

# Plotting with the 4 Act Structure

## “Beat Sheet”

ACT	BEAT	DESCRIPTION	GOAL SHIFTING
1	<b>Opening Image</b>	Initial situation, characters, and setting is established. Protagonist conceives 1+ goals.	
	<b>Inciting Incident</b>	Event that thrusts the protagonist into the main action of the story	
	<b>Turning point #1</b>	Protagonist’s goals shift in relation to the inciting incident.	
2	<b>Complicating action</b>	Protagonist takes steps toward achieving goal.	
	<b>Midpoint</b>	False victory, defeat, or setback that forces protagonist to alter goal or shift tactics.	
3	<b>Falling action</b>	Protagonist struggles toward goal. “Bad guys close in.”	
	<b>Turning point #3</b>	Protagonist’s struggles culminate with a defeat. All hope seems lost.	
4	<b>Climax</b>	Action shifts toward final resolution.	
	<b>Denouement</b>	Closing image.	