

FICTION STEP OUTLINE POINTERS

You can have a log line or wait until after you have your revised draft of events:

Events

Act 1:

- 1) Establish status quo
- 2+)(renumber as needed) Actions leading up to
- 3) Act 1 turn -- The inciting incident/catalyst/problem identified

Act 2:

- 4+)(renumber as needed) Events that identify the obstacles -- develop the conflict/antagonist -- formulate a solution to the problem; they should conform to the idea of Rising Action -- i.e., get more severe over time -- and lead to
- 5) Act 2 turn -- A full solution is proposed and is ready to be executed

Act 3:

- 6+)(renumber as needed) Events that occur as the obstacles are surmounted and the solution is executed
- 7) Climax -- the solution succeeds or fails
- 8) Denouement/resolution -- the effect of the climax on the protagonist is seen and a new status quo arrives.

For each step ask: When is this event? Where is it happening? Who needs to be here? What are they doing? Why? How does it turn out and how do the participants feel about?

Try always to have actions depend on character and to be as careful with your antagonist's character as your protagonist's -- make it a fair fight.

Once this is done you may move on to issues of tone and presentation. For this you'll need a log line (see *Oceans 8* vs. *Widows* trailers-- same story, wildly different log lines/tones).