

# English Language Arts 7

## Module 5 Blackline Master

This blackline master package, which includes student worksheets and materials for teachers to make their own overhead transparencies, is designed to accompany Open School BC's *English Language Arts 7* course. The course was developed by BC teachers, instructional designers, and multimedia experts, with input from BC teachers, students, and historians. It is designed for use by students working in traditional classrooms as well as those studying independently. The course package consists of six modules, six Notebooks and one course CD, *Expressions*. *English Language Arts 7* can be purchased as individual components or as a complete resource and is available in print and online versions. The following supporting resources are required for both versions of the course. All are available from Open School BC.

### Textbooks

None

### Novels

*The Breadwinner* by Deborah Ellis. Groundwood Books, 2000.

To order, contact:

Open School BC Customer Service Team

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1 888 883 4766 (Toll-free)

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## Assignment 5.1A: Identifying Story Types

Identify a story, book, movie, video game, etc. that matches each of the story types (genres) below. For each example, list at least three characteristics that prove it is of that genre.

Story Type	Title	Characteristics
Adventure		
Fantasy		
Folk Tale		
Historical Fiction		
Horror		
Mystery		
Realistic Fiction		
Science Fiction		

**Assessment Guidelines**

- Choices correctly match each genre.  
(0.5 marks each x 8 = 4 marks)
- Reasons to support each choice are accurate and described in excellent detail. (8 marks)

**MARKS**

12

## Assignment 5.1B: Describe Your Setting

Where will your story take place? Will it be in the past, present, or future? Will it be set in another country, in an imaginary world, or in your own backyard? Will it be happy, scary, or exciting? Describe this setting in the space provided.

This assignment can be done as point form notes, paragraphs (see example), a web outline, drawing with captions, or another form of your choice.

Example:

*The story takes place in Nepal and in the lower regions of Mount Everest. It is quite muddy at the bottom and kind of like a jungle. As they climb, the air gets thinner and colder. The mountain is covered with snow and ice. There is a lot of fog making it hard for the climbers to see where they are going at times. The mountain is very steep in places.*

### Assessment Guidelines

- The location, time, and mood of the story are clearly outlined. (3 marks)
- The setting is appropriate for the chosen story type(s). (2 marks)

### MARKS

5



## Assignment 5.1C: Describe Your Characters

Think of three main characters for your story. Describe how each of your characters looks, what their likes and dislikes are, and any strange or special behaviours they might have. An example is provided for you.

Example:

Character:	Sarah Mulligan
Description:	<i>Sarah is a fourteen-year-old girl from Alberta. She has straight brown hair and brown eyes, and is very strong and fit. She likes mountain climbing and trekking and travels a lot with her parents to do this. Sarah likes the adventure but sometimes wishes she could stay in one place and be a normal kid who just hangs out with her friends.</i>

Character: #1	
Description:	

Character: #2	
Description:	

Character: #3	
Description:	

**Assessment Guidelines**

- Characters are clearly described. (5 marks)
- Characters are believable and interesting. (5 marks)

**MARKS**

10



## Assignment 5.1D: Describe Your Plot

What will the key events in your story be? How will the conflict be overcome, or will it?

Outline the plot of your story in point form, a web, or in short paragraphs like in the example below. Make sure you have a believable situation, rising action with an interesting conflict, a climax that will grab the reader, falling action, and a conclusion that ties up all the loose ends.

### Situation

*The story begins at Sarah's house, when she finds out that her family is going to Everest. A week later, her bags are packed, and they're off.*

### Rising Action

*1. Once they reach Nepal, they join up with the rest of the team and hire Babu to come with them. Their goal is to make it on the trail to base camp, where they will meet up with a large group of Sherpas and another trekking group for the much easier way back.*

*2. While in the temple, spinning prayer wheels, Sarah meets Sammi, who has wanted to climb to base camp for years, ever since her parents died. She wants to go for memory's sake and is looking for a group to take her. Sarah convinces her parents to take Sammi along, and they are off to Everest.*

*3. Getting to base camp is tiring and difficult because of the high elevation. The climbers also encounter snakes, crocodiles, and a mean yak. Some of their provisions are stolen.*

### Climax

*The climax comes when they get lost because of a heavy fog. Sarah runs off and meets a "yeti," that turns out to be a brown bear, and she and Sammi are rescued by the rest of the group.*

### Falling Action

*While fighting off the "yeti," they get turned around to the right course so that they find the base camp.*

### Conclusion

*The story ends with them finding the base camp and meeting the group they will be going home with. After almost a week of hardly any good food, they have a big meal and are finally finished their trek.*

**Assessment Guidelines**

- Your plot includes all the key elements (situation, rising action, climax, falling action, conclusion). (5 marks)
- Your plot events are logical and interesting. (5 marks)

**MARKS**

10

## Assignment 5.1E: Describe Your Theme

What is the deeper message you want to get across to the readers of your story? What will make your story meaningful to these people?

Provide two or more ideas for a possible theme for your story. In a sentence or two explain why you chose each theme. Two examples are provided for you.

- 1. Nature is a powerful force that you must respect if you hope to survive.** — *I have chosen this theme because climbing Mount Everest is a dangerous thing to do. Trekkers are at a high elevation and the weather can change very quickly. There are many dangers. You have to be prepared and accept that nature is more powerful than you are*
- 2. People can overcome many obstacles if they stay positive and work hard.** — *This theme also would apply to my story. Many times the characters face difficult situations and could easily give up, but they don't. In the end they are happy because they achieve their goal of making it to base camp.*

### Assessment Guidelines

- The theme of the story is clearly identified. It makes sense based on the events of the story. (5 marks)

### MARKS

5

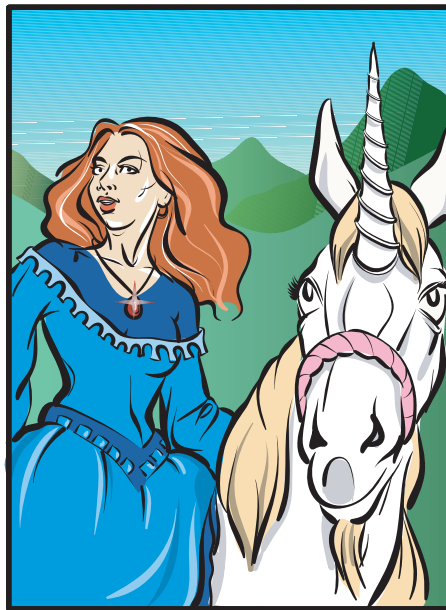


## Story Types

Stories can be grouped into different types, or **genres**, based on where and when the story takes place, what happens, and who the characters are. Some of the most popular story types are:

- Adventure
- Fantasy
- Folk Tales
- Historical Fiction
- Horror
- Mystery
- Realistic Fiction
- Science Fiction

Many stories are actually a combination of two or more genres. For example, a story that takes place in a South American jungle is both an adventure story and realistic fiction. Another story about aliens attacking a space colony is both science fiction and a horror story.





## What is Setting?

One of the most important parts of any story is the **setting**. The setting describes:

**The location of the story** — in a small town in northern British Columbia, in the woods, on a distant planet, etc

The author usually describes the setting(s) in a story with lots of detail. This helps the reader really picture the scene.

**The time of the story** — a long time ago, today, 2050, etc

The time when a story takes place affects many things. If the story were to take place in the early 1800s for instance, then everything the characters do, wear, say, and how they live must match the time period.

**The mood or feeling of the story** — is it a happy place? A sad place? A scary place?

Authors carefully choose their settings in order to create a certain mood. For example, a story set in a haunted house on a dark, stormy night would be rather frightening. Another story set on a tropical island with a gentle breeze and waves lapping against the shore would be peaceful and relaxing. Skillful writers often take you through many different moods as they tell their story.





## Creating a Great Setting

### **Choose a specific location for your story.**

- Does your story take place on a dark street in a big city? On the top of a snowy mountain? Inside your grandmother's kitchen? Somewhere else?
- Close your eyes and imagine you are in this place. Take notes on what you can see, hear, smell, and touch. If you prefer, draw a detailed picture of your setting. Include everything that you will write about later.
- Do some research on your location if you don't know very much about it. This will help you describe your location accurately.

### **Choose a specific time for your story.**

- Does your story take place in 1920? Today? 2199?
- When a story takes place determines how you need to describe it. If your story is set in 13th century England, you should include things like castles, peasant villages, and green, open fields. If your story is set in a modern city, then skyscrapers, mini-malls, and automobiles would be more appropriate.
- Make your setting believable for the time you have chosen. If you are unfamiliar with this time, research it so you can describe it accurately. Add any new information to your notes or drawing.

### **Establish a strong mood for your story.**

- How do you want your readers to feel when they read your story? Skillful writers often take you through many different moods as they tell their story. By making one scene happy, the writer relaxes you and makes you feel good about the story. Then, in order to build suspense, the writer may begin to change the mood. Suddenly, happy feelings may turn to fears as unexpected dangers threaten them.



## Characters

### What is a Character?

**Characters** are the people, animals, and objects that take part in a story. A story is usually woven around what they say and do.

### How Characters Are Developed?

Good characters have strengths and weaknesses, just like characters in real life. They are believable and interesting so we want to keep reading about them.

There are several ways you can develop good characters. You can describe:

#### what your characters look like

e.g., *Rita was small and fragile but had immense courage.*

#### what your characters do (how they behave and perform)

e.g., *With a determined effort, Rita managed to get the rowboat into the lake and clamber aboard.*

#### what your characters say

e.g., *"I'm afraid but I'll do it anyway!" Rita shouted.*

#### what your characters think or say about each other

e.g., *Polly watched from shore, knowing it was impossible to stop Rita once she decided to do something.*



## Creating Good Story Characters

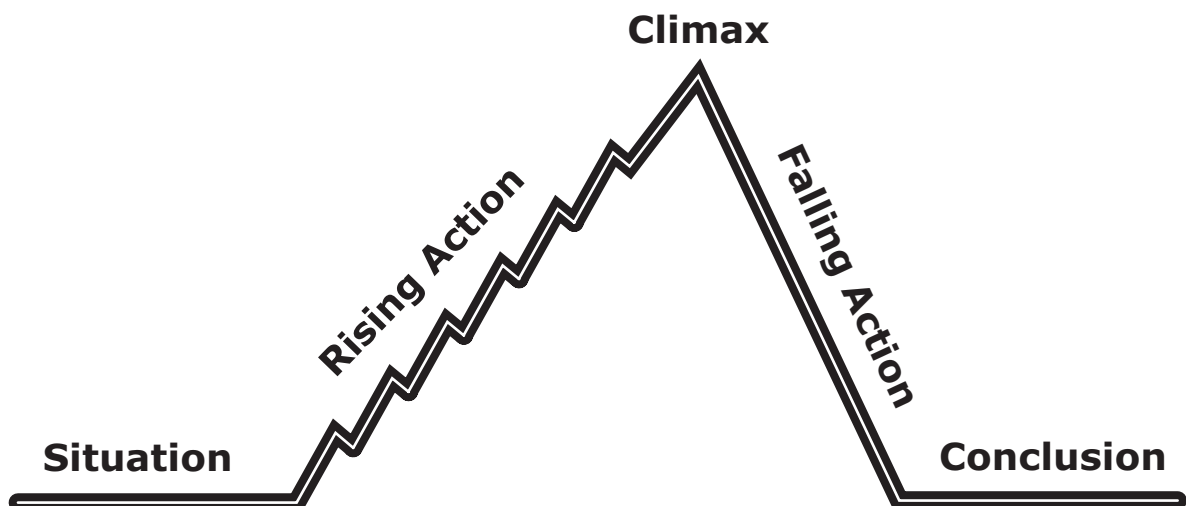
- Keep a “character notebook” and write down details you notice about interesting people you see in stores, on the bus, in the news, etc.
- Look in magazines, newspapers, etc. for pictures of interesting people. Perhaps it is a young woman hiking up Mt. Kilimanjaro or an old man feeding bread crumbs to pigeons in the park.
- Interview someone you think would make a great character. This guarantees your characters are realistic and accurate.
- Decide on the facts about your characters—name, age, family background, occupation, etc. Stick to facts you can easily imagine and that fit with the setting of your story.
- Decide what and who is important to your characters. What are their likes and dislikes, beliefs, dreams, and fears? What do they think about?
- Decide what your characters look like, how they act, and what kind of clothing they wear. What do they talk about and how do their voices sound?
- Decide how your character will change during the story. Figure out what your main character wants and why he or she wants it. What problem(s) does he or she face? How does your character overcome those problems?
- Make sure your character acts and reacts in a believable way. If you don’t think he or she is credible, neither will your audience.
- Reveal new information about your character as the story progresses, not all at once. This will help the audience better understand your character’s actions and motives.
- After you complete your character descriptions, ask a friend or family member to draw a picture of or describe your main characters. This picture or description might give clues about what is missing from your description.



## Plot

The **plot** is the sequence of events that happen in a story. It contains the situation, rising action, climax, falling action, and conclusion of a story.

- The **situation** introduces the setting (location, time, and mood of the story) and gives information on the characters. It also introduces the problem in the story.
- The **rising action** occurs when events begin to unfold and the problem gets worse.
- The **climax** is usually the most exciting part of the story. It is where a solution to the problem is suddenly revealed.
- The **falling action** is where the action in the story begins to wind down.
- The **conclusion** is where the story ends. The problem may or may not be resolved here.







## Tips for Writing Powerful Plots

Here are some tips for creating powerful plots that keep your readers turning the pages. Keep these tips in mind when you begin writing your own short story.

- Decide what the main problem in your story will be. Does the main character face an internal struggle, a problem with another character, or with a greater force, such as nature?
- Decide what events will take place as the main character faces this problem. These events should become more complicated or serious as time passes until they reach a climax.
- Check to see if you need to add connections between events, especially if you are changing place or time.
- Make sure you include events that will end your story in a satisfying way. Don't be too abrupt but don't drag out the conclusion either.



## Theme

**Theme** is the central idea or ideas presented in a story. It is the deeper message that lets readers connect the story to their own lives.

Theme makes you think. The author presents a story, and through the actions of the characters, tells you something about life in general. When you learn to think about the purpose of a story, you'll find that pinpointing theme is easier.

To find a theme, ask yourself:

- Why did the author choose to write this story?
- What insight or experience did the story offer me?

A good story always has a theme. It might be obvious from what the characters learn or say or by what happens to them. In other stories the theme may be less obvious. You might have to think about it for a while or discuss it with another person who has read the story.

