

Narrative Structure





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College and Career Readiness Standards for Reading:

3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.



What is the main difference between these two definitions?

Plot:

A series of events in a text that are connected.

Narrative:

The choices that a writer makes about how the sequence of events in a text should be shown to the reader.

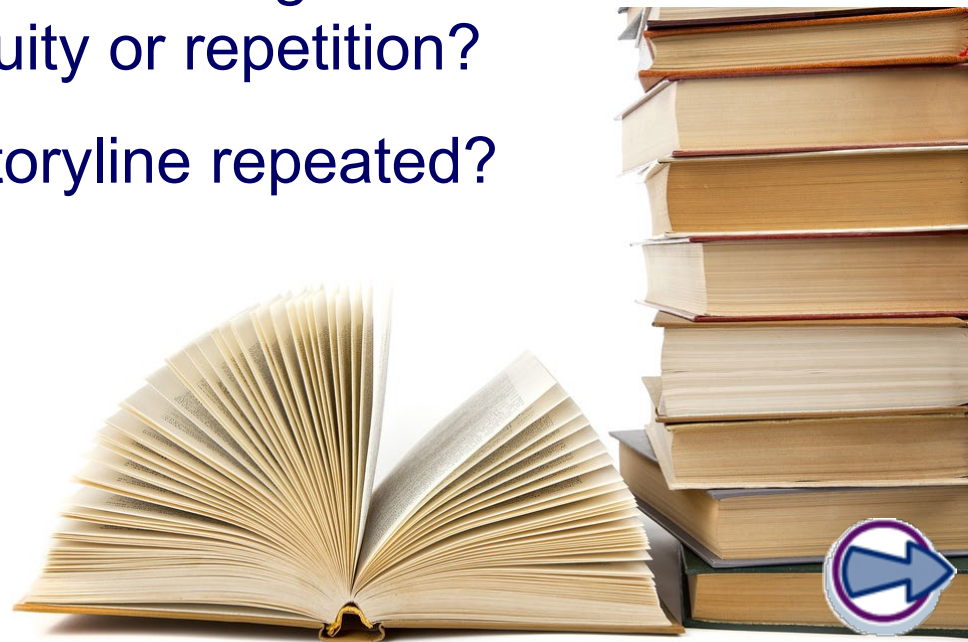
In studying **narrative structure**, we move beyond the events of the novel and consider:

- how these events are presented to the reader
- in what order they are presented (**chronology**)
- why the writer makes these choices.



Structure relates to how and why the text is organized in a certain way. A narrative is created through the choices that a writer makes about structure.

- Are the events in chronological order?
- Are there **subplots**? What purpose do they serve?
- Is the narrative **cyclical**? Is the ending similar to the beginning, indicating continuity or repetition?
- Are events or parts of the storyline repeated?
- Are **flashbacks** used?
- Is there **narrative framing** (a story within a story)?



Key features of a narrative





Chronology and time shifts



Key terms recap





To help you better understand the text you are reading, you may want to map the structure of the narrative.

Identify key narrative features and where they are in the story. Include features such as:

- time shifts or retrospection
- subplots, narrative framing or a cyclical structure
- foreshadowing.

Consider why the author may have included these features at that point in the narrative. What purpose do they serve? What impact do they have on the reader?



Structure: *The Kite Runner*



Mapping structure

