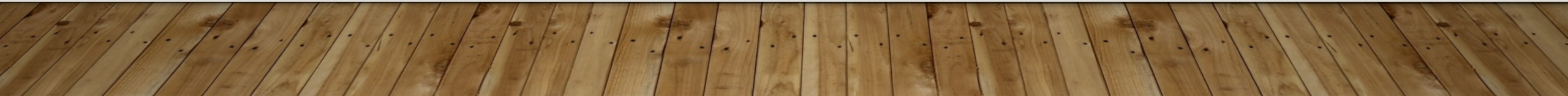


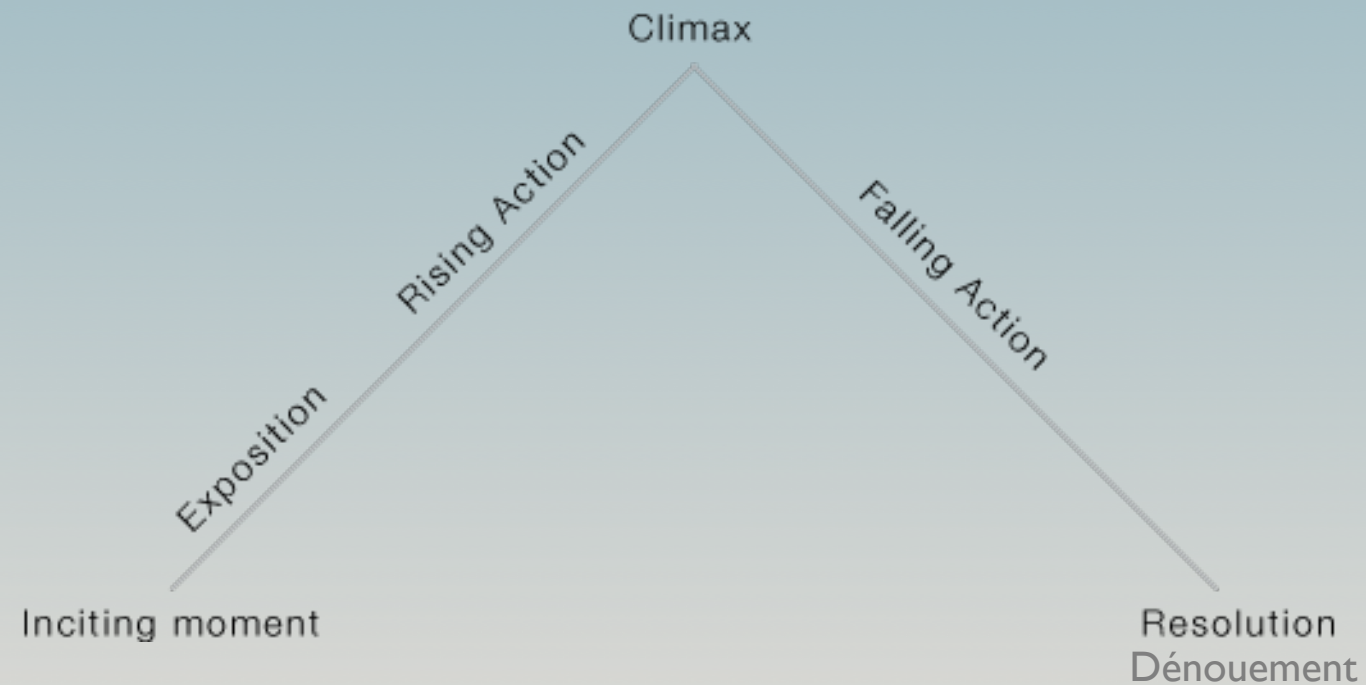
PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN NARRATIVE STRUCTURES



FREYTAG'S PYRAMID

- Gustav Freytag (1863) *Technique OfThe Drama*
- The theoretical framework is drawn almost exclusively from Aristotle.
- Most famous for his description of the 'dramatic arc':

FREYTAG'S PYRAMID



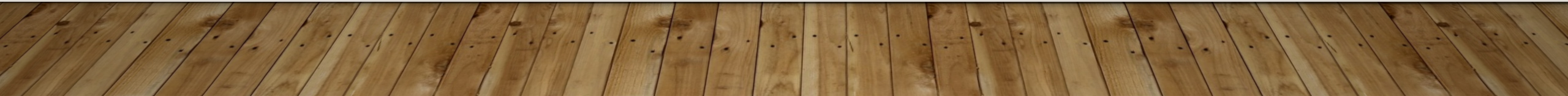
WHAT PART OF THE FILM OR PRODUCTION ARE WE DESIGNING FOR?

An **inciting incident** is an event that hooks the viewer into the story and sets everything else that happens into motion. This **moment** is when an event thrusts the protagonist into the main action of the story.

WHAT PART OF THE FILM OR PRODUCTION ARE WE DESIGNING FOR?

Exposition is a literary term that refers to the background information the audience needs to know for the world of your story to make sense.

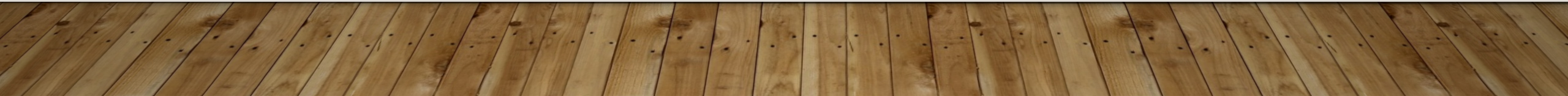
Exposition includes anything from character introductions to set details and dialogue and is most common at the beginning of the story.



WHAT PART OF THE FILM OR PRODUCTION ARE WE DESIGNING FOR?

Rising action in a plot is a series of relevant incidents that create suspense, interest and tension in a narrative.

Visually, a rising action includes all decisions, characters' flaws and background circumstances that together create turns and twists leading to a **climax**.

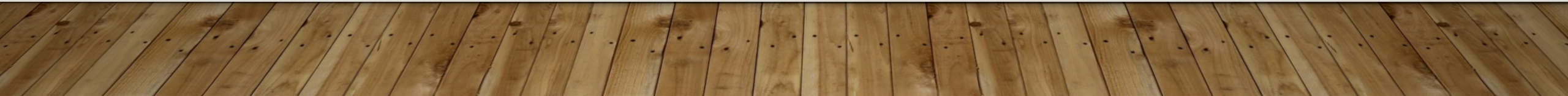


WHAT PART OF THE FILM OR PRODUCTION ARE WE DESIGNING FOR?

The **climax** (from the Greek word κλῖμαξ, **meaning** "staircase" and "ladder") or turning point of a narrative work is its point of highest tension and drama or it is the time when the action starts during which the solution is given.

WHAT PART OF THE FILM OR PRODUCTION ARE WE DESIGNING FOR?

Falling action is what happens near the end of a story after the climax and resolution of the major conflict. The majority of dramatic works are built on **action** - characters doing things, typically pursuing things they want.



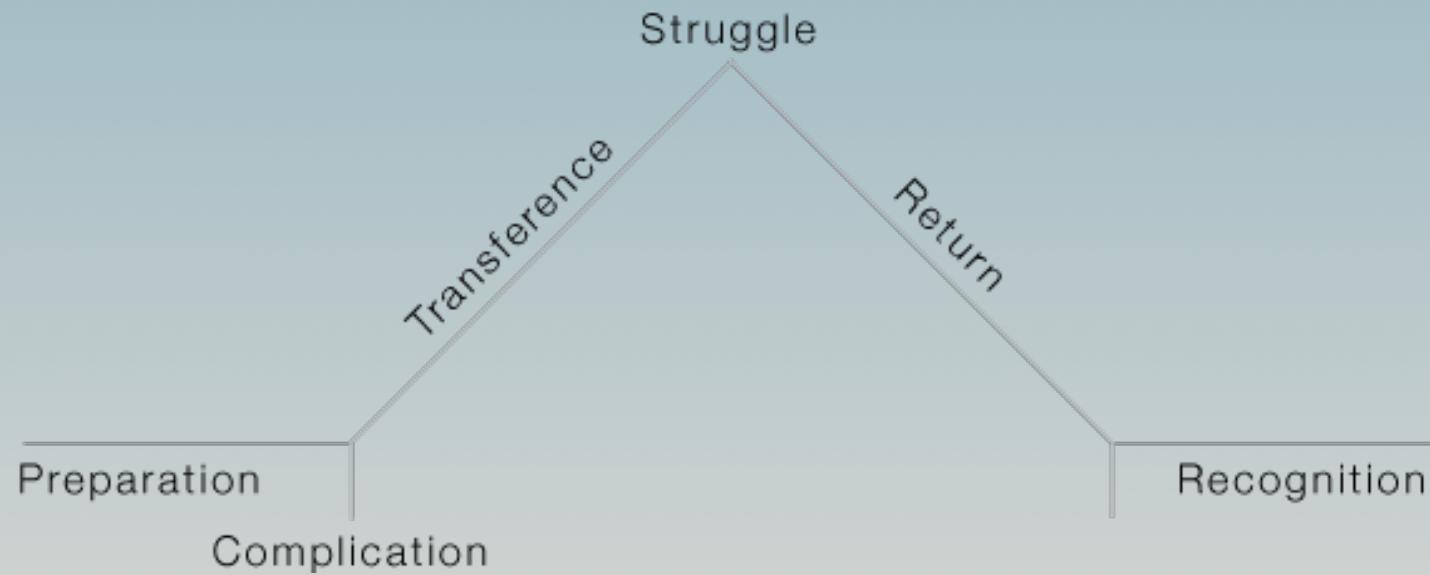
WHAT PART OF THE FILM OR PRODUCTION ARE WE DESIGNING FOR?

The **denouement** is the point of **resolution** that typically follows a **climax** and the **falling action** in literature or **film**. The **term** comes from the French word **meaning** “to untie.” **Denouement** is the place where small details get “unwrapped” and the remaining characters go on to lead their lives.

VLADIMIR PROPP

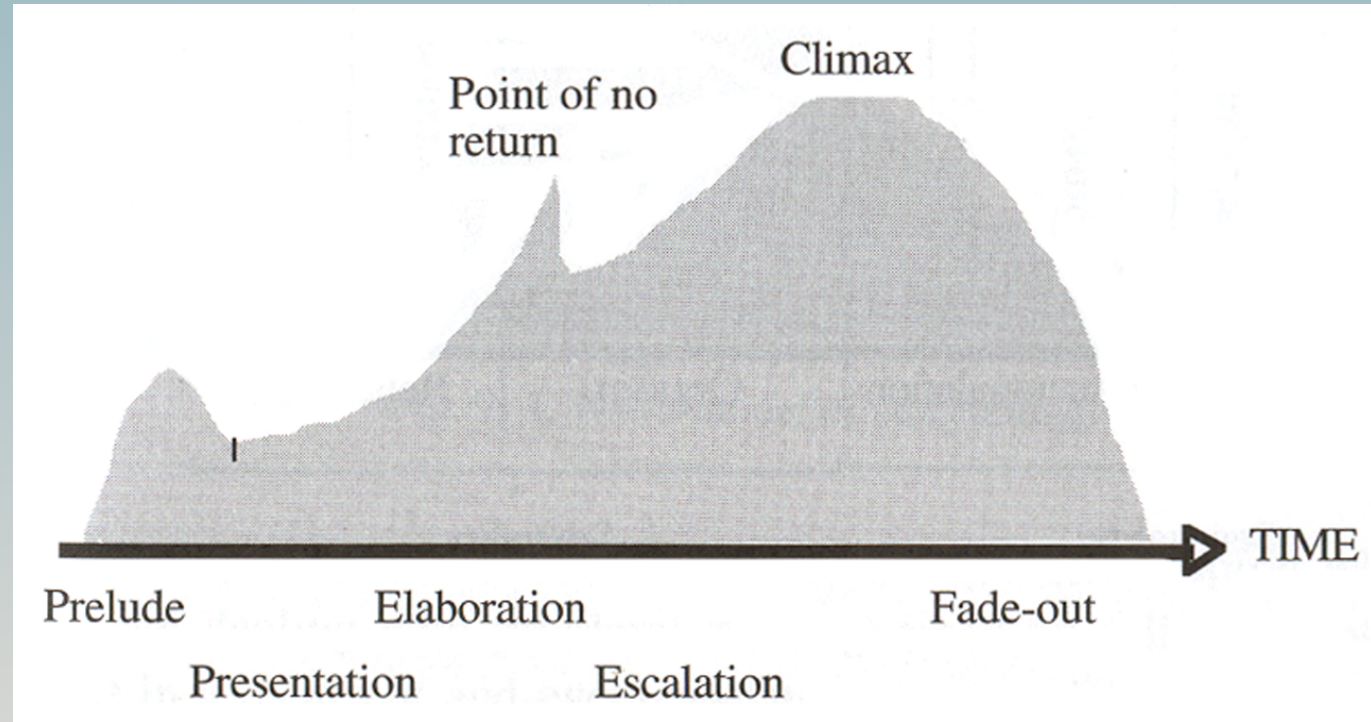
- Propp, V. (1928) *The Morphology of the Folktale*.
 - Not published in English until 1958.
- Based on an exhaustive study of Russian folk tales, originally oral but now written down. Propp devised a system of breaking the narratives down into 31 *functional* elements featuring 8 basic character types.
 - These move through six stages: Preparation, Complication, Transference, Struggle, Return, and Recognition.

VLADIMIR PROPP



Freytag's Pyramid with Propp's classifications.

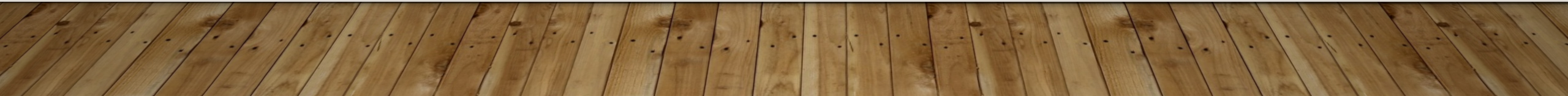
BANG'S MODEL



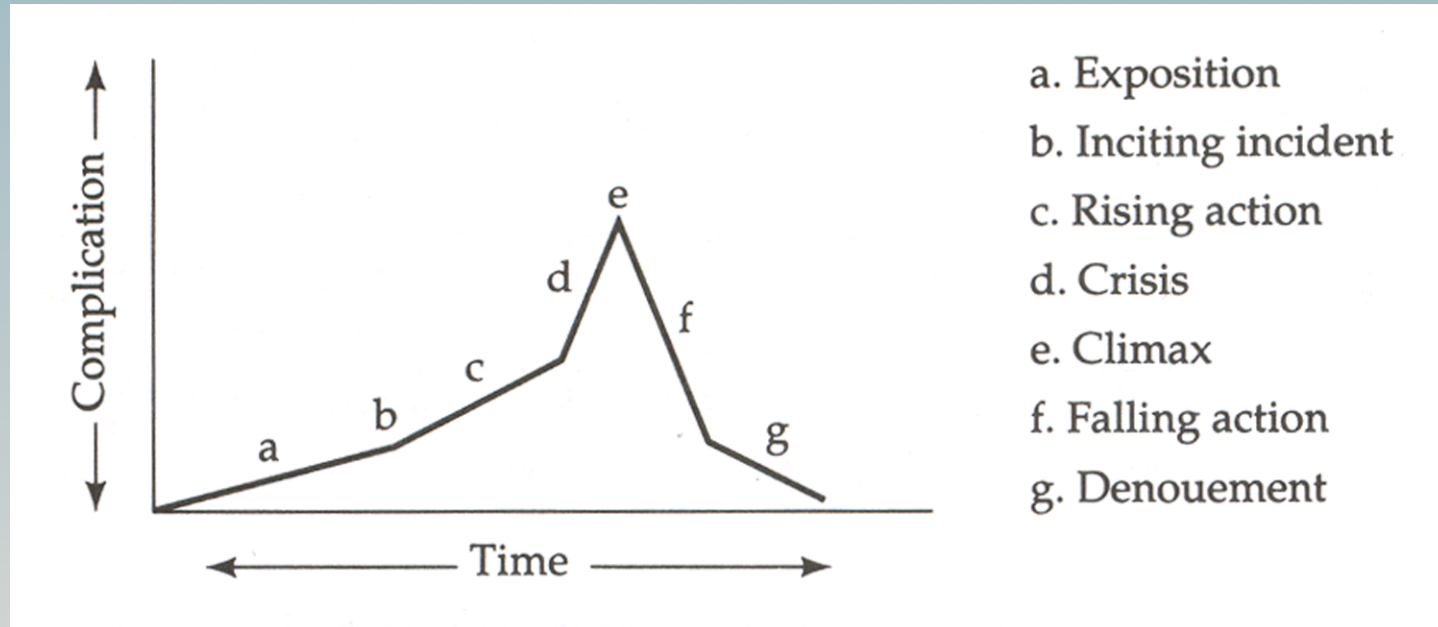
Bang's (1993) model of "linear storytelling."

WHAT PART OF THE FILM OR PRODUCTION ARE WE DESIGNING FOR?

The **point of no return** (PNR or PONR) is the **point** beyond which one must continue on one's current course of action because turning back is dangerous, physically impossible, difficult or prohibitively expensive.



LAUREL'S DRAMATIC ARC



Laurel's (1993) "contemporary" dramatic arc.

REFERENCES

Bang, J. (1993) 'The Meaning of Plot and Narrative' in Andersen, P., Holmqvist, B., & Jensen, J. (Eds) *The Computer As Medium*. Cambridge, New York, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.

Labov, W. & Waletzky, J. (1997 [1967]) Narrative Analysis: Oral Versions of Personal Experience, in *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 7 (1-4), 3-38. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Laurel, B. (1993) *Computers As Theatre*. Boston: Addison Wesley.

Meadows, M. (2003) *Pause & Effect: The Art of Interactive Narrative*. Indiana: New Riders.

Propp, V. (1968 [1928]) *The Morphology of the Folktale*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

YOUR 30 MINUTE TASK

Find a trailer for a movie on YouTube.

The movie can be current, old or about to be released.

Apply these ideas to the trailer.

Determine where the different points of action occur.

Note down the times when you think you see one of these.

Send me the link and we'll share the trailer on screen.

Does your choice of trailer stick to this dramatic arc?

Does it do anything twice or different?

Where on this dramatic arc, do you think your current skills would allow you to work best?

