

Worksheet: "Crack the Conflict, Solve the Story!"

Introduction: Understanding Conflict and Resolution

What is Conflict?

Conflict is the heart of every great story. It's the problem your characters need to solve and what keeps your readers flipping pages. Below are the five main types of conflict, explained with examples to inspire your story:

1. **Man vs. Man** – A clash between characters, like rivals, enemies, or even friends with different goals.
Example: A heated debate between Archimedes and Eratosthenes about the ethics of war.
 2. **Man vs. Self** – A character wrestles with their inner doubts, fears, or weaknesses.
Example: Archimedes questioning whether his war machines align with his values.
 3. **Man vs. Society** – A character challenges societal rules, laws, or expectations.
Example: Archimedes resisting pressure to use his genius solely for war.
 4. **Man vs. Nature** – A battle against natural forces, like storms, disease, or survival challenges.
Example: Archimedes designing solutions to overcome a siege's natural obstacles.
 5. **Man vs. Technology** – A fight against human-made tools, inventions, or their consequences.
Example: The unintended destruction caused by Archimedes' war machines.
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How Do Novels Typically Wrap It All Up?

Every story needs an ending—but not all endings look the same! Here are some ways stories can wrap up their conflicts:

1. **Happy Ending:** All is well, and the protagonist achieves their goals.
Example: Archimedes and Eratosthenes reconcile and save their city together.
 2. **Tragic Ending:** The conflict resolves, but at a great cost.
Example: Archimedes saves Syracuse but loses his friendship with Eratosthenes.
 3. **Ambiguous Ending:** Some questions are left unanswered, leaving readers to imagine the outcome.
Example: The siege ends, but the characters' resolution is left unclear.
 4. **Bittersweet Ending:** The protagonist gains something but loses something else.
Example: Archimedes saves the city but realizes the moral toll of his inventions.
 5. **Unresolved Ending:** The conflict is left open, often to provoke thought or set up a sequel.
Example: The siege continues, and the characters remain divided on their decisions.
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Part 1: Build the Conflict

1. Defining Your Conflict

- What is the central problem in your story?
- Which conflict type does it fall under?
- Why is this conflict important to your protagonist's journey?

2. AI Prompt #1:

- *"Give me some prompt ideas for exploring conflict within my [ARCHIMEDES] story."*

Write down at least three conflict ideas the AI suggests.

3. Examples of Conflict

- Create three examples of each type of conflict in your story using AI:
 - Man vs. Man
 - Man vs. Self
 - Man vs. Society
 - Man vs. Nature
 - Man vs. Technology

AI Prompt #2:

- *"Give me three examples of each kind of conflict in terms of my [ARCHIMEDES] story."*
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Part 2: Level Up the Drama

1. Turning Up the Tension

- What are the key moments that escalate this conflict?
- How does your protagonist react to each moment?

2. AI Prompt #3:

- *"Can you generate some ideas for plot points that might increase in conflict intensity?"*

Write down three AI-suggested plot points and pick the best one.

3. Scene Spotlight

- Where in your story outline does this conflict escalation happen?
- Write a few sentences describing the scene.

AI Prompt #4:

- *"Let's use this one. Please give me where in the outline it will play out as scenes. [CONFLICT SUGGESTION]"*
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Part 3: Resolve It Like a Pro

Building a Resolution Using AI

Use the components below to guide AI in crafting a strong resolution. Incorporate these elements into your AI prompts to create detailed and meaningful solutions:

- 1. Define the Conflict:**
Clearly articulate the nature of the conflict you are addressing.
Example: Archimedes and Eratosthenes' ethical debate about war machines.
- 2. Set the Stakes:**
What does each character stand to gain or lose? High stakes drive compelling resolutions.
Example: If Archimedes builds war machines, Syracuse could be saved, but at a moral cost.
- 3. Explore Character Motivations:**
Delve into the motivations and backstories of the characters involved.
Example: Archimedes wants to protect Syracuse, while Eratosthenes values scholarly ethics.
- 4. Determine the Tone:**
Decide on the tone you want for the resolution (dramatic, uplifting, bittersweet, or tragic).
Example: A bittersweet tone where both men learn from their philosophical differences.
- 5. Specify the Themes:**
Outline the themes or messages you want to convey (redemption, sacrifice, love, justice, etc.).
Example: Themes of loyalty, friendship, and moral responsibility.
- 6. Desire for Resolution:**
State whether you want a full resolution or ambiguity.
Example: A peaceful but imperfect resolution where both men compromise.
- 7. Use "What If" Scenarios:**
Pose hypothetical "what if" scenarios to the AI to explore different angles and perspectives.
Example: "What if Archimedes designed war machines that could only defend, not attack?"
- 8. Incorporate Genre Elements:**
Mention any genre conventions to keep the resolution genre-appropriate.
Example: For historical fiction, maintain historical accuracy in the resolution.
- 9. Ask for Alternatives:**
Request multiple resolutions to the same conflict for variety.
Example: AI could suggest one tragic, one bittersweet, and one hopeful resolution.
- 10. Feedback Loop:**
Refine AI suggestions by going back and forth, tweaking the details until satisfied.

AI Prompt #5:

- *"Here's the conflict we are resolving. Both men will gain friendship if they resolve it right. They may determine that war machines kill fewer people than allowing Rome to destroy their entire city, so killing machines, while bad, are ultimately the lesser evil. Both love Syracuse, but it's just Archimedes' hometown. Eratosthenes is from Cyrene. The men are motivated by scholarship and their friendship to resolve this conflict. Please give me multiple dramatic resolution solution options. Please let it resolve in peace."*

Use the components above to build your prompt. Write down at least two AI-suggested resolutions and explain why one feels most satisfying.

Part 4: Reflect and Revise

1. **Connect the Dots**
 - How does your resolution solve the central conflict?
 - What does your protagonist learn through this journey?
 2. **Feedback and Final Tweaks**
 - Share your conflict and resolution ideas with a peer or use AI for feedback.
 - Revise based on feedback and explain what changes you made.
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Your Mission: Create a Killer Conflict and Nail the Resolution!

Use this worksheet to make your story unforgettable. Think big, ask bold questions, and let AI help you craft something extraordinary.