ENG2D Voice and Story, Lesson 2

The Heist Map

How stories are built



Today's goals

We are learning…

- The parts of a story's plot and how they build tension.
- To use prediction and questioning while we read or listen.

I can…

- Name and explain the parts of plot structure.
- Find the setup and the inciting incident in a story.
- Make a prediction and support it with clues from the text.
- Listen actively and note important details.

Today's plan

Time	What we're doing	You will…
0–10 min	**Hook**	Brainstorm
10–25 min	**The heist map**	Complete the organizer definitions
25–60 min	**Read Part I**	Listen, predict and record
60–70 min	**Map it**	Map the story so far
70–75 min	**Exit prediction**	Write a prediction

Think of a heist



Think of any heist movie, show or game. What always happens, no matter which one it is?

A crew. A plan. Something goes wrong. A big moment. An escape. Everyone splits the take (or doesn't).

The heist map



Six stages

- The setup: exposition
- The job: inciting incident
- Complications: rising action
- The vault: climax
- The getaway: falling action
- The split: resolution

The six stages, in detail

Stage	English term	What it does	Ask yourself
1. The setup	Exposition	Introduces the characters, the setting and what “normal” looks like.	Who? Where? When? What's normal?
2. The job	Inciting incident	The event that kicks off the main conflict. After it, things can't go back.	What changes everything?
3. Complications	Rising action	Problems pile up and the stakes get higher. Most of the story lives here.	What gets in the way?
4. The vault	Climax	The turning point: the moment of greatest tension, when the conflict comes to a head.	What's the biggest moment?
5. The getaway	Falling action	The results of the climax play out.	What happens because of it?
6. The split	Resolution	The new normal. Loose ends are tied up, or left open on purpose.	How has the world changed?

Try it together: Cinderella

Everyone knows this one. Where does each event go?

Stage	In “Cinderella”
The setup	Cinderella lives with a cruel stepmother and stepsisters who treat her like a servant.
The job	An invitation arrives: the prince is holding a ball, and Cinderella isn't allowed to go.
Complications	Her fairy godmother helps, but the magic ends at midnight. She meets the prince and has to run.
The vault	The prince arrives with the glass slipper, and it fits Cinderella.
The getaway	Her identity is revealed and the stepfamily's plans fall apart.
The split	Cinderella marries the prince and her life is changed for good.

Why the shape works: tension



Stakes rise

Each complication makes the problem worse or raises what the characters could lose.



Time runs out

Deadlines and countdowns (midnight, a ticking clock) squeeze the characters.



We know more

When readers see danger the characters can't, we lean in. That's called dramatic irony.

Writers control tension by deciding what happens, when, and who knows it.



Big idea

Most stories follow a shape, like a heist that goes wrong: a setup, a job, complications, a climax and a getaway. Knowing the shape helps us notice what a writer is doing.

“The Monkey's Paw”



W. W. Jacobs (1863 to 1943) was an English writer best known for funny stories about sailors and dockworkers. “The Monkey's Paw” (1902) is his most famous story, and it's anything but funny.

A family, a visitor from far away and a strange object that grants three wishes. Listen for: who's in the crew, what the “job” is and every warning sign.

Words to know

You'll hear these in Part I.

fakir	In the story, a holy man from India said to have special powers. *“It had a spell put on it by an old fakir.”*
talisman	An object believed to have magic power or bring luck. *Morris treats the paw as a dangerous talisman, not a toy.*
sergeant-major	A senior rank for an experienced soldier. *Sergeant-Major Morris has served in India for 21 years.*
compensation	Money paid to make up for a loss or an injury. *Remember this word. It matters later.*

The paw's warning

“It had a spell put on it by an old fakir,” said the sergeant-major, “a very holy man. He wanted to show that fate ruled people's lives, and that those who interfered with it did so to their sorrow.”

W. W. Jacobs, “The Monkey's Paw” (1902). Public domain.

Think about it

What does the fakir want to prove?

What does “to their sorrow” suggest will happen to anyone who wishes?

Is this a warning or an invitation? Why?

Prediction stops

We'll stop three times. Record a prediction and a clue.

1. Stop 1: Sergeant-Major Morris arrives.
2. Stop 2: Morris throws the paw into the fire.
3. Stop 3: Mr. White makes his wish.

Good predictions

Use A clue from the text

Say “I think… because…”

Okay To be wrong!

Weak prediction vs strong prediction

Weak

- “Something bad will happen.”
- Too vague to test.
- No clue from the text.
- Could be said about any story.

Strong

- “I think the wish will come true in a terrible way, because Morris says the first owner's third wish was for death.”
- Specific: says what and how.
- Uses a clue from the text.

Frame: I think _____ will happen because in the text _____.

Map it

With a partner, fill in the first two stages of your Heist Map.

1. The setup: who, where, what's normal?
2. The job: what changes everything?
3. Bonus: list every warning sign so far.

Talk it out



Morris begs the Whites not to use the paw, but then he tells Mr. White exactly how to make a wish. Why?

Sentence starters

“I think Morris tells him because…”

“A clue that supports this is…”

“I see it differently. Maybe Morris…”

“This makes me predict that…”

How it works

- Talk with a partner for 2 minutes.
- Each person gives one reason and one clue.
- Be ready to share your partner's idea, not your own.

Exit ticket

1. What is the inciting incident of “The Monkey's Paw”?

2. Name one warning sign in Part I.

3. Predict what will happen in Part II, with a clue.

Next class: Parts II and III.

Teacher reveal

Part I at a glance

Setup: A stormy night at the Whites' isolated house. Mr. White and his son Herbert play chess while Mrs. White knits.

Visitor: Sergeant-Major Morris, back from years in India, tells them about a monkey's paw that an old fakir put a spell on to show that fate rules people's lives, and that people who interfere with it are sorry. Three men can each have three wishes.

Warning signs: The first owner's third wish was for death. Morris throws the paw into the fire, and Mr. White rescues it.

Inciting incident: Mr. White wishes for 200 pounds to pay off the house. The paw twists in his hand.