The power of a short story, such as “Rogue Wave,” comes from its actions and events. Most stories follow a series of events, also known as the **plot**. A story centers around the **conflict**, the struggle between opposing forces. As the characters struggle to resolve a conflict, the plot builds suspense, the growing tension and excitement felt by the reader. Most plots have five stages:

- **The exposition** introduces the characters and presents the setting and conflict.
- **The rising action** presents complications that intensify.
- **The climax** is the story’s moment of greatest interest - the point where the conflict of resolved.
- **In the falling action**, the story begins to draw to a close.
- **The resolution** reveals the final outcome of the conflict.

Often the plot is influenced by the setting, or the time and place of the action. For example, the setting can cause plot complications. In “Rogue Wave,” Sully notes that as evening comes, the fading light could hamper his rescue efforts. To understand the influence of setting on the plot in “Rogue Wave,” find details that tell where and when the events are happening. Use those details to visualize the setting and follow the action.

### Exposition:
Sully is outside the capsized boat where there is plenty of light and air. But he wants to get into the boat to free his sister. Scoot is below in the darkness with limited air. She wants to get to the surface. So, the settings separate the two characters, underscoring the external conflict.

### Rising Action:
Scoot is in total darkness, so she can’t see what she’s doing or where things are. She has a headache. She finally realizes that the cabin where she is trapped is upside down, which makes her disoriented. Finally, when she tries to open the entry doors, she can’t.

### Climax:
Sully is finally giving up hope. Scoot is on her sixth dive. She gives one final push “with all her strength” and the skylight finally opens! Scoot is almost out of breath - about to lose consciousness - but has resolved her conflict.

### Falling Action:
Sully answers Stevens’s question with just two words: “rogue wave.” Stevens winces and nods because that is all he needs to hear - a rogue wave is so sudden and destructive, it goes without saying that it causes massive problems.

### Resolution:
... Sully and Scoot survive the “Rogue Wave.”

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**Analyze the Text**
1. **Infer** Reread lines 218-225. What inference can you make about Scoot’s personality, based on these lines? Scoot has scary thoughts about whether Sully is okay. Fear takes over her, but only for a few moments. Then she turns her attention to getting out. People who act like this in the face of disaster are brave and resilient.

2. **Connect** How does the information in lines 17-31 help establish the conflict? By providing details of the dangers of rogue waves, it underscores the threat to Scoot and Sully and suggests the conflict that they will soon have to resolve - surviving the sudden strike of a rogue wave.

3. **Infer** Reread lines 186-194. Describe Sully’s emotions at this point. Sully has just been thinking about his sister and their loving relationship. He has pounded his fists bloody, trying to contact her. He jumps in the water for one final time. He is scared and desperate.

4. **Infer** Reread lines 328-332. What inference does the author want you to make at this point? Sully knows roughly their location in the ocean. He also knows that small boats might be in the area. This shows that he is knowledgable and that rescue might be close. There is still hope for Sully and Scoot.

5. **Compare** Fill out a chart like this one to trace the conflicts or complications Scoot and Sully encounter in the story. Review the story events in the text, expanding the chart as necessary to cover the key happenings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complication</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scoot’s</strong></td>
<td>the flooding, upturned, dark cabin</td>
<td>a headache</td>
<td>concern about Sully and inability to hear him</td>
<td>dwindling air</td>
<td>the locked skylight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sully’s</strong></td>
<td>his inability to see or hear Scoot</td>
<td>his inability to get inside the capsized cabin</td>
<td>fears of what could happen to Scoot</td>
<td>guilt about putting Scoot in danger</td>
<td>the sinking hull and the oncoming sunset</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. **Analyze** Identify the two settings in this story. How does the author’s shifting between these settings help build suspense? The two settings are outside the Sea Dog’s upturned hull, and below in the upturned cabin. Shifting between these settings builds suspense by altering between the obstacles each character encounters.

7. **Evaluate** Describe the climax of the story. What makes this moment so suspenseful? Explain. The climax is the moment when Scoot finally unfastens the dogs of the skylight and pushes through to the ocean. It’s suspenseful because we know she is exhausted and running out of air. Meanwhile, up above, Sully has almost given up hope. The situation seems desperate.