

## IDENTIFYING ELEMENTS OF A PLOT

# Stranded in Wyoming

This seemed like the longest road trip ever to Kristen. She couldn't wait to arrive at Yellowstone National Park. Her friends had told her about all the fascinating natural wonders she would see there. They had also warned her about the long car ride to get there, but she still felt like she had been in the car with her parents forever! To make matters worse, her dad decided to "help" by taking a shortcut he had found on a map, but the rough country road was making her carsick.

Suddenly the car made a loud clunking sound. Then it slowed to a stop. "What's going on, Mark?" Kristen's mother asked her father.

"I don't know, but it's not good," her father replied. He pulled to the side of the road, popped the hood, and stepped out to look at the engine. A minute later he returned to the driver's seat. "We'll need to call a towing service."

Kristen's mom groaned. "I was afraid you were going to say that. We lost cell phone service about 15 miles back."

"You mean we're stranded here in the middle of nowhere?!" Kristen exclaimed.

"Kristen, we're not in the middle of nowhere, we are simply in rural Wyoming," her dad said. "Someone will drive by soon."

Two hours later, a cow in the pasture was the only moving thing they had seen. Suddenly, a pickup came barreling up the road behind them. They all waved their arms wildly. They were overjoyed when the vehicle slowed to a stop.

They told the man about the situation that had left them stranded along the desolate road. It turned out that this man owned a ranch nearby. He fixed his own ranch equipment all the time and knew exactly what needed to be done to fix their car! He promised he would return shortly with the tools necessary to repair the engine.

Minutes later, not only did the rancher return, but his wife as well. While he fixed the car, she shared a snack of cookies and lemonade with them while telling them what life on a ranch in rural Wyoming was like.

Before long, the rancher closed the hood. "You're all set," he said.

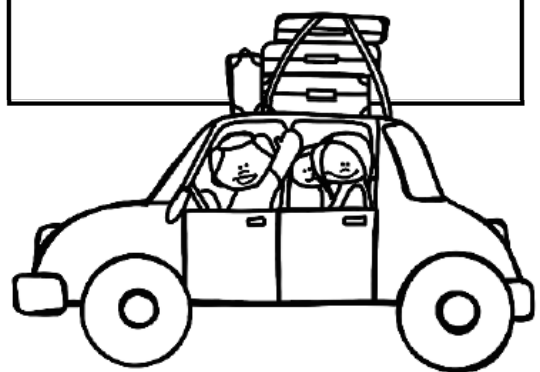
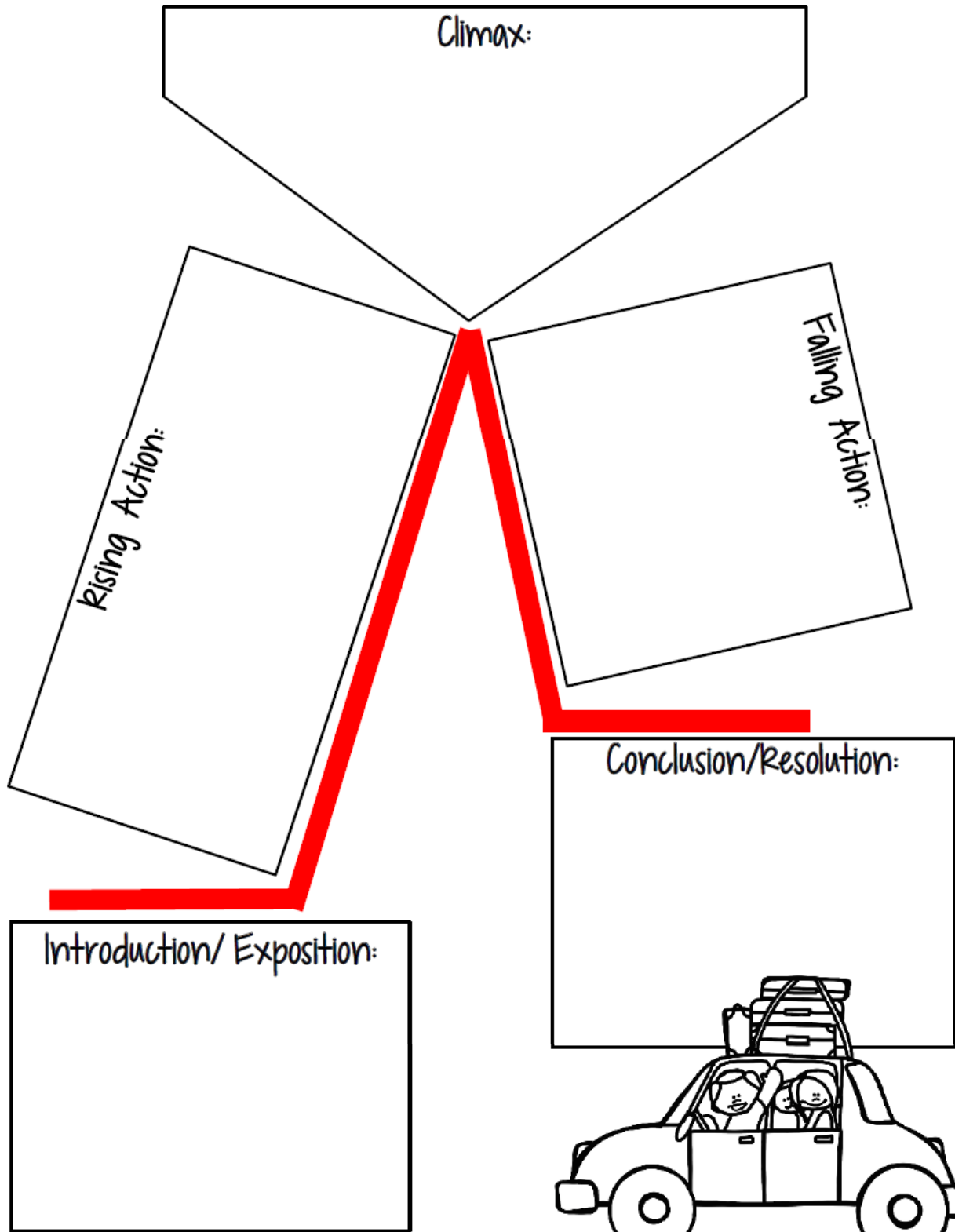
"I can't thank you enough!" Kristen's father told him. "What do I owe you?"

"Not a thing," the rancher said, "Just pay it forward someday. When you find someone in need, help them out and don't ask for anything in return."

"You have my word," Kristen's father replied. Soon, they were back on their way, thankful for the kindness of strangers.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Read the short story "Stranded in Wyoming". Briefly describe the plot elements of the story in the correct boxes below.



The car stalls along this deserted road. There is no cellphone reception. They wait for two hours.

The rancher repairs the car while his wife gives the family a snack. The rancher refuses payment for this help, asking the family to "pay it forward" instead.

A local rancher finally comes up the road and stops to help.

The vacationers are back on their way to Yellowstone, thankful for the kindness of strangers.

Kristen's family is on their way to Yellowstone for their summer vacation. Dad takes a shortcut on a little travelled road.