

What is a story?

A **STORY** begins a **CHARACTER** and a **PROBLEM**.

Character: A person, animal, or thing. Any “thing.” A toaster, a nose, a shadow, France.

Problem: A problem is whatever keeps the character from being happy. A general rule of writing is: Make your characters as unhappy as possible (aka, Big Problems make Great Characters).

PROBLEM	<p>Conflict – two or more characters that don’t get along.</p> <p>Desire – something that a character wants (often it’s something that they can never have, or that’s not really good for them.)</p> <p>Fear – something the character is afraid of.</p> <p>Weakness – some area where a character needs to grow more to become happy (shyness, vanity, etc.).</p>
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What is a plot?

A **plot** is what the character does to solve the problem.

There are the three main parts to a plot:

Beginning	Middle	End
The character has a problem.	The character tries to solve it, but doesn’t know how. They often doing exactly the WRONG thing, and the problem keeps getting worse.	The character finally solves the problem, and usually gains: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Wisdom ○ Happiness ○ Realization

More Plot!

We are making a **seven-frame story**, so our plot ~~will~~ **MIGHT** go like this:

- 1) We start with a character with a problem.
- 2) The character takes action to fix the problem.
- 3) The problem gets worse!
- 4) The character tries again to fix the problem.
- 5) The problem gets even worse!
- 6) The character tries to fix the problem one last time.
- 7) The problem is solved.

There are some tips that can help make an interesting plot:

1. Make the problem grow	The bigger the problem gets, the more interested your reader will be to know how the character solves it.
2. Give your character HARD CHOICES. Make them struggle!	The harder it is for the character to figure out what to do, the more the reader will want to know what they chose. Make your character work hard to solve the problem—the harder your character has to work, the more the reader will root for them.
3. Create SUSPENSE.	Suspense is created when things do not happen the way we expect them to. Whenever your character takes an action, try to make the result be the OPPOSITE of what the character (and the reader) expect.
4. Make the end a TURNING POINT (an “a-ha” moment.)	They don't solve the problem by doing the same thing they've been trying—they learn from their mistakes, and solve it by doing something new. This is the result of the Lesson They Learned (their “epiphany.”)

Illustrating

Here are a few guidelines for illustrating your picture book:

0. If you can show it, don't tell it.

If you can draw a picture of something, don't also describe it in words. Use your words to tell us something that the picture doesn't. (Sometimes you can have the words contradict the pictures.)

1. Use as few words as possible.

A perfect picture book has no words—or almost no words. If you can tell a story with only pictures—do it!

2. Make lots of mistakes.

Making mistakes is how we learn. The more mistakes you make, the better you'll get.

3. Mix it up!

Use different angles, and EXTREME CLOSE-UPS and bird's eye views.

Mix it up.

Brainstorming

This is the most important part of writing a story. The key to coming up great ideas is throwing out tons of bad ones. So think of as many ideas as possible before you chose.

Character:

Come up with at least six characters...

1.	2.
3.	4.
5.	6.

Then pick your favorite, and creates at least six...

Problems:

1.	2.
3.	4.
5.	6.

Solutions:

1.	2.
3.	4.
5.	6.