



2017 Sequoyah Book Awards Lessons + Activities

It's Sequoyah Book Award Week!

Get your students reading and involved in the third-oldest youth-choice literary award program in the nation. Your students can help determine the winners of the 2017 Sequoyah Book Award during voting next spring.



Visit bit.ly/1kC6na7 to find out more about this 57-year-old Oklahoma reading tradition. You'll also be able to download the masterlist of high school Sequoyah books, reading certificates, and a smorgasbord of promotional materials and ideas for Sequoyah titles.

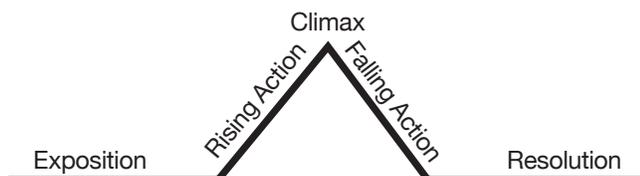
Day One:

Focusing on the High School Masterlist of books for grades 9-12

Dramatic Structure

In 1863, German novelist Gustav Freytag released his system of dramatic structure. Although based on his analysis of Greek Tragedies and Shakespeare's plays, we can still see this dramatic structure at work in many modern stories.

Freytag's Pyramid of Dramatic Structure in its simple form



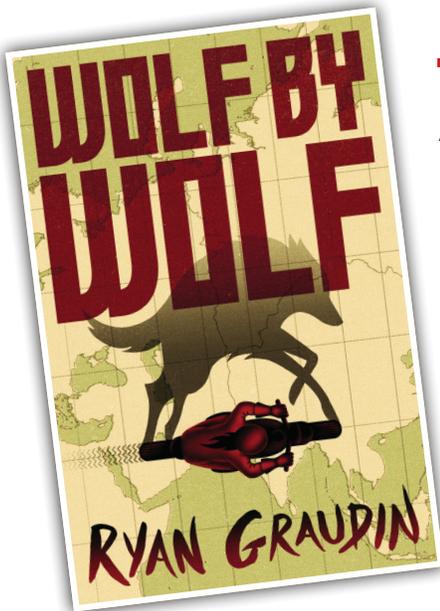
Elements of Dramatic Structure

- **Exposition:** The author sets the stage for the action to follow. We meet the characters, learn backstories, and become acquainted with the fictional world.
- **Rising Action:** A conflict is introduced, or an existing conflict escalates. This *inciting incident* sparks a series of events to move readers toward a point of revelation. Suspense builds as readers turn the pages. This element is the meat of the story's plot.
- **Climax:** This is a major turning point in the narrative, and is often the part of the highest drama: a detective knows who the killer is; the ultimate war battle begins; or a character finds out the truth. The fate of the protagonist and other characters is changed.
- **Falling Action:** Conflicts between characters unravel. Solutions are found. Winners and losers are revealed. A final dash of suspense can be thrown in before the action ends.
- **Resolution:** The world returns to normal, or a new normal must be accommodated. Lessons are learned, morals imparted. Any dangling plot points are explained.

Suggested Activities on Dramatic Structure

- **After the class reads a particular Sequoyah title, use Freytag’s system of dramatic structure to guide discussion of the book. Questions to consider:**
 - Did the author do a good job setting the stage in the Exposition? Why or why not?
 - What was the major conflict or conflicts during the Rising Action stage of the story? What inciting incident or incidents spark the action? How did the different events in this part of the story add suspense or anticipation for the reader?
 - Did readers guess any of the turning points or revelations in the Climax or Falling Action stages? What has changed in this fictional world for the characters?
 - What did the protagonist and the other characters learn from their experiences? Is their world better or worse for living through the events in the book?
 - Does the structure of the book fit with Freytag’s system of dramatic structure? Why or why not?
- **Students pick the Sequoyah title they wish to read. Instead of a regular book review, have students write about how the elements of dramatic structure were used by the author. Refer to the questions above.**
- **Have students make a large Freytag Pyramid poster to illustrate how their Sequoyah book follows the dramatic structure. Encourage students to use text and art on the poster. Students could present.**

Note: Do a Google Image search of “Freytag’s Pyramid” to see examples of stories “deconstructed” down to the elements of dramatic structure. We found examples of *The Great Gatsby*, a Harry Potter movie, and the Breaking Bad television series!



The Skin You’re In

A high school lesson plan based on the book
Wolf by Wolf by Ryan Graudin

In an alternate history, where the Axis powers have won World War II, Yael escapes a concentration camp after gaining shape shifting powers through Nazi experiments and enters a motorcycle race in an elaborate plot to kill Hitler.

Objectives:

Apply critical thinking and creative writing skills to “what if” scenarios in history

Materials:

Copies of the book *Wolf by Wolf* by Ryan Graudin
Textbooks, encyclopedias, access to online reference databases

Procedure:

1. Spend several days reading the book *Wolf by Wolf*.
2. Discuss the impact of “skinshifting” for Yael. What were the positive and negative ramifications for her? What did she gain and what did she learn?
3. Students will research a historical figure of their choice.
4. Students will compose a short essay discussing which historical figure they would skinshift with and why.
5. Students will break into groups to share their choices and their reasoning. They will examine the positive and negative ramifications of their choices.
6. Optional: Students can read their essays aloud in class.