

# Plot Story Narrative

At Edusites, the terms 'Story' and 'Narrative' are used quite frequently. On reflection, it's clear that a better job could be done in defining them, or more importantly, explaining the difference between the two.

The aim here is to clarify these concepts and their relationship to someone who might be completely unfamiliar with literary theory.

## Story

A 'story' is, in the simplest terms, a sequence of events. When thinking of a story, it is A then B then C then D—the set of relevant events in chronological order.

To illustrate this, let's use the term in a defining sentence.

The story of Jane's Saturday begins when she wakes up in the morning. She makes breakfast, takes a walk in the park, visits a friend, goes shopping, has dinner, watches a film, and then goes to sleep at night.

The story is the entire sequence of events (though even that paragraph simplifies it somewhat).

## Plot

Plot describes a set of events as they relate to each other. The term is concerned with how to sequence and select the events of a story as a structure for its telling and how that telling can achieve maximum effect.

The plot usually focuses on specific points of the story and the pattern of their relation. Plot breaks down a story into events dealing with exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution.

The plot of Jane's Saturday begins when she wakes up in the morning. The most interesting part of the day is when she visits her friend. The plot ends when she goes to sleep at night.

## Narrative

The concept of narrative deals more with how the events are told. Narrative is the ordering of events into a consumable format.

Narrative is the method and means by which you construct the events of a story into a plot. It concerns itself with the sequence of the events, the medium on which they are told, and the way these events are put together into one coherent unit.

Narratives may involve a reordering of the events of a story. The story's events can be set out of chronological order, be combined with elements from outside the story to better inform the audience, or build dramatic effect. Sometimes a narrative may draw attention to things or events the story lacks because the contrast is interesting.

The narrative of Jane's Saturday: Jane wakes up in the morning and skips breakfast to go straight to the park. Though most of her day is routine, she enjoys visiting her friend in the afternoon. After a bit of shopping, she has dinner, watches a film, and goes to sleep, ready for the next day.

If you've been confused by how Edusites uses these different terms, hopefully, this helps you better understand them. If not, please let us know in the comments, and we can elaborate further.