thinking ALOUD
Making Sense of Literacy

VIDEO SCRIPT
Name That Plot
Plot
(overview)

Scene		Full Transcript
1	**Stage Crew:**	Five more minutes and then we're ready to go.
	Dante':	OK. All right. Thank you.
	Ms. Heeley:	Dante'! Everything looks fantastic!
	Dante':	Oh, Ms. Heeley! I didn't expect to see you here! It does look great, doesn't it?
	Ms. Heeley:	Who… who would have imagined a public access game show about plot? What a great way to involve students and stress the importance of robust action and engaging conflict in writing.
	Dante':	It's impossible to tell a compelling story without it. You know, it was your writers' workshop that inspired us to help others improve their writing.
	Ms. Heeley:	Well, I've been impressed with how everyone's writing has improved. I just bought a copy of Turner's book!
	Dante':	I can't believe he is a published author! Did Nate mention to you that he's been attending the writing group I'm in? It's nothing formal, just several of us getting together for writing conferences whenever we need them.
	Ms. Heeley:	Oh, that's fantastic!
	Stage Crew:	Two-minute warning!
	Ms. Heeley:	Well, you better get ready. What's your stage name?
	Dante':	It's Al Author!
	Ms. Heeley:	Oh, all right, Al! Remember to smile!
2	**Narrator:**	Hold that thought! Does Dante', excuse me, Al have a future as a game show host? Will the audience and viewers at home be inspired to pursue their own perfect plots? Join the Knowledge Seekers as they *Name That Plot* in this episode of **THINKING ALOUD!**
3		**Introduction**
4	**Narrator:**	As Dante' reviews the rules of the game with the studio audience, let's look at how skillful authors name their own plots. Good readers and skillful authors know that for a story to hold our attention, it must have a well-written plot. Plot is a combination of conflict and action, thoughtfully chosen by the author as the best way of telling his or her story.
5	**Dante':**	Before the camera starts rolling, does anyone know one component of a good plot?

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5 (continued)	**Audience:**	CONFLICT!
	Dante':	Very good! Now let's talk about the types of conflict. First, conflict is…
6	**Narrator:**	Dante' is reminding the audience that conflict occurs when a character faces a problem or obstacle that stands in the way of achieving his or her goal. Skillful authors draw the reader in by creating tension, which keeps the story interesting. Without it, readers may find themselves asking, "Who cares?"
		The person-against-self conflict reflects a character's internal struggle. Characters try to decide what to do as they battle their own sense of right and wrong. They struggle with their own insecurities, weaknesses, habits, and hang-ups in order to achieve a goal or resolve an issue.
		When one character has a problem with another character, it's known as person-against-person conflict. Readers root for the "good guy" as they read about competitive challengers. They identify with characters involved in sibling rivalries, parent-child arguments, or the underdog taking on the giant.
		In person-against-society conflicts, the character has a conflict against society, social tradition, government, or "the way things have always been done." The hero takes up a cause to fight pollution, battle prejudice, or overcome an injustice.
		Sometimes the conflict occurs between humans and nature. Found frequently in survival stories, these threats appear as blinding snowstorms, terrifying tornados, fierce floods, or wild animals.
		Other conflicts, such as person-against-the supernatural or person-against-technology, are typically found in Fantasy.
9	**Dante':**	You're all doing great! Now, I know you know this one. What's the other main component of plot?
	Audience:	ACTION!
	Dante':	Exactly! So what patterns of action do we find in plot? What do you think, audience?
10	**Narrator:**	Action is often conveyed to readers using one of several common patterns. The most familiar is the progressive or climactic pattern of action. It begins early in the story when the main character wants to achieve an important goal, but faces an obstacle, which appears as some sort of conflict or problem to solve.
		As the story progresses, the main character makes a series of choices which will result in a series of events. Each moves the plot forward and intensifies the action. The author

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10 (continued)	**Narrator:**	reveals these events as they occur in chronological order, continuing to build momentum and excitement along the way.
		Called "rising action," it culminates at the highest point of the story, which is the peak of the conflict. As the conflict is resolved, the author reveals to the reader how everything will turn out. What follows is the called the "falling action," as details of the plot are unraveled and the story is brought to a conclusion.
		Similar to the Progressive pattern of action, the Cliffhanger begins in much the same way. It is built through rising action until finally the action hits its peak. Then suddenly, it ends there! There is no conflict resolution in a cliffhanger. It leaves the reader hanging, wondering, "How does the story end?"
		Episodic plot structure is made up of a series of separate, short stories tied together by characters, settings, or themes. Often constructed into chapters, each episode follows a character through a series of adventures, each with its own conflict and resolution.
		Readers may notice a sense of time passing throughout the episodes, as if the character is growing and changing through each successive chapter or story, but not necessarily. Sometimes, the chapters or stories can be read out of order and still make sense. These plots are generally found in adventure series, TV sitcoms, or comic books.
		When there are at least two main characters that have individual stories to tell, the author may choose the Parallel plot structure. The first character tells the story from his or her viewpoint in the first section, and then the second character tells the story from his or her viewpoint in the next section, alternating from one character's perspective to the other, until they ultimately meet up at the end. A variation of this is when the action of the story is presented as a flashback, alternating between the present and the past.
11	**Dante':**	I think you guys are ready! It's time to get started!
	Stage Crew:	Places everyone!
12	**Johnny:**	Welcome to *Name That Plot,* the game show that promises action and conflict with every question! And here's your host, Al Author!
13	**Dante':**	Thanks Johnny! Contestants, are you ready?
	Contestants:	Ready!
	Dante':	All right! Audience, are you ready to...

Scene		Full Transcript
13 **(continued)**	**Audience:**	NAME THAT PLOT!
14	**Narrator:**	Stay tuned to the next episodes of *Name That Plot* to buzz in on action and conflict. Keep playing along with Dante' and the Knowledge Seekers and keep **Thinking Aloud!**