

L.O. Use different aspects of a scene to develop tension.

Re-cap of last lesson - Describing the setting & build-up



Review next box-up



Focus on building tension - whole-class practice



Write next section - dilemma

Friday's L.O. was to include descriptive details to develop a realistic setting .

...punched the air triumphantly like Usain Bolt. Victory! Up ahead, brambles choked the stony tracks, an old shopping ... The tracks gleamed, reflecting the harsh, midday sun....	Build-up: MC arrives at warning place & reacts. Setting described: pov. figure. pathetic fallout. un.	Nathan + Anna pedal down to building site - Nathan slips under wire fence with his bike - Anna calls him back, but ignored - follows angrily. Piles of bricks, bright orange mixer caked in dried cement + scaffolding poles left scattered around. She shivers + squints as cold wind whips up dust. Nathan shouts in delight at sight of sand pile - "I'm the greatest stunt man!" + rides towards it, feet spinning in blur.
... ignoring the bright red warning signs... Suddenly, he felt vibrations shudder through his body. ... It was stuck fast. There was no escape.	Dilemma: MC gets into serious trouble. Set. th. fur. reac. ever.	Anna smiles + watches him racing towards her - then looks down to see rusty scaffold pole poking out from base of sand pile on her side: where her brother will land. Eyes widen. screams to brother - too late - he's already reached the slope, laughing wildly, hair streaming + jacket flapping in wind.

This was where the settings toolkit really came in useful. On the next page is an example of what the writing from these notes could look like. When you read it, can you spot any tools that have been used?

The two children pedaled away quickly, and it wasn't long before they had reached Main Road. Before Anna could say anything, her brother had slipped under a gap in the chain-link fence, pulling his bicycle with him. She called him back, her father's words still ringing in her mind, but Nathan was already out of ear-shot. Frowning and muttering angrily, Anna followed him into the building site.

It it had been left in a bit of a mess: piles of new bricks teetered precariously, a bright orange cement mixer yawned sadly, its mouth caked in dried mortar, and everywhere, scaffolding poles were scattered around. Anna shivered and pulled her jacket tighter, squinting as a cold wind whipped up sand and dust.

Not far away, Nathan's excited cries drew his sister's attention to a giant pile of building sand, rising up like a great ramp.

"I'm the world's greatest stunt-man!" he exclaimed, lining his BMX up with the base of the sandy hill.

Anna couldn't help but smile and trotted over to the heap, reassured that the soft sand would break her brother's fall if he should not make the landing.

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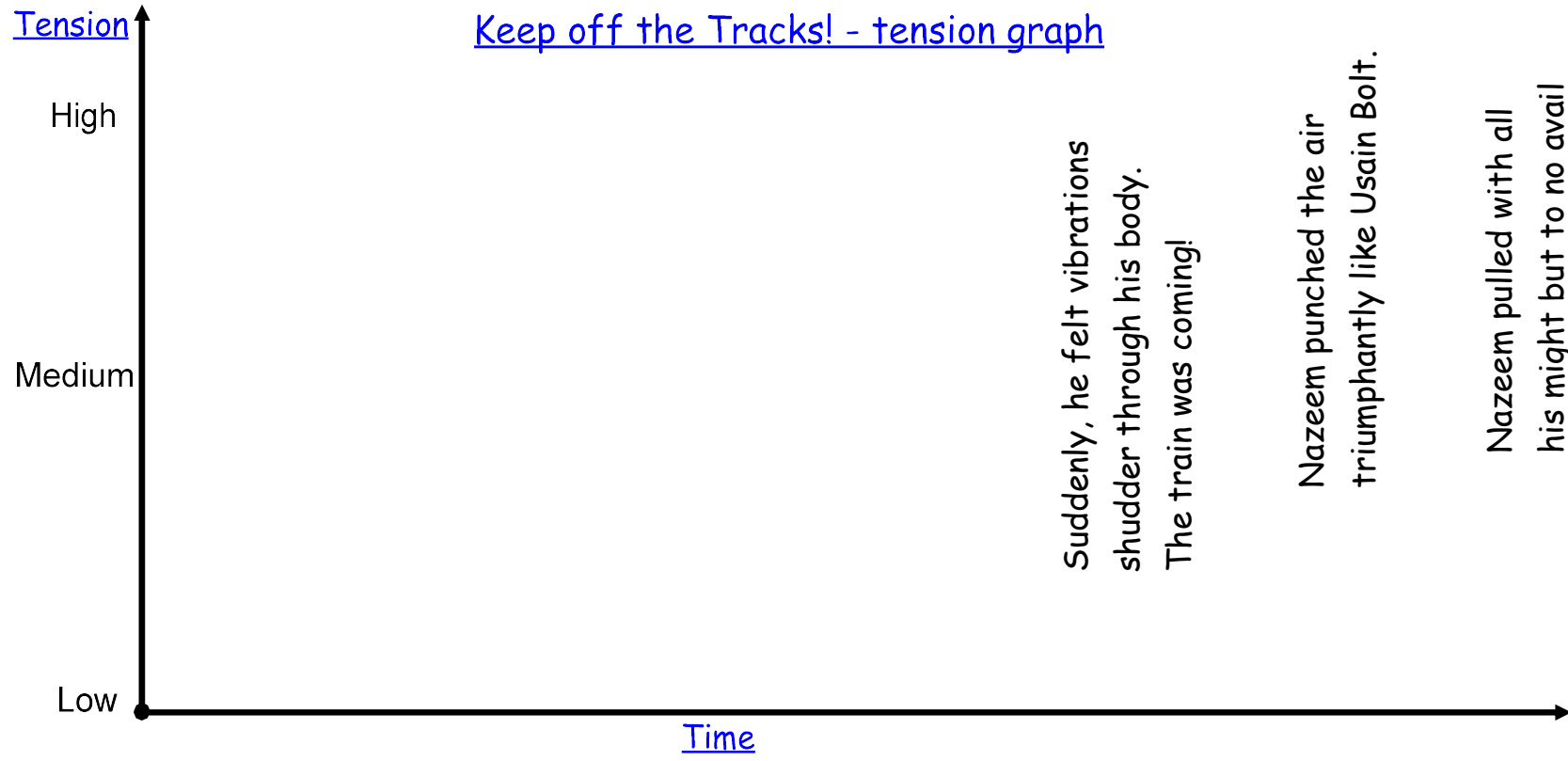
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## L.O. Use different aspects of a scene to develop tension.

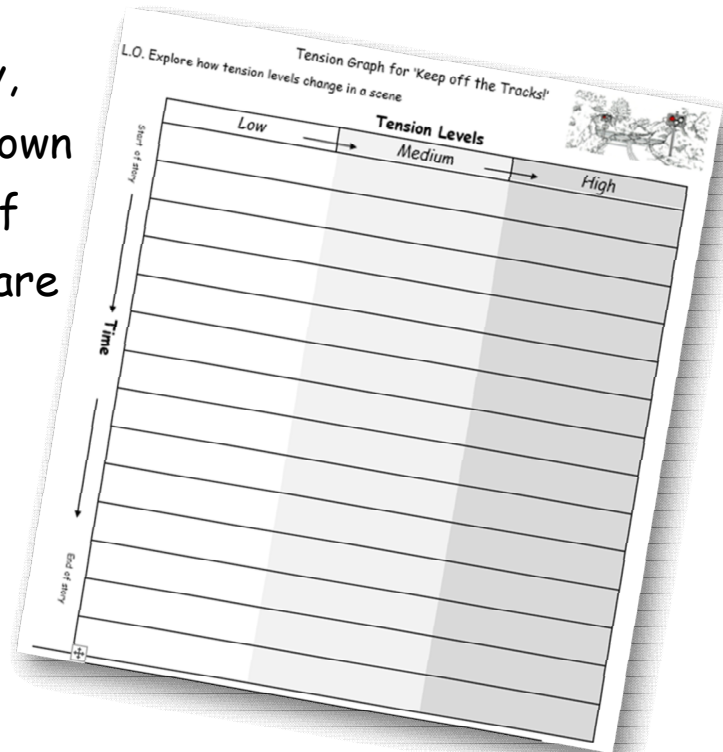
... ignoring the bright red warning signs... Suddenly, he felt vibrations shudder through his body. ... It was stuck fast. There was no escape.	Dilemma: MC gets into serious trouble. Setting shown through MC's eyes – further details/ MC reacts to situation & events.	Anna smiles + watches him racing towards her - then looks down to see rusty scaffold pole poking out from base of sand pile on her side: where her brother will land. Eyes widen, screams to brother - too late - he's already reached the slope, laughing wildly, hair streaming + jacket flapping in wind.
... pulled with all his might but to no avail. The colour drained from Nazeem's face ... he spotted Jake's dad screeching to a halt in his red car ... he ran as fast as he could to his son's rescue.	Resolution: Tension continues to build – character reactions/short, snappy sentences for increased action. Solution to problem/ rescue arrives.	

Last week, we reached this part in our stories - the point at which the MC gets into trouble. Now we need to continue to build the tension. First, let's look at how the model text 'Keep off the Tracks!' does this.



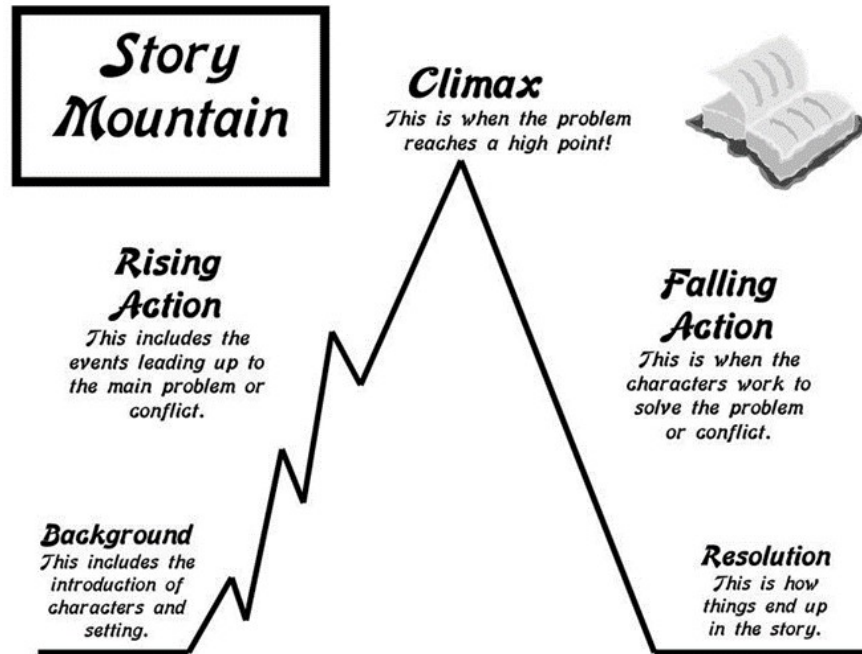
Cut out the sentences taken from the story, order them and then arrange them on your own tensions graph, to show the tension levels of each one. Discuss with your partner as you are working, giving reasons for your choices.

It was stuck fast. There was no escape.	Nazeem punched the air triumphantly like Usain Bolt.
Jake and Nazeem grinned secretly at each other.	Nazeem pulled with all his might but to no avail.
"Where is he?" Mr Newton shouted frantically.	At that moment, his foot slipped and jammed painfully in the sleepers.
They zipped under the barrier onto the railway track just before it came down.	"Don't go playing near that railway track!"
With all his might, he tugged on Jake's leg, dislodging his trainer. Jake was free!	Nazeem shot off, shouting, "Last one to the tracks buys the ice creams!"
Without a care in the world, he balanced like a tightrope-walker on the cold rail.	As he heard the train rumbling closer, he spotted Jake's dad screeching to a halt.
Suddenly, he felt vibrations shudder through his body. The train was coming!	They bowed their heads in shame.



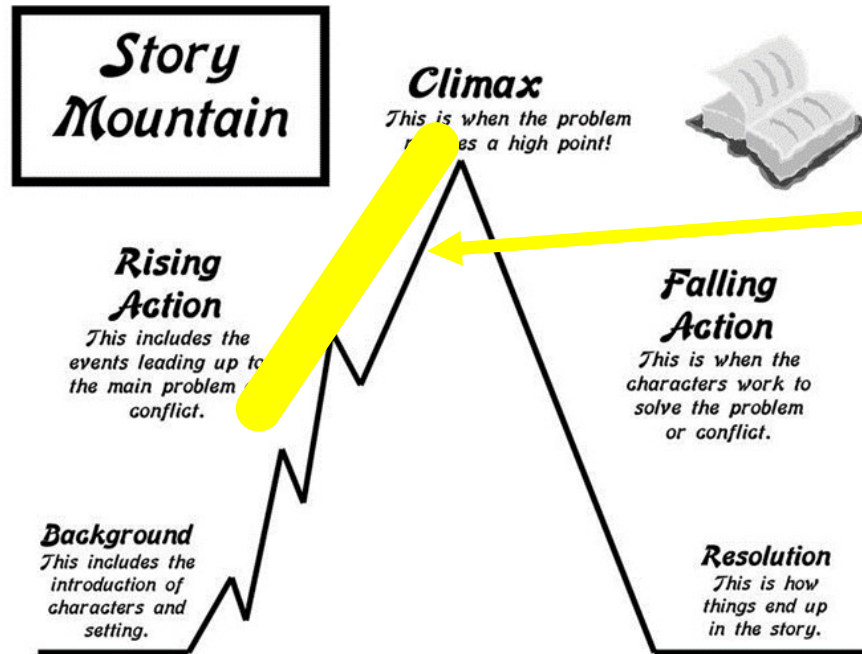
What is the overall pattern of tension throughout the story?

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The classic 'story mountain'.

What is the overall pattern of tension throughout the story?



This is where we are with our own warning stories.



How does the author create increasing levels of tension? What techniques has he used?

Suddenly, he felt vibrations shudder through his body. The train was coming! At that moment, his foot slipped and jammed painfully in the sleepers. "Ow!" he howled, desperately tugging at his foot. It was stuck fast. There was no escape.

Nazeem span around and, with his heart pounding, ran to rescue his friend. He pulled with all his might but to no avail. The colour drained from Nazeem's face; this was serious!

Panicking, he scrambled down the track and screamed for help. As he heard the train rumbling closer, he spotted Jake's dad screeching to a halt in his red car. Desperately, Nazeem blurted out the problem.

How does the author create increasing levels of tension? What techniques has he used?

Events experienced through the characters' eyes (from the toolkit).

The train was coming! At that moment, his foot slipped and jammed painfully in the sleepers. "Ow!" he howled, desperately tugging at his foot. It was stuck fast. There was no escape.

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How does the author create increasing levels of tension? What techniques has he used?

Characters react to the action (from the toolkit).

Suddenly, he felt vibrations shudder through his body. The train was coming! At that moment, his foot slipped and jammed painfully in the sleepers. [redacted] at his foot. It was stuck fast. There was no escape.

[redacted] ran to rescue his friend. He pulled with all his might but to no avail. The [redacted] this was serious!

Panicking, he scrambled down the track and screamed for help. As he heard the train rumbling closer, he spotted Jake's dad screeching to a halt in his red car. [redacted]

[redacted]

How does the author create increasing levels of tension? What techniques has he used?

Short, snappy sentences speed up the action.

Suddenly, he felt vibrations shudder through his body. [redacted] at that moment, his foot slipped and jammed painfully in the sleepers. "Ow!" he howled, desperately tugging at his foot. [redacted] [redacted]

Nazeem span around and, with his heart pounding, ran to rescue his friend. He pulled with all his might but to no avail. The colour drained from Nazeem's face [redacted]

Panicking, he scrambled down the track and screamed for help. As he heard the train rumbling closer, he spotted Jake's dad screeching to a halt in his red car. Desperately, Nazeem blurted out the problem.

How does the author create increasing levels of tension? What techniques has he used?

Paragraphs become shorter, as different parts of the scene are explored in quick succession (camera angles!).

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So it appears that in order to speed up action and create tension, there are some simple tricks:

- See the scene through the eyes of the characters
- Make the characters react realistically to the events
- Shorten some of our sentences to force the reader to speed up
- Increase the number of 'camera angles' we use.

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Some of those tricks had already begun to be used in the last box-up section

<p><i>... ignoring the bright red warning signs... Suddenly, he felt vibrations shudder through his body. ... It was stuck fast. There was no escape.</i></p>	<p>Dilemma: MC gets into serious trouble. Setting shown through MC's eyes – further details/ MC reacts to situation &amp; events.</p>	<p>Anna smiles + watches him racing towards her - then looks down to see rusty scaffold pole poking out from base of sand pile on her side: where her brother will land. [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] [redacted]</p>
<p><i>... pulled with all his might but to no avail. The colour drained from Nazeem's face ... he spotted Jake's dad screeching to a halt in his red car ... he ran as fast as he could to his son's rescue.</i></p>	<p>Resolution: Tension continues to build – character reactions/short, snappy sentences for increased action. Solution to problem/ rescue arrives.</p>	<p>[redacted]</p>

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The action might continue like this...

<p>... ignoring the bright red warning signs... Suddenly, he felt vibrations shudder through his body. ... It was stuck fast. There was no escape.</p>	<p>Dilemma: MC gets into serious trouble. Setting shown through MC's eyes – further details/ MC reacts to situation &amp; events.</p>	<p>Anna smiles + watches him racing towards her - then looks down to see rusty scaffold pole poking out from base of sand pile on her side: where her brother will land. Eyes widen, screams to brother - too late - he's already reached the slope, laughing wildly, hair streaming + jacket flapping in wind.</p>
<p>... pulled with all his might but to no avail. The colour drained from Nazeem's face ... he spotted Jake's dad screeching to a halt in his red car ... he ran as fast as he could to his son's rescue.</p>	<p>Resolution: Tension continues to build – character reactions/short, snappy sentences for increased action. Solution to problem/ rescue arrives.</p>	<p>Anna shouts again, but voice lost in the wind. Brother's feet spin faster and faster - Anna's heart pounds - feet frozen to the spot - Nathan reaches top of hill - she forces herself to react - lunges towards scaffold pole - he launches himself off the ramp - she heaves at the pole, but no good - Nathan flies through the air - looks down - face pales as he realises what will happen.</p>

Now it's your turn. Remember to explore lots of different aspects of the scene, particularly from the characters' point of view, as if you can see all the details in slow-motion.



