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A SIMPLE STORY PLAN

Here is an exercise about planning a story before you write. Take a few minutes to create a short story outline using traditional three act structure.

Act 1: The beginning

How is the character introduced?

What is the conflict that kicks off the story? What happens to turn things in a new direction for the character?

Act 2: The middle

How does the character react to the conflict? What action do they take to resolve the problem, and what new problems arise to make the situation worse?

What is the worst thing that happens, does this make the problem situation seem unsurmountable?

Act 3: The end

What new idea or skill does the character use to resolve the conflict? Is there a happy ending for the character? If not, how does the story end? Has the character changed or learned anything new?