

Visual Plotting

The Heart Share Group presents...
SEASIDE SCRIBES WRITERS CONFERENCE

January 8-11, 2025!
Myrtle Beach, South Carolina

with Carrie Stuart Parks

One Writing Solution

- ◆ Why care?
- ◆ Plotter or pantsers.
- ◆ Story VS Plot.
- ◆ Plot overview.
- ◆ How your creative mind works.

People read

- ◆ Escape.
- ◆ Transported to another place or time.
- ◆ Emotional experience.
- ◆ Learn something new.
- ◆ Enjoyment.
- ◆ Entertainment.
- ◆ Relax.
- ◆ Spiritual enrichment.

Fiction Author

You make a promise to your reader
that you will be providing
one or more of those benefits.

Genre

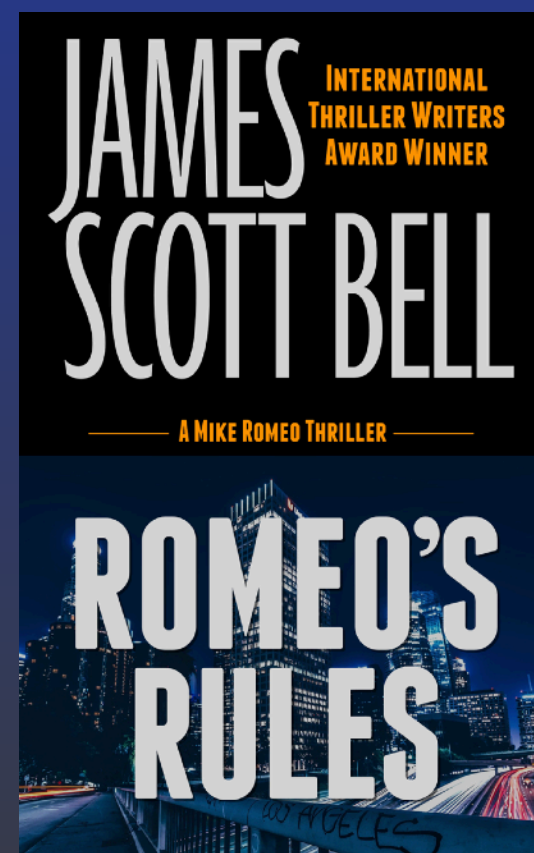
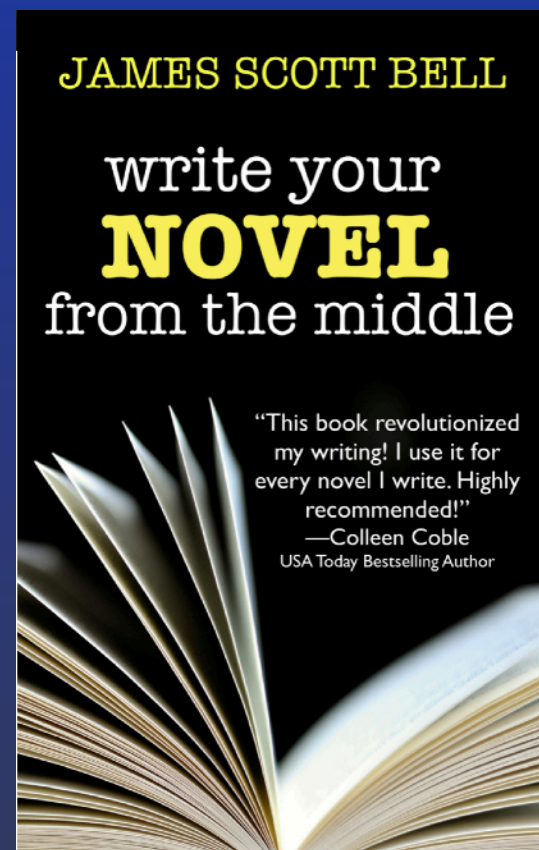
You make a promise to your reader
that you will provide the
expectations of your genre.

Plotter or Pantser?

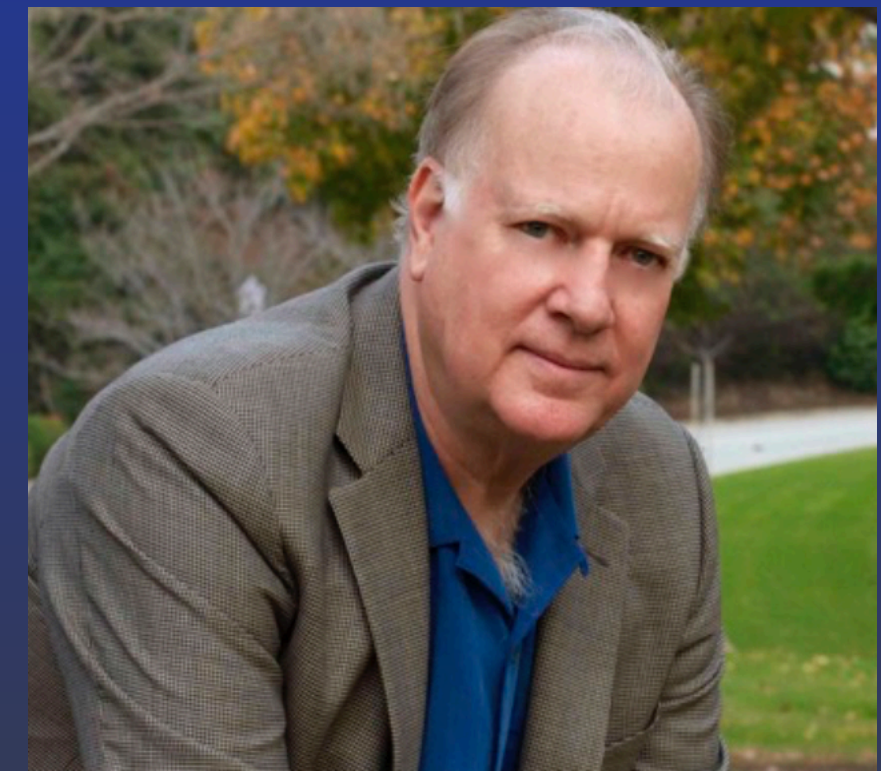
- ◆ Plotter works out the story in advance.
- ◆ Pantser writes and works out the story as it progresses.

Story VS Plot

“A story is a series of events recorded in their chronological order.”



-James Scott Bell



Story VS Plot

“A plot is a series of events deliberately arranged so as to reveal their dramatic, thematic, and emotional significance.”

-James Scott Bell

“Plot is about story events.

“Structure is about where to place those events so as to create the greatest effect upon the reader.”

-James Scott Bell

◆ Your novel is more than just “this happened, then this happened...”

◆ Imbibe your novel with purpose.

Meaningful Plot

- ◆ The beginning of the story must ask a question.
- ◆ The end of the story must answer that same question.

Meaningful Plot

Every story must change
your lead character irrevocably
from the beginning to end.

Meaningful Plot

- ◆ Every scene must create change that directly affects the characters' current relation to that goal.

Brainstorming

Ronie Kendig Colleen Coble

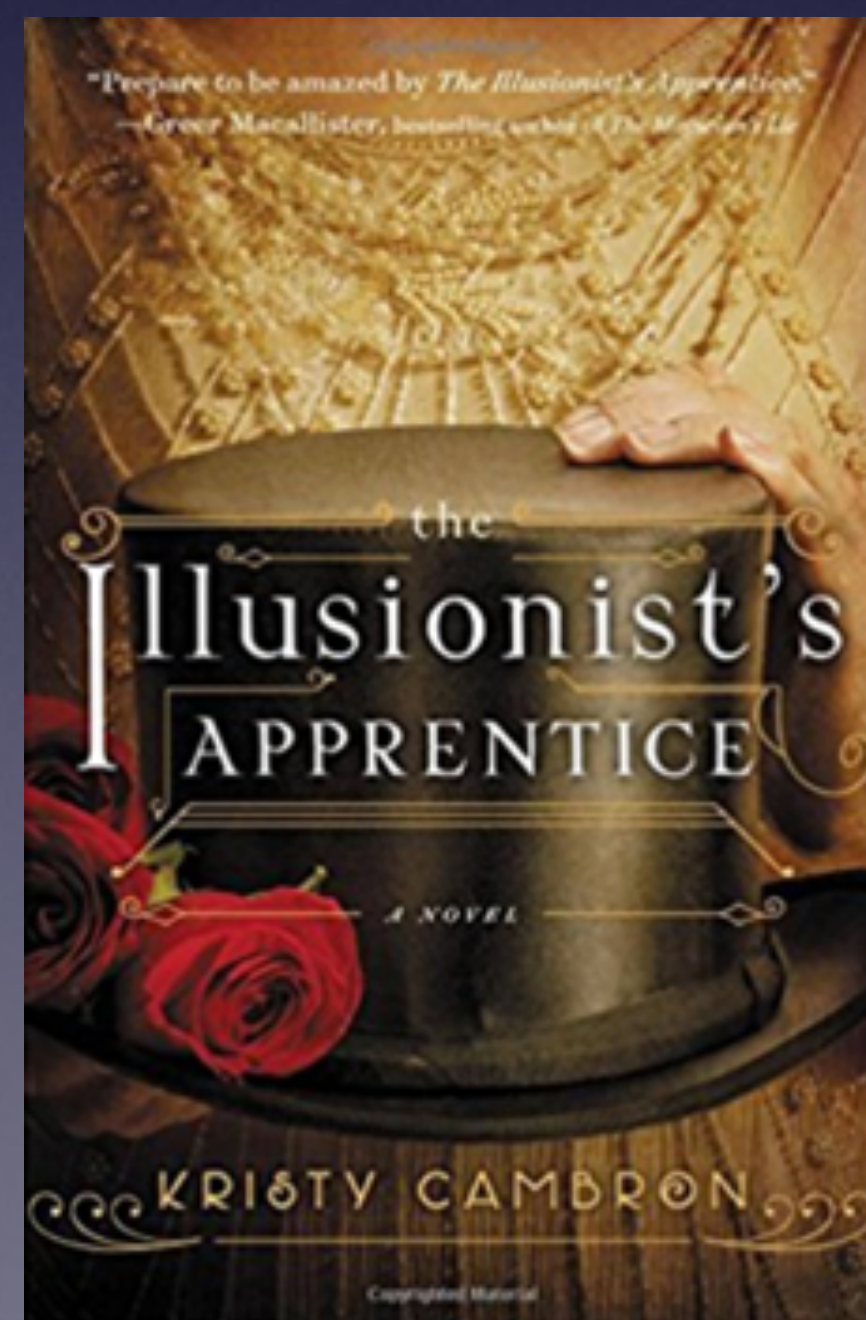
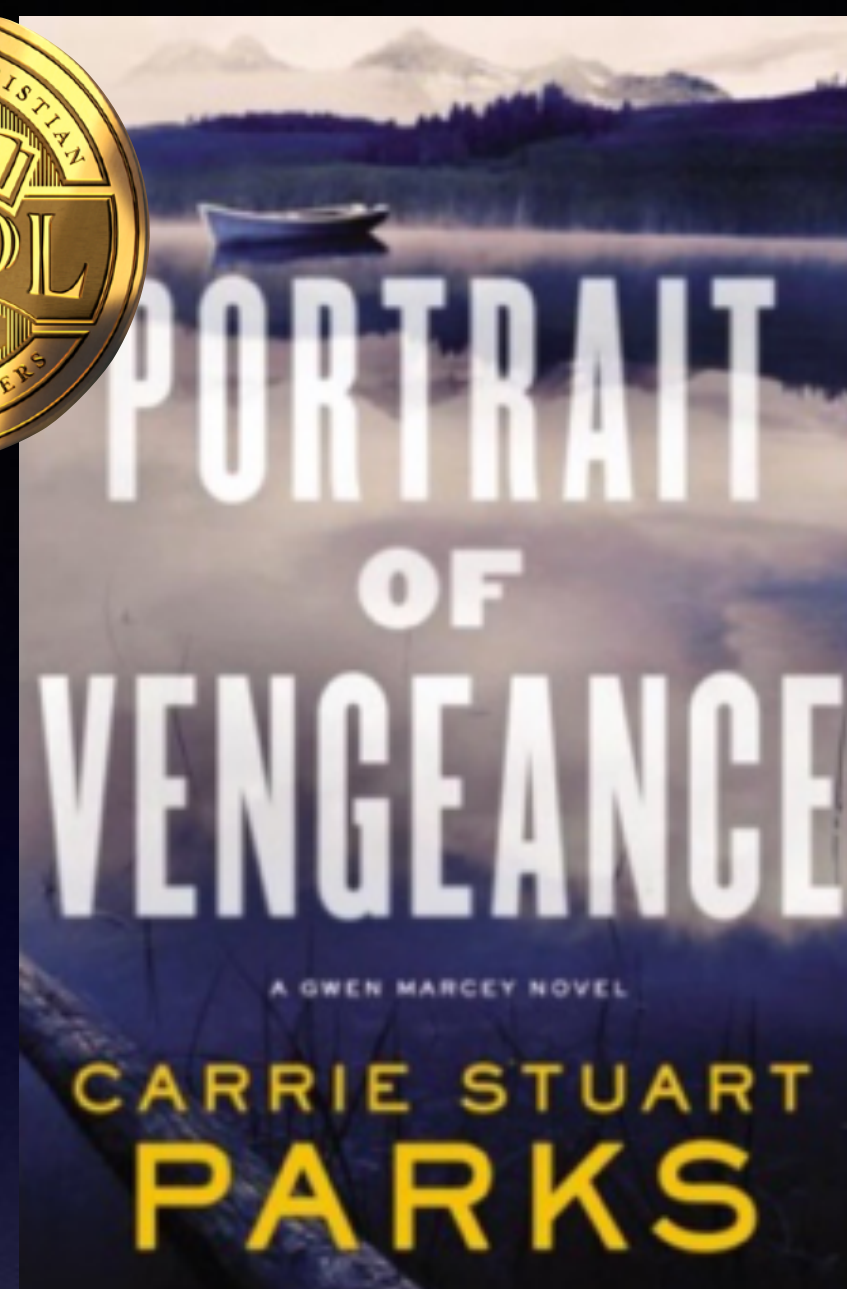
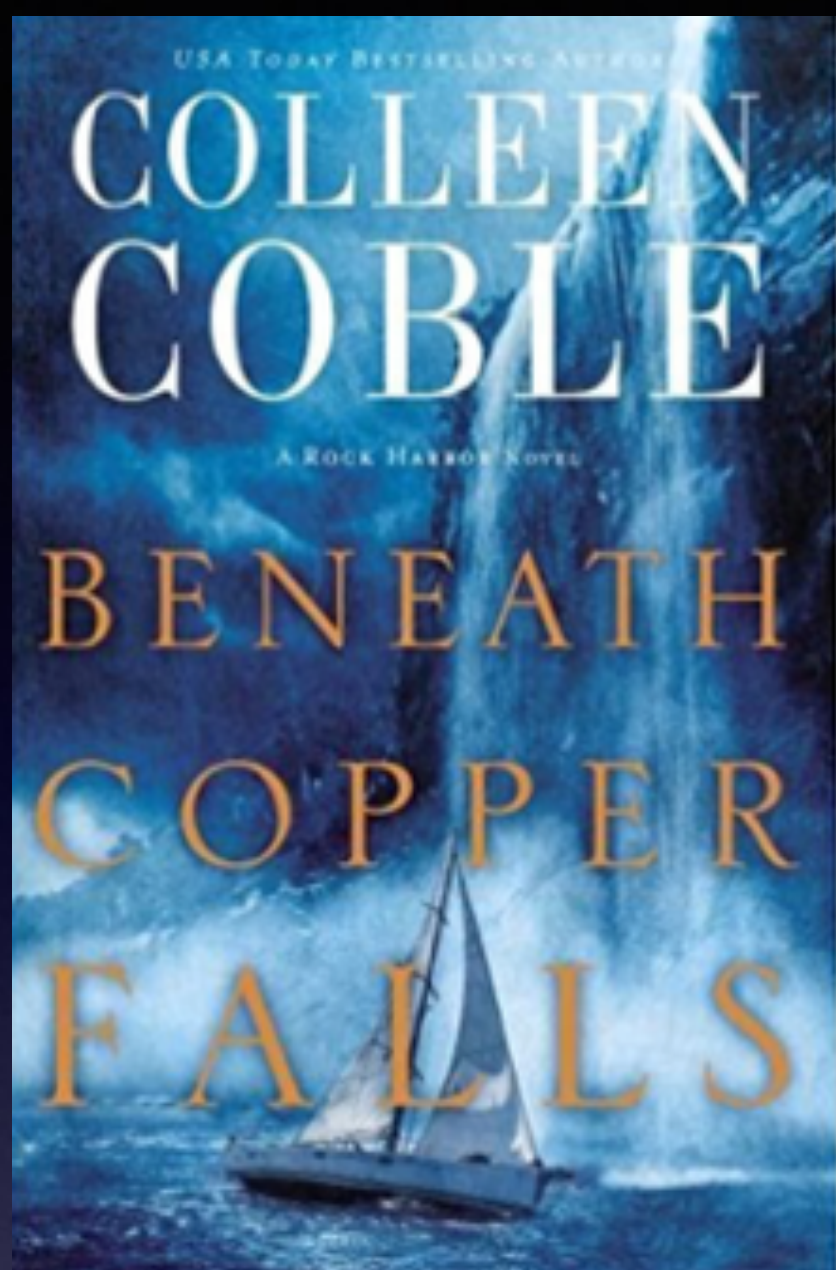
Michelle Lim Sarah Ladd



Lynette Eason

Robin Carroll

Kristy Cambron



Genre

Genre's an incredibly broad way of cataloguing all stories.

Fiction Author

- * Christian fiction
- * Romance
- * Mystery
- * Adventure
- * Speculative
- * Historical

Fiction Author

Knowing your genre
will tell you the crucial conventions
and obligatory scenes you must include.

Critical Convention

Specific requirements
in terms of the method
in moving the plot forward.

Critical Convention

These requirements must
be present or the reader
will be confused and unsettled.

Critical Convention

Murder Mystery

- * Dead body
- * Investigator (professional or amateur)
- * False clues
- * Standard characters (side kick/prime suspect)

Obligatory Scenes

**Must-have elements to pay off
the raised expectations
of those conventions.**

Obligatory Scenes

Murder Mystery

- * Discovery of the dead body scene.
- * Confrontation between investigator and accused.
- * Ending that results in justice, injustice, or irony.

Fiction Author

You will not only be writing that novel,
You'll be crafting it.

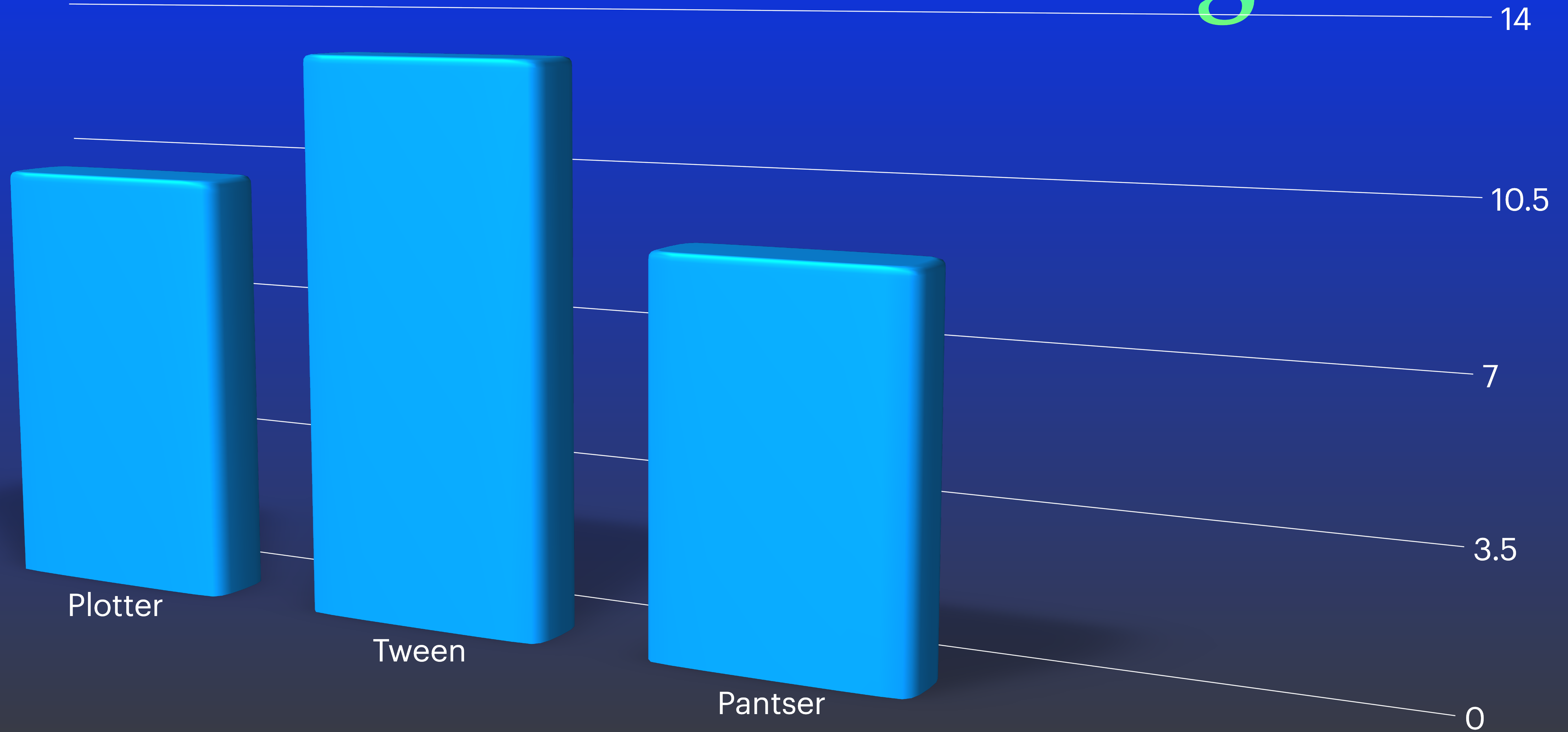
Informal Survey

- ◆ James Patterson
- ◆ Jeffery Deaver
- ◆ Lee Child
- ◆ Steven King
- ◆ Jerry Jenkins
- ◆ Frank Peretti
- ◆ Colleen Coble
- ◆ Terri Blackstock
- ◆ Robin Lee Hatcher
- ◆ Lynette Eason
- ◆ James Scott Bell
- ◆ Ronie Kendig
- ◆ Robin Carroll
- ◆ Kathleen Y'Barbo
- ◆ Brandilyn Collins
- ◆ Martha Rogers
- ◆ Kristen Ethridge
- ◆ Linda Ford
- ◆ James Coggins
- ◆ Melanie Dickerson
- ◆ Ann H. Gabhart
- ◆ Lenora Worth
- ◆ Veronica Heley
- ◆ Lyn Cote
- ◆ Gayle Roper
- ◆ Deb Raney
- ◆ DeAnna Dodson
- ◆ Melanie Dodson
- ◆ Kerry Nietz
- ◆ Susan Meissner
- ◆ Sarah Sundin
- ◆ Lisa Harris

Seventeen authors on that list reported
the number of published books
they'd written.

Over 750

Plotter VS Pantser Range



Plotter or Pantser

“The truth is, there isn’t an easier way
to write a novel.

It is hard work, whether
you are a pantser or a plotter.”

–Robin Lee Hatcher

Plotter or Pantser

“The more you write and encounter these things (the structure of the novel,) the more they will become second nature, something your creative gut will sense. You develop a writer’s intuition.”

–Frank Peretti

Plotter or Pantser

“I long ago stopped feeling guilty or inferior when I heard others’ methods.

None is better nor worse.

It’s just how your brain works,
and what motivates you to finish
such a long project. ”

–Terri Blackstock

People Avoid Plotting

- ◆ Don't know how.
- ◆ Feels it stifles creativity.
- ◆ Boring.
- ◆ Just want to write!

- ◆ Order of events.
- ◆ Major scenes.
- ◆ When to reveal information.
- ◆ When to introduce characters.
- ◆ What to reveal about character.
- ◆ Clues, foreshadowing.

Overview

Act I

Act II

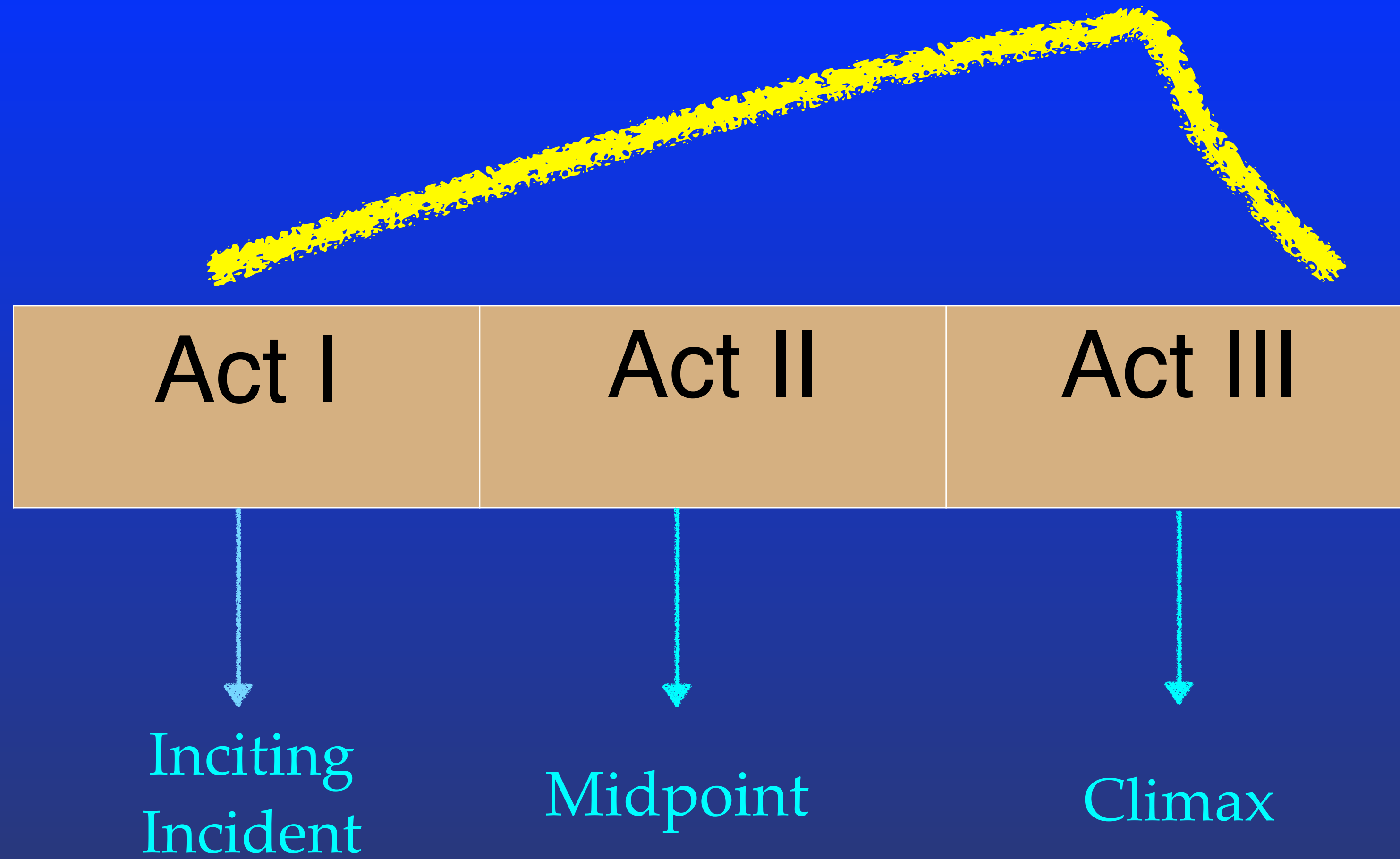
Act III

“Using a three-act structure ensures that every scene has a clear purpose and direction.”

Act I

Act II

Act III



Overview

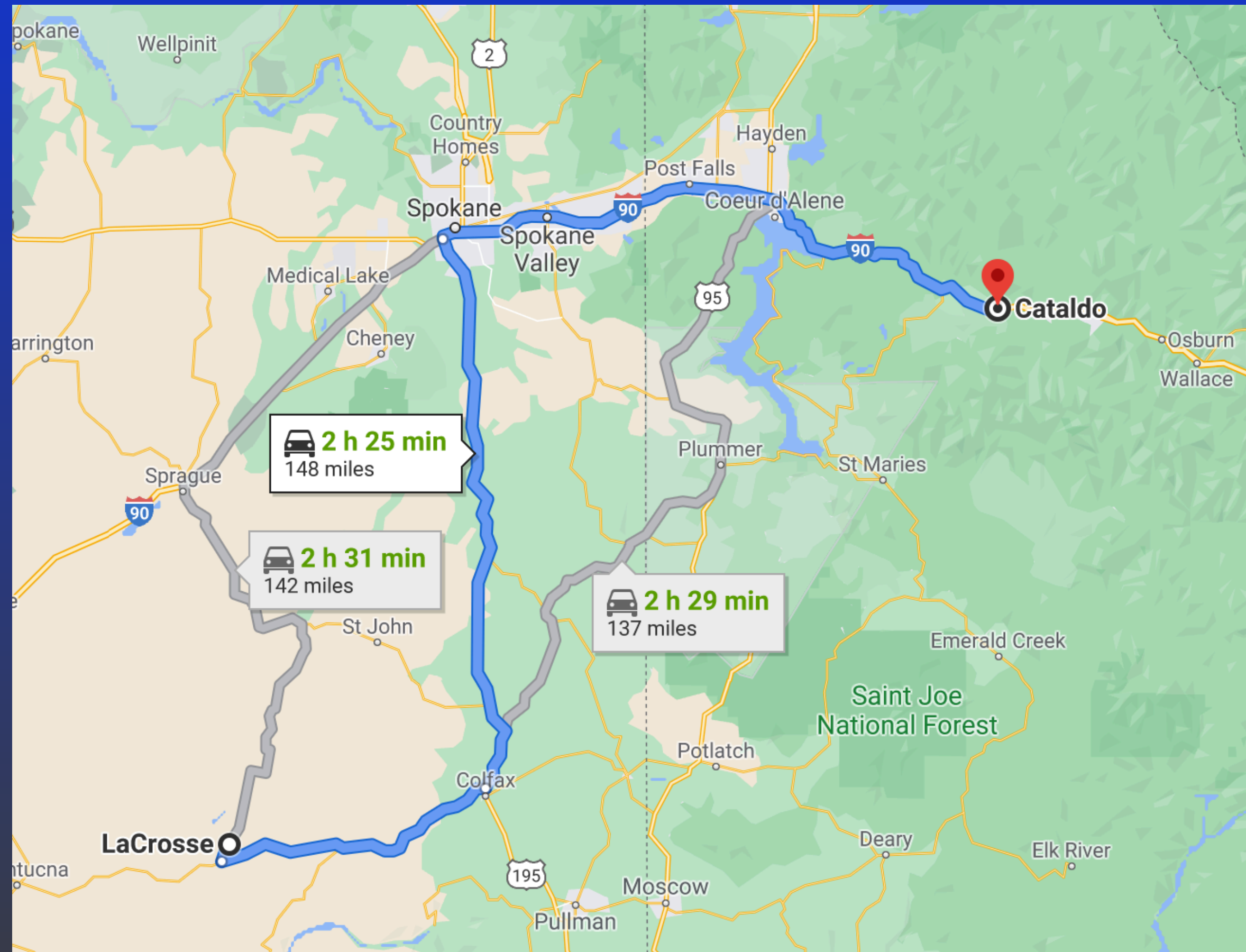
For your story to feel complete

- “Orientation to the world of the characters.”
- “Origination of conflict.”
- “Escalation of tension.”
- “Rising stakes.”
- “A moment at which everything seems lost.”
- “A climactic encounter.”
- “A satisfying conclusion.”
- “A transformation of a character or a situation.”

-Steven James



A Plot is A Roadmap



Classic outline

I. Opening

- a. Introduce main character
- b. Introduce location
- c. Introduce goal

II. Inciting incident

- a.

Classic outline



Introduction to Mind Mapping

◆ Free association.

◆ Word painting.

◆ Link analysis.

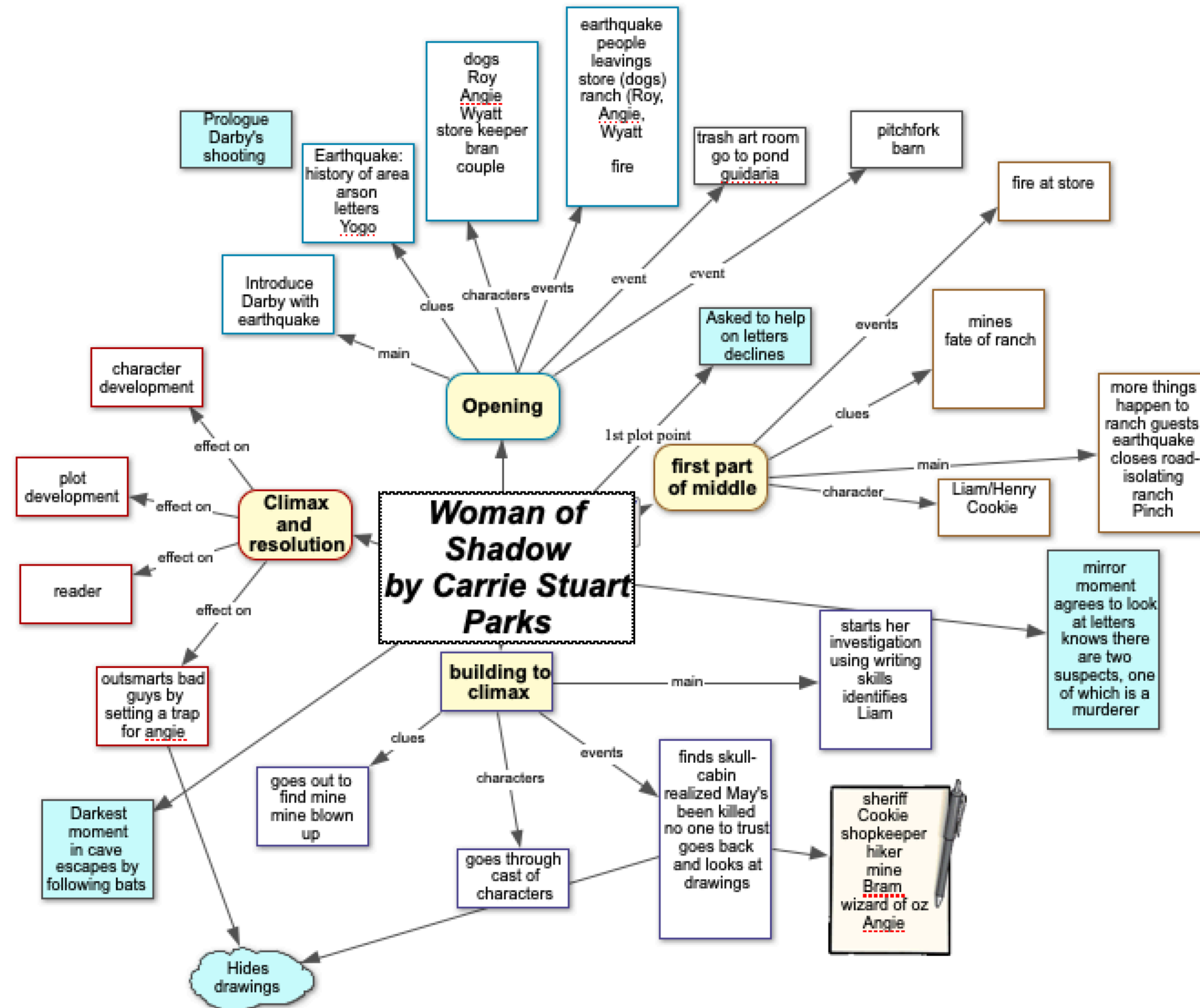
Introduction to Mind Mapping

- ◆ Highly effective way of getting ideas out of your mind.
- ◆ Logical.
- ◆ Natural organizational structure.

Introduction to Mind Mapping

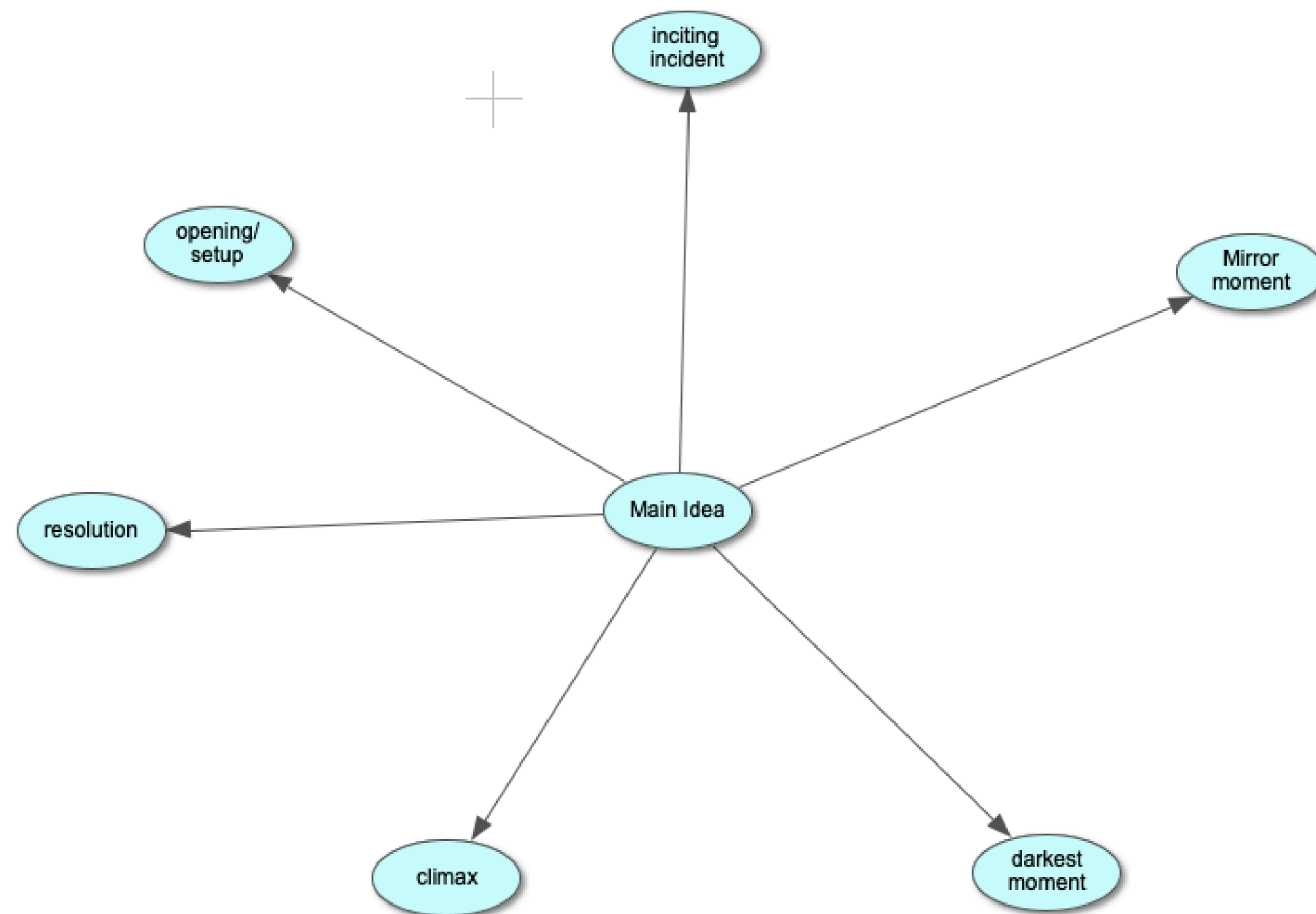
- ❖ Can be added in any order.
- ❖ Can be rearranged as needed.
- ❖ Rough idea of the main points of your novel.

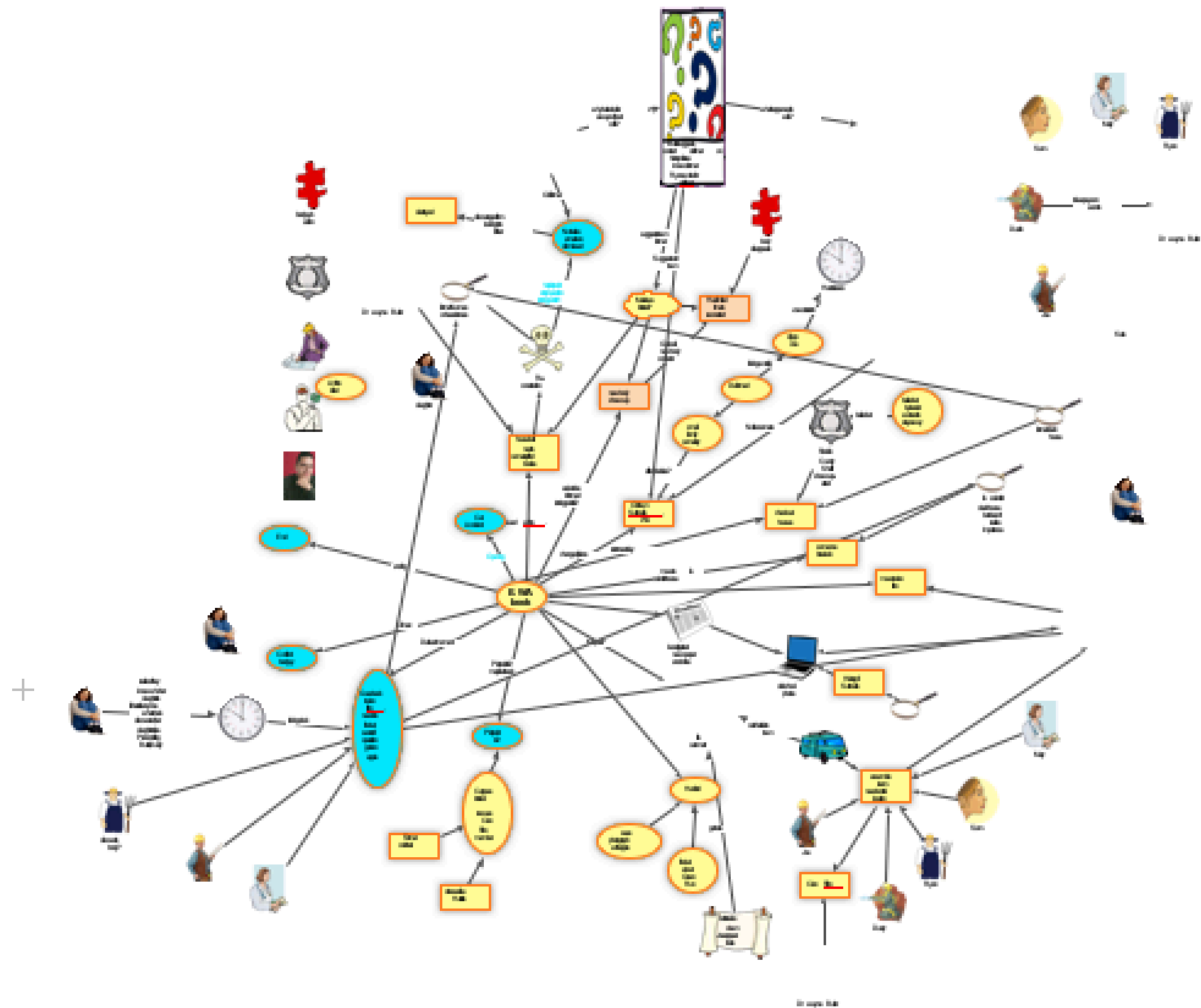
Mind Mapping



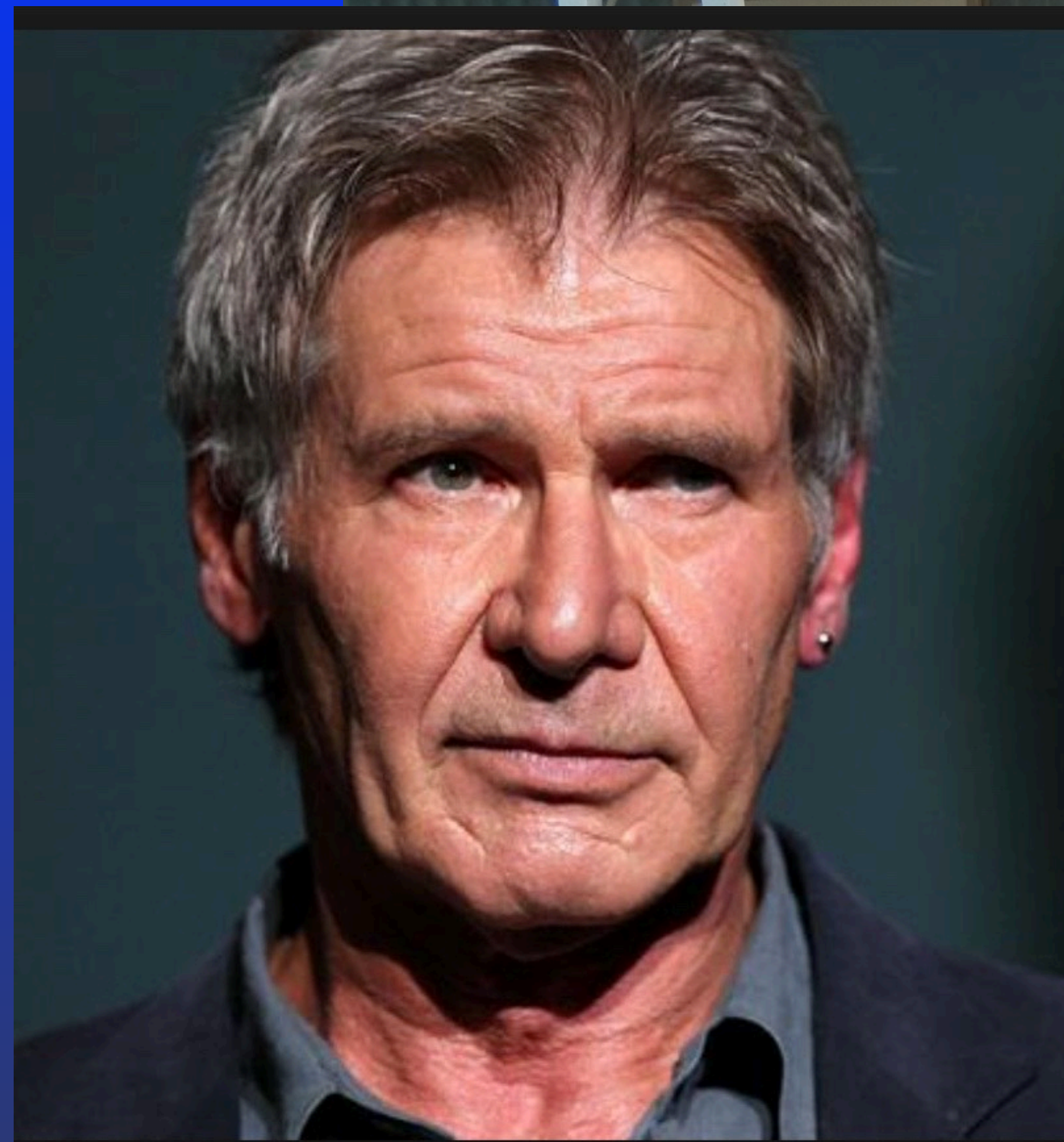
- ◆ Order of events.
- ◆ Major scenes.
- ◆ When to reveal information.
- ◆ When to introduce characters.
- ◆ What to reveal about character.
- ◆ Clues, foreshadowing.

Overview-road map









Characters

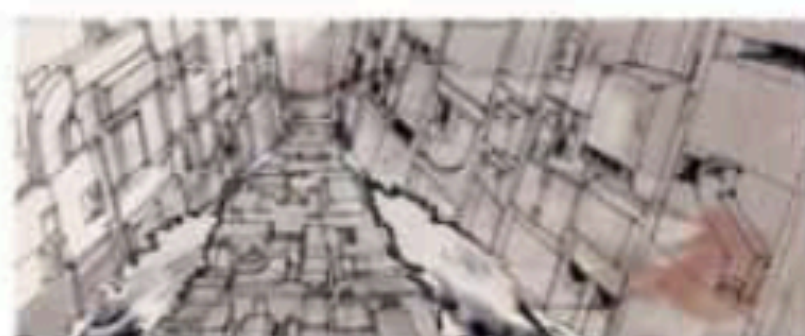
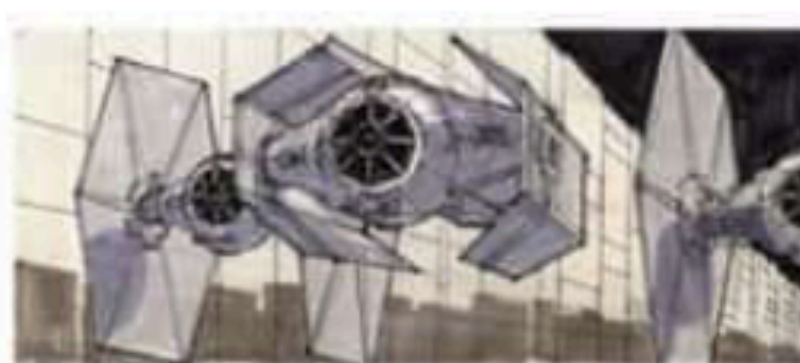


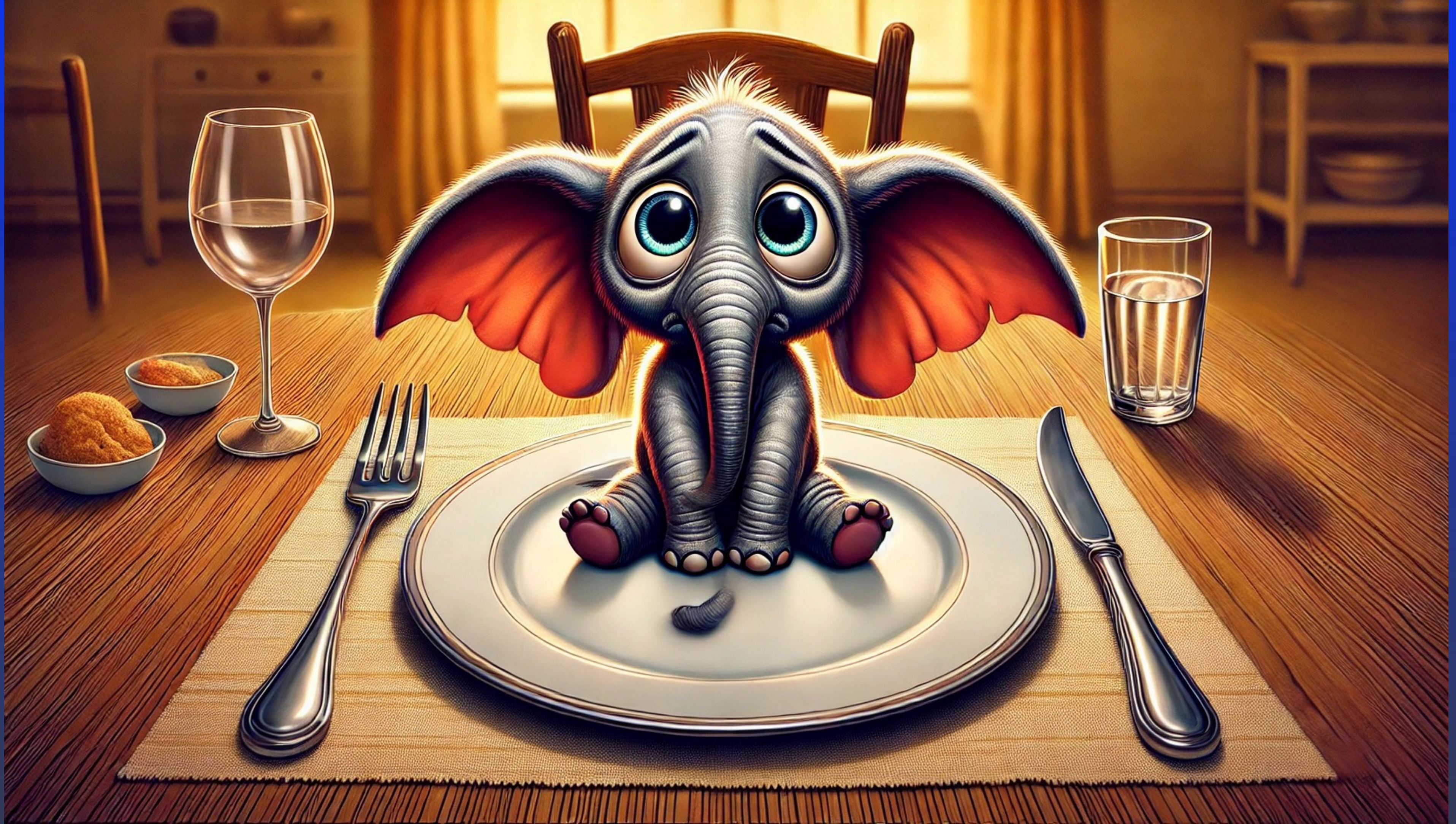
Event





Find images that represent scenes or characters





Project-Brainstorming a plot



Act 1

A compelling lead
whom the reader bonds with
and whose world has been disturbed.

Questions Answered

- ◆ What does your protagonist want?
 - ◆ (Outward journey)
- ◆ Why does she want it?
 - ◆ (Inward journey)
- ◆ Who/what will try and stop her?
- ◆ What are the stakes?

Act 1

“Orientation to the world of the characters.”
“Origination of conflict.”

-Steven James



**“Something must happen
at the very beginning of the story—
an event that throws
the lead character’s life out of balance.”**

-The Story Grid by Shawn Coyne

Inciting Incident

Change of Plans

- * The hero's world is normal and ordinary; the inciting incident makes the hero's world abnormal and extraordinary.
- * May be called a doorway, end of Act I, Plot Point, call to adventure, origin of conflict.

Act 2

Rising tension

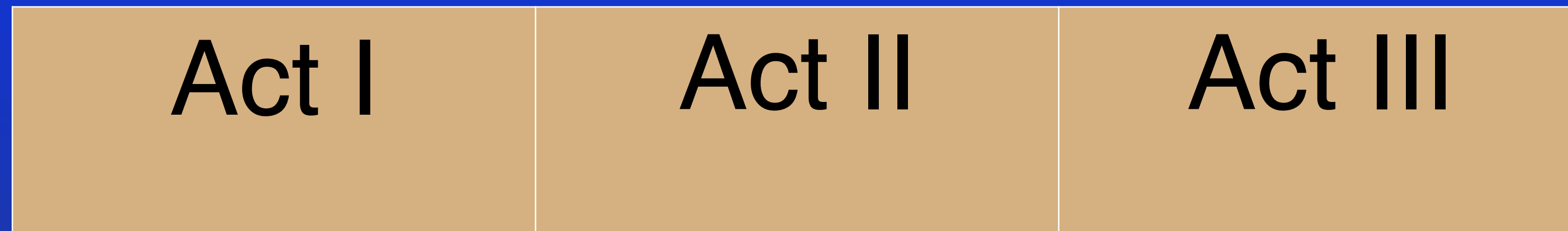
Character has to dig deeper

learn new things


make new allies

Moving toward the darkest moment

Act II



Rising
stakes /
tension



Point of no
return /
darkest
moment

Act II

Act I

Act II

Act III



Rising
stakes /
tension /
complications



Act 2

“Escalation of tension.”

“Rising stakes.”

“A moment at which everything seems lost.”

-Steven James

Act II

Act I

Act II

Act III



Point of no
return/
darkest
moment / all
is lost

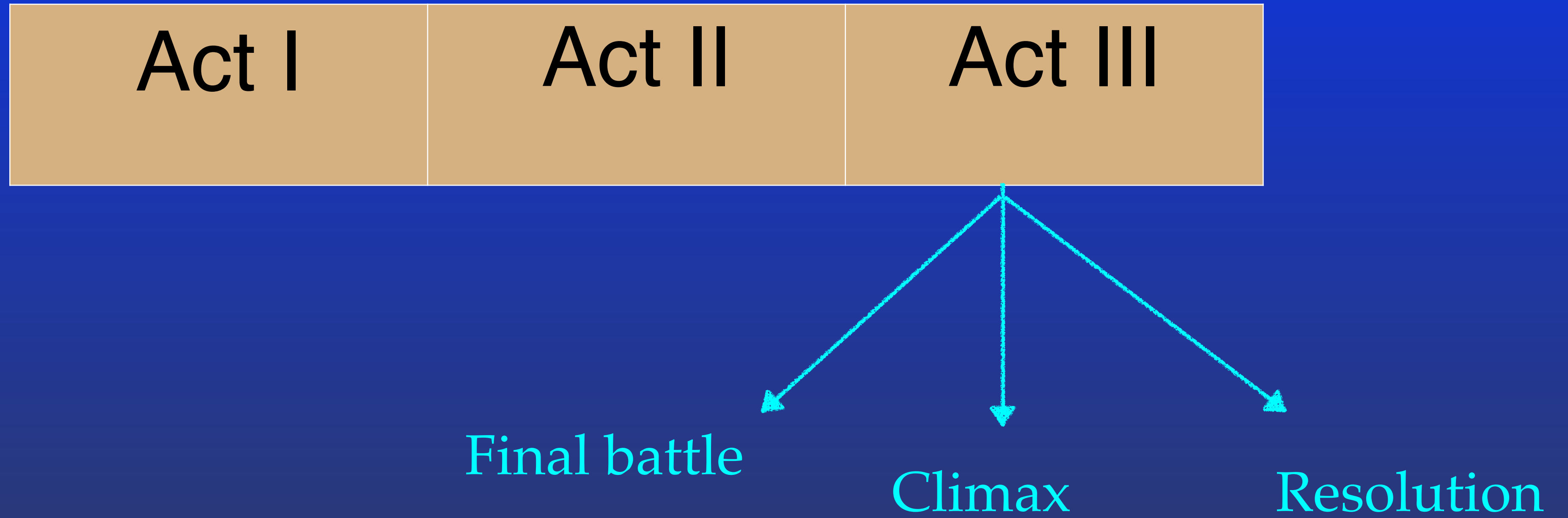


“A climactic encounter.”
“A satisfying conclusion.”
“A transformation of a character or a situation.”

-Steven James



Act III



Act III

Act I

Act II

Act III



Final battles

Act III

Act I

Act II

Act III



Climax

Act III

Act I

Act II

Act III



Resolution



Setup

Resolution



Questions?



Inspiration

SimpleMind Lite
KnowledgeBase Builder
Scapple
miMind
Foocusplan
iThoughtsX
MindMaple Pro
Trout
Oovium
Rama
Conceptorium

Synopsis

To interest agents or publisher
in your book

- * Characters
- * Evidence of character progression
- * Stakes
- * Major turning points
- * Ending