

10 Key Scenes of Novel Structure

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One-Sentence Story Concept:

Your protagonist's goal:

Your 2 MDQs for your novel (visible and emotional):

5 Turning Points – a brief phrase or sentence for each:

Turning Point #1 – Opportunity

Turning Point #2 – Fixed Goal

Turning Point #3 – Midpoint

Turning Point #4 – Dark Night

Turning Point #5 - Climax

Key scene #1: The hook and opening setup (first scenes)

Key scene #2: The disturbance or opportunity (10% mark) that starts the new direction.

Key scene #3: First Pinch Point: usually introduces the force of the opposition (33%, also called “First plot point”) and pushes the character along.

Key scene #4: Twist #1. Complication before the midpoint that impacts protagonist’s path toward his goal (which is locked in around the 25% mark).

Key scene #5: Midpoint. Character balancing on the knife's edge—going forward now means no going back.

Key scene #6: Pinch Point #2. The opposition comes full force. New developments add tension and complications

Key scene #7: Twist # 2: big complication that will lead to scene 8. Usually some reversal, betrayal, unforeseen complication.

Key scene #8: Dark night of soul (turning point #4). Utter hopelessness. Biggest danger and belief she will fail.

Key scene #9: The big climax moment when hero reaches her goal and realizes her true essence.

Key scene #10: the end and resolution that wraps it all up and shows the results of reaching (or not) the goal.