

# PLOT - Storytelling

## Questions

*These questions are meant to help you think about the plot and theme of a film:*

- What actually happens in the film? Is there a structure that you can recognize?
- What is the sequence of events in the film? (plot)
- Is there a conflict in the story - and what is the conflict about?
- Who are the parties in the conflict?
- How does the film begin?
- How does the film end?
- Does the ending represent a resolution of a conflict?
- What has the main character learned?
- Does the main character face a choice?
- What are the main character's dilemmas about?
- What is the main theme of the film?
- What do you think the director wants to tell by making the main character face some obstacles?
- What does the director want the audience to realize about themselves or life as such?
- What is the message of the film?

## Speak

In this section we focus on the story, on the characters' development and on the theme and message of the film. You use what you found out while working with the theatrical elements (set) and cinematic technique (shot). You dig deeper to find out how the story of the film is built and how tension is created. You might say that you now turn from looking at the what to looking at the why of the film.

A film expresses an idea, a story that the director wants to share. Very often this idea or story is about a **conflict** between two forces or a **development** that the main character needs to go through.

The **plot** is the events that make up the story. These events are the obstacles the main character has to overcome or live through to reach the end of the story and the goal of his or her development.

When working with the **structure** of film plots, you will often notice a pattern. One structure is so common that it is called the "Hollywood model" because so many Hollywood films are based on it. It is a highly efficient way of building a story, and knowing about it will help you

see how the film you are analysing works. Other structural models, such as for example “The Conflict Box”, may help you understand how the characters relate to each other and how the parts of the story are connected.

The **theme** is often related to an inner conflict that the main character needs to resolve. It is typically ethical or moral in nature. For instance, the main character has to decide between good and evil.

The message of the film is what the director wants to tell the audience about the film’s theme.

## The terms

Characterisation, Point of View, Narrative Technique, Distribution of Knowledge, Time Aspect, Symbol, Theme and Message are all relevant to this area of analysis.

Go to the playlist about “Plot” if you want to learn more.