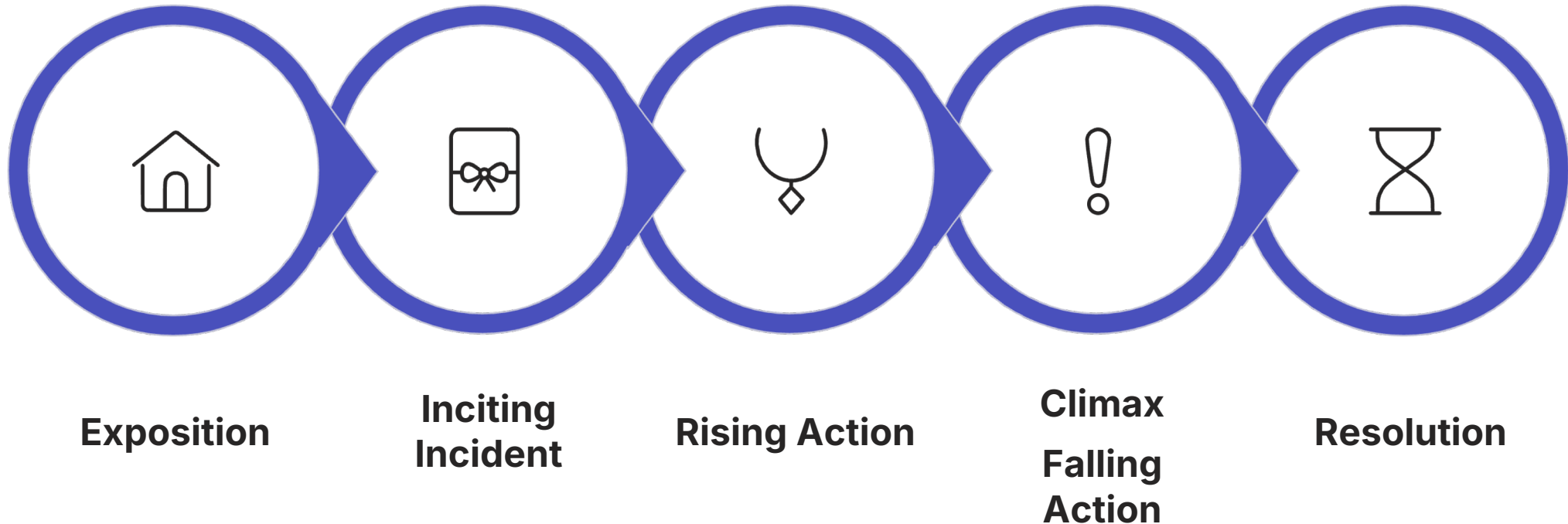
Mathilde's inability to appreciate what she had leads directly to her suffering.

Which theme do you think is most important? Support your answer with specific evidence from the text.

The Complete Plot

Where does each event from *The Necklace* belong?

Let's trace the entire story from beginning to end using the six stages of plot structure. As we review each stage, think about which specific events from *The Necklace* belong there.

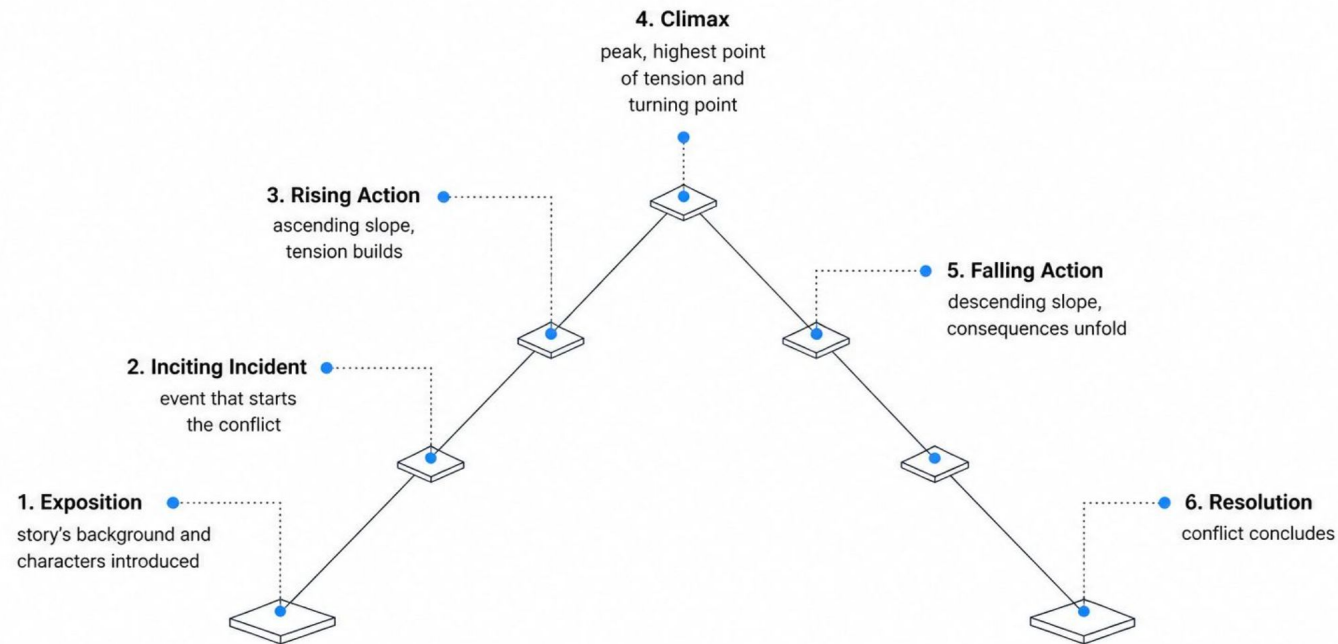


Work with a partner to place each major event from *The Necklace* into the correct stage of Freytag's Pyramid. Be prepared to justify your choices.

Freytag's Pyramid Review

The Complete Structure of Plot

Gustav Freytag's Pyramid is a visual model that maps the rise and fall of tension in a story. Complete the pyramid below by placing each plot stage in its correct position — then challenge yourself to explain *why* each event from *The Necklace* belongs where you placed it.



☐ Challenge: Can you explain why each event from *The Necklace* belongs at each specific stage of the pyramid?

Writer's Toolbox

Every Story Needs a Satisfying Ending

As you begin writing your own narratives, the ending is one of the most important decisions you will make. A powerful ending is not an afterthought — it is the moment that gives your entire story its meaning. Ask yourself these three essential questions before you finish your story:

1

Is my conflict resolved?

Has the central problem of your story been addressed? Readers need closure — even if the ending is ambiguous or bittersweet.

2

Does my ending feel earned?

Does the conclusion grow naturally out of the events of your story?
Endings that feel forced or rushed leave readers unsatisfied.

3

Will readers remember my final scene?

The last image, line, or moment in your story is what readers carry with them. Make it count.

Strong endings stay with readers long after the story is over — just like the final line of *The Necklace*.

Exit Ticket

Answer each question in complete sentences.

Before you leave today, demonstrate your understanding of today's lesson by responding to all three questions thoughtfully and in complete sentences. Use evidence from the text where needed.

Question 1

What is the resolution? Write a clear definition in your own words and explain its role in a story's plot structure.

Question 2

Does *The Necklace* have a denouement? Explain your answer. What does Maupassant's choice tell us about his intentions as a writer?

Question 3

Which theme do you think is most important in *The Necklace*? State your theme clearly and support it with at least one specific detail from the story.



COMING UP NEXT

Looking Ahead

Tomorrow: Plot Assessment

Tomorrow is your opportunity to show everything you have learned throughout Module 1. Come prepared and confident — you have done the work!



Freytag's Pyramid

Demonstrate your understanding of the full six-stage structure of plot.



The Necklace

Apply plot concepts directly to Maupassant's classic short story.



Narrative Terminology

Know your key terms: exposition, climax, resolution, denouement, and more.



Your Own Narrative

After the assessment, we begin planning and writing original stories of your own!