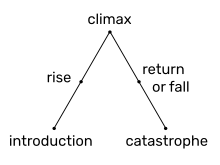
**Freytag's analysis**

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Freytag%27s_Pyramid_with_English_text.svg)

Freytag's Pyramid[[12]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dramatic_structure#cite_note-12)

Freytag derives his five-part model from the [conflict](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conflict_(narrative)) of [man against man](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conflict_(narrative)#Man_against_man), the hero and his adversary. The action of the drama and the grouping of characters is therefore in two parts: the hero's own deeds and those of his [antagonist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antagonist), which Freytag variously describes as "play and counter-play" ("Spiel und Gegenspiel" in the original)[[13]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dramatic_structure#cite_note-Technik_des_Dramas-13) or "rising and sinking". The greater the rise, the greater the fall of the vanquished hero. These two contrasting parts of the drama must be united by a climax, to which the action rises and from which the action falls away. Either the play or the counter-play can maintain dominance over the first part or the second part; either is allowed. Freytag is indifferent as to which of the contending parties justice favors; in both groups, good and evil, power and weakness, are mingled.[[14]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dramatic_structure#cite_note-14)

A drama is then divided into five parts, or acts, which some refer to as a **dramatic arc**: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and [catastrophe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catastrophe_(drama)). Freytag extends the five parts with three moments or crises: the exciting force, the tragic force, and the force of the final suspense. The exciting force leads to the rising action, the tragic force leads to the falling action, and the force of the final suspense leads to the catastrophe. Freytag considers the exciting force to be necessary but the tragic force and the force of the final suspense are optional. Together, they make the eight component parts of the drama.[[15]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dramatic_structure#cite_note-15) Freytag's Pyramid can help writers organize their thoughts and ideas when describing the main problem of the drama, the rising action, the climax and the falling action.

Although Freytag's analysis of dramatic structure is based on five-act plays, it can be applied (sometimes in a modified manner) to short stories and novels as well, making dramatic structure a [literary element](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Literary_element).