

Plot Twist Worksheet

The Red Herring

Introducing a fake clue can convince the reader they know how the story is going to come out. They characters usually come up with reasoning to support this – often without any help from the antagonist.

False Clue:

Anticipated Outcome:

Surprise Outcome:

The Distraction

Introducing a misconstrued situation (or deliberately faked set-up by the antagonist) can mislead characters into moving to a location that will allow the antagonist to do something the heroes otherwise could have stopped.

Faked Situation:

Anticipated Outcome:

Surprise Outcome:

The Power-Up

The reader may assume that the hero can beat the bad guy handily – and you can arc the plot so that it looks like that's what's about to happen. Only – then you give the antagonist a wild card, a more brilliant plan, or a hidden power (the whole "I'm not really left handed," fits in this category).

Dire Situation:

Apparent Hero Success:

Antagonist Level Up:

The Deceptive Setting

The reader may assume the story takes place in one time period, planet, genre or other location/worldbuilding conceit, only to have the rug pulled out from under them (like yeah, the alien planet is actually post-apocalyptic Earth).

Perceived Setting:

Misleading Details:

Actual Setting:

The Ironic Twist

Two characters act like they are discussing the same thing – only one of them turns out to be mistaken or lying. One character tries to do something nice for the other, but the other, trying to do something nice for the first character does something that negates the first character's actions. Or one claims to be helping the other, but is secretly causing harm.

Character 1's Words and Actions:

Character 2's Words and Actions:

Ironic Mismatch: