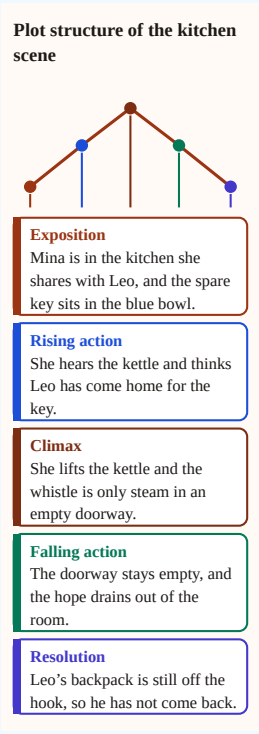
English Language Arts 10-1

## Unit 2: Comprehend and respond to texts

# Narrative and character

## An opening scene

- Mina stood in the kitchen of the house she shares with her brother Leo. The spare key sat in the blue bowl on the table. She heard the kettle and thought Leo had come home for the key, because she had promised their mother she would keep the house ready. When she lifted the kettle, the whistle was only steam in an empty doorway. Leo's backpack was still missing from the hook.
- Exposition. Mina is in the kitchen she shares with Leo, and the spare key sits in the blue bowl.
- Rising action. She hears the kettle and thinks Leo has come home for the key.
- Climax. She lifts the kettle and the whistle is only steam in an empty doorway.
- Falling action. The doorway stays empty, and the hope drains out of the room.
- Resolution. Leo's backpack is still off the hook, so he is still out.



## Plot and character

- Plot structure is the shape of the events: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution.
- Exposition is who and where at the start. Rising action builds the tension. The climax is the turning point. Falling action follows it, and the resolution is how the scene settles.
- Conflict is the pull between Mina's promise and Leo's absence. Motivation is why she acts: she promised their mother she would keep the house ready.
- Tone is the quiet attitude of the sentences, heard in empty doorway. Mood is the lonely feeling that kitchen creates for a reader.
- An archetype is a familiar character pattern. Mina fits the caretaker, the person who keeps a place ready for someone else.

# Key terms

**conflict**

The tension between two pulls in a narrative, such as a promise and an absence.

**archetype**

A familiar character pattern, such as the caretaker, that readers recognize across many stories.

**tone**

The attitude a text creator takes toward the subject, heard in word choice and shaped for a purpose and an audience.

## Character frame

- A trait needs an action. Responsible fits because Mina lifts the kettle and checks the hook.
- Her motivation is the promise to their mother, and she treats keeping the house ready as a duty.
- She is Leo’s older sibling. That relationship, and the caretaker archetype, come from what she does.

## Worked theme and tone

- Worked move on the kitchen scene. Exposition: Mina is in the kitchen, and the spare key is in the blue bowl.
- Rising action: she hears the kettle and thinks Leo has come home. Climax: the whistle is only steam.
- Falling action: the doorway stays empty. Resolution: the backpack is still off the hook, so Leo is still away.
- Conflict is the promise against Leo’s absence. Her motivation is that promise. The theme is that care can stay in the objects after the person leaves.
- The tone is quiet, heard in empty doorway, for classmates who know a small kitchen.

## Practice with a scene

- Amira stood under the one floodlight at the community rink after the other skaters had gone home. She had told her coach she would run the drill alone. She tied her skates, and the dark boards gave nothing back.
- Use the same move: name the exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution. Then state the conflict, one trait with an action, and the tone with a phrase from the scene.

## Review

- The new passage below is the text for this check. Work from these sentences.
- Jordan stood in the empty choir room after rehearsal and set a black folder on the piano. The name inside was written in pencil. Jordan had promised the folder would be safe. The empty chair faced the music.
- Name the conflict, one trait with evidence, the relationship or archetype, and the tone.