



Communication Arts Unit | Grades 9-12 | Lesson 3: Freytag's Pyramid

Lesson Description

Watch as Ebenezer Scrooge undergoes a life changing experience on a cold Christmas Eve night, brought on by his deceased friend Jacob Marley. Known as the town's grumpy, penny-pinching workaholic, Scrooge encounters three different spirits and is forced to watch his life play out based on the choices he's made and the choices he will make if he continues on his current path. In this lesson, students will answer questions based on Freytag's Pyramid which will help them better understand the characters and the work as a whole.

Concepts

Freytag's Pyramid
Exposition
Rising Action

Climax
Falling Action
Resolution

Objectives

Students will:

- Understand the drama's conflict
- Know the difference between a Protagonist and an Antagonist
- Learn about Freytag's Pyramid
- Identify each of the 5 aspects of Freytag's Pyramid

Content Standards

National Standards in Communication Arts

- **Standard 6:** Uses reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of literary texts.
 - Benchmark 3, Grades 6-8: Understands complex elements of plot development (e.g., cause-and-effect relationships; use of subplots, parallel episodes, and climax; development of conflict and resolution).
 - Benchmark 4, Grades 6-8: Understands elements of character development (e.g., character traits and motivations; stereotypes; relationships between character and plot development; development of characters through their words, speech patterns, thoughts, actions, narrator's description, and interaction with other characters; how motivations are revealed).



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- Benchmark 9, Grades 6-8: Understands inferred and recurring themes in literary works (e.g., bravery, loyalty, friendship, good vs. evil; historical, cultural, and social themes).
- Benchmark 2, Grades 9-12: Knows the defining characteristics of a variety of literary forms and genres (e.g., fiction, nonfiction, myths, poems, biographies, autobiographies, science fiction, supernatural tales, satires, parodies, plays, drama, American literature, British literature, world and ancient literature, the Bible).
- Benchmark 3, Grades 9-12: Analyzes the use of complex elements of plot in specific literary works (e.g., time frame, cause-and-effect relationships, conflicts, resolution).
- Benchmark 4, Grades 9-12: Analyzes the simple and complex actions (e.g., internal/external conflicts) between main and subordinate characters in literary works containing complex character structures.
- Benchmark 6, Grades 9-12: Understands how themes are used across literary works and genres (e.g., universal themes in literature of different cultures, such as death and rebirth, initiation, love and duty; major themes in American literature; authors associated with major themes of specific eras).
- **Standard 9:** Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media.
 - Benchmark 7, Grades 9-12: Understands how images and sound convey messages in visual media (e.g., special effects, camera angles, symbols, color, line, texture, shape, headlines, photographs, reaction shots, sequencing of images, sound effects, music, dialogue, narrative, lighting).

Time Required

Varies by student

Materials

- Silver Dollar City Pathfinder & writing utensil
 - Student activity sheet from the Kids-U-Cation website
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Procedures

1. Go over the basic elements of literary works before coming on the field trip.
 2. Print off student activity sheet from Kids-U-Cation website (teachers).
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3. Watch "A Dickens' Christmas Carol" to complete the exercise.
 4. Complete and turn in activity to the teacher for a participation or accuracy grade
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Closure

Review the key points of this lesson by discussing the following:

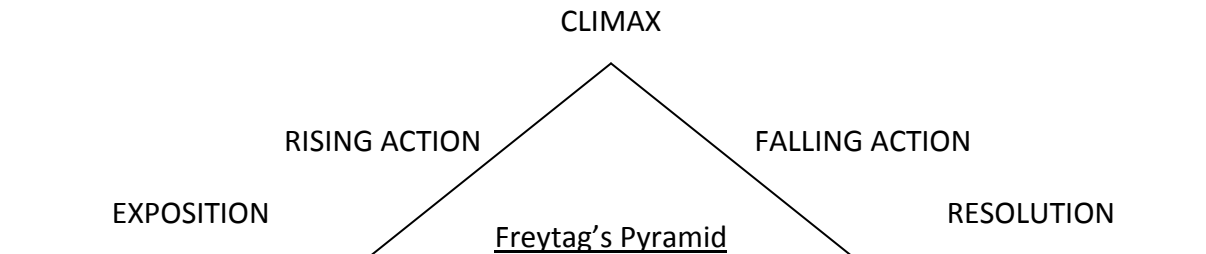
- What was Ebenezer Scrooge's favorite saying?
 - Name at least 3 of the characters in the show.
 - What was your favorite part about the show?
 - Discuss each element of Freytag's Pyramid.
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Assessment/Independent Practice

Give an assignment or test of your choice.

Freytag's Pyramid & "A Dickens' Christmas Carol"

Gustav Freytag was a German writer and critic who proposed a method of analyzing plots that has today been titled Freytag's Triangle or Freytag's Pyramid. According to Freytag, a drama is divided into five parts: Exposition, Rising Action, Climax, Falling Action, and Resolution. After watching "A Dickens' Christmas Carol," use the model and the information below to help identify each element in the pyramid.



Exposition: Provides the background information needed to properly understand the story, such as the protagonist, antagonist, basic conflict, and the setting. Describe the Exposition in "A Dickens' Christmas Carol."

Rising Action: the basic conflict gets complicated by the introduction of related secondary conflicts, including various obstacles that frustrate the protagonist's attempt to reach their goal. Describe the Rising Action in "A Dickens' Christmas Carol."

Climax: marks the change (or turning point), for the better or the worse in the protagonist's affairs. Describe the Climax in "A Dickens' Christmas Carol."

Falling Action: the conflict between the protagonist and antagonist unravels, with the protagonist winning or losing against the antagonist—might have a moment of final suspense. Describe the Falling Action in "A Dickens' Christmas Carol."

Resolution: point at which the protagonist is better off (or worse off) than at the story's onset. Describe the Resolution in "A Dickens' Christmas Carol."