

# DRAMATICA®

## Table of Story Elements

Based on a theory and materials developed by  
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### What is this chart?

This chart illustrates the core Dramatica structure found in all complete stories. Its four major areas—Situation, Activity, Manipulation, and Fixed Attitudes—represent areas of conflict essential to every fully explored story. Nested within each of these four areas on this chart are various story components which are used to create dramatic story points such as the “Story Goal” and “Problem.” The components have been arranged according to their relevance to genre, plot, theme, and character.

### Why should you use this chart?

As a writer, you’ll want to explore your story as completely as possible. This chart serves as a reference guide to help you understand the fundamental relationships that exist between the story components essential to developing a fully explored story.

## Situation

<b>Past</b>		<b>How Things Are Changing</b>	
<b>Fate</b>	<b>Prediction</b>	<b>Fact</b>	<b>Security</b>
Knowledge   Order	Actuality   Inertia	Proven   Accurate	Effect   Result
Chaos   Thought	Change   Perception	Non-accurate   Un-proven	Process   Cause
<b>Interdiction</b>	<b>Destiny</b>	<b>Threat</b>	<b>Fantasy</b>
Ability   Equity	Aware   Projection	Theory   Expectation	Trust   Ending
Inequity   Desire	Speculation   Self-Aware	Determination   Hunch	Unending   Test
<b>Future</b>		<b>Present</b>	
<b>Openness</b>	<b>Delay</b>	<b>Work</b>	<b>Attract</b>
Consideration   Faith	Pursuit   Support	Certainty   Deduction	Proaction   Acceptance
Disbelief   Reconsider	Oppose   Avoid	Induction   Potentiality	Non-acceptance   Reaction
<b>Choice</b>	<b>Preconception</b>	<b>Repel</b>	<b>Attempt</b>
Logic   Conscience	Control   Help	Probability   Reduction	Inaction   Evaluation
Temptation   Feeling	Hinder   Un-controlled	Production   Possibility	Re-evaluation   Protection

## Activity

<b>Understanding</b>		<b>Doing</b>	
<b>Instinct</b>	<b>Senses</b>	<b>Wisdom</b>	<b>Skill</b>
Knowledge   Ability	Actuality   Aware	Proven   Theory	Effect   Trust
Desire   Thought	Self-Aware   Perception	Hunch   Un-proven	Test   Cause
<b>Interpretation</b>	<b>Conditioning</b>	<b>Experience</b>	<b>Enlightenment</b>
Order   Equity	Inertia   Projection	Accurate   Expectation	Result   Ending
Inequity   Chaos	Speculation   Change	Determination   Non-accurate	Unending   Process
<b>Obtaining</b>		<b>Gathering Information</b>	
<b>Approach</b>	<b>Self Interest</b>	<b>Prerequisites</b>	<b>Strategy</b>
Consideration   Logic	Pursuit   Control	Certainty   Probability	Proaction   Inaction
Feeling   Reconsider	Un-controlled   Avoid	Possibility   Potentiality	Protection   Reaction
<b>Morality</b>	<b>Attitude</b>	<b>Analysis</b>	<b>Preconditions</b>
Faith   Conscience	Support   Help	Deduction   Reduction	Acceptance   Evaluation
Temptation   Disbelief	Hinder   Oppose	Production   Induction	Re-evaluation   Non-acceptance

## Manipulation

<b>Developing A Plan</b>		<b>Playing A Role</b>	
<b>State of Being</b>	<b>Situation</b>	<b>Knowledge</b>	<b>Ability</b>
Knowledge   Inertia	Actuality   Order	Proven   Result	Effect   Accurate
Change   Thought	Chaos   Perception	Process   Un-proven	Non-accurate   Cause
<b>Circumstances</b>	<b>Sense of Self</b>	<b>Desire</b>	<b>Thought</b>
Aware   Equity	Ability   Projection	Trust   Expectation	Theory   Ending
Inequity   Self-Aware	Speculation   Desire	Determination   Test	Unending   Hunch
<b>Changing One's Nature</b>		<b>Conceiving An Idea</b>	
<b>Rationalization</b>	<b>Commitment</b>	<b>Permission</b>	<b>Need</b>
Consideration   Support	Pursuit   Faith	Certainty   Acceptance	Proaction   Deduction
Oppose   Reconsider	Disbelief   Avoid	Non-acceptance   Potentiality	Induction   Reaction
<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Obligation</b>	<b>Expediency</b>	<b>Deficiency</b>
Control   Conscience	Logic   Help	Inaction   Reduction	Probability   Evaluation
Temptation   Un-controlled	Hinder   Feeling	Production   Protection	Re-evaluation   Possibility

## Fixed Attitude

<b>Memories</b>		<b>Impulsive Responses</b>	
<b>Truth</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Confidence</b>
Knowledge   Actuality	Ability   Aware	Proven   Effect	Theory   Trust
Perception   Thought	Self-Aware   Desire	Cause   Un-proven	Test   Hunch
<b>Suspicion</b>	<b>Falsehood</b>	<b>Worry</b>	<b>Worth</b>
Order   Inertia	Equity   Projection	Accurate   Result	Expectation   Ending
Change   Chaos	Speculation   Inequity	Process   Non-accurate	Unending   Determination
<b>Innermost Desires</b>		<b>Contemplations</b>	
<b>Closure</b>	<b>Hope</b>	<b>Investigation</b>	<b>Appraisal</b>
Consideration   Pursuit	Logic   Control	Certainty   Proaction	Probability   Inaction
Avoid   Reconsider	Un-controlled   Feeling	Reaction   Potentiality	Protection   Possibility
<b>Dream</b>	<b>Denial</b>	<b>Re-appraisal</b>	<b>Doubt</b>
Faith   Support	Conscience   Help	Deduction   Acceptance	Reduction   Evaluation
Oppose   Disbelief	Hinder   Temptation	Non-acceptance   Induction	Re-evaluation   Production

### LEGEND: Color Coding of the Chart

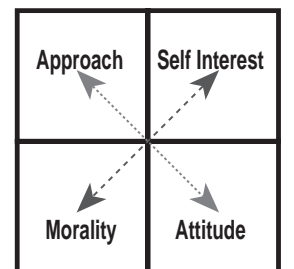
<b>Activity</b> (For Example)	<b>Throughline</b> The largest items on the chart illustrate where genre is best represented. They represent the broadest contexts in which a story's conflicts are explored.	<b>Morality</b> (For Example)	<b>Issue</b> Within each concern are for “thematic” Issues. This is where theme is best represented. The Issue and its diagonal opposite, the “thematic counterpoint,” form the foundations of a thematic conflict.
<b>Obtaining</b> (For Example)	<b>Concern</b> Within each throughline are four Concerns. This level is where plot is best represented. Concerns indicate the topic of concern in each act.	<b>Temptation</b> (For Example)	<b>Problem</b> The smallest items on the chart is where character is best represented. They represent the building blocks used for constructing characters and the problems that drive them.

### Understanding the Table Structure

The Dramatica table of story elements is comprised of many **Quads** (groupings of four squares or items). These quads range in size from the largest—the throughline-sized quad—to the smallest—the element-sized quad. Each quad is nested within a larger quad; the only exception being the throughline quad which is the largest.

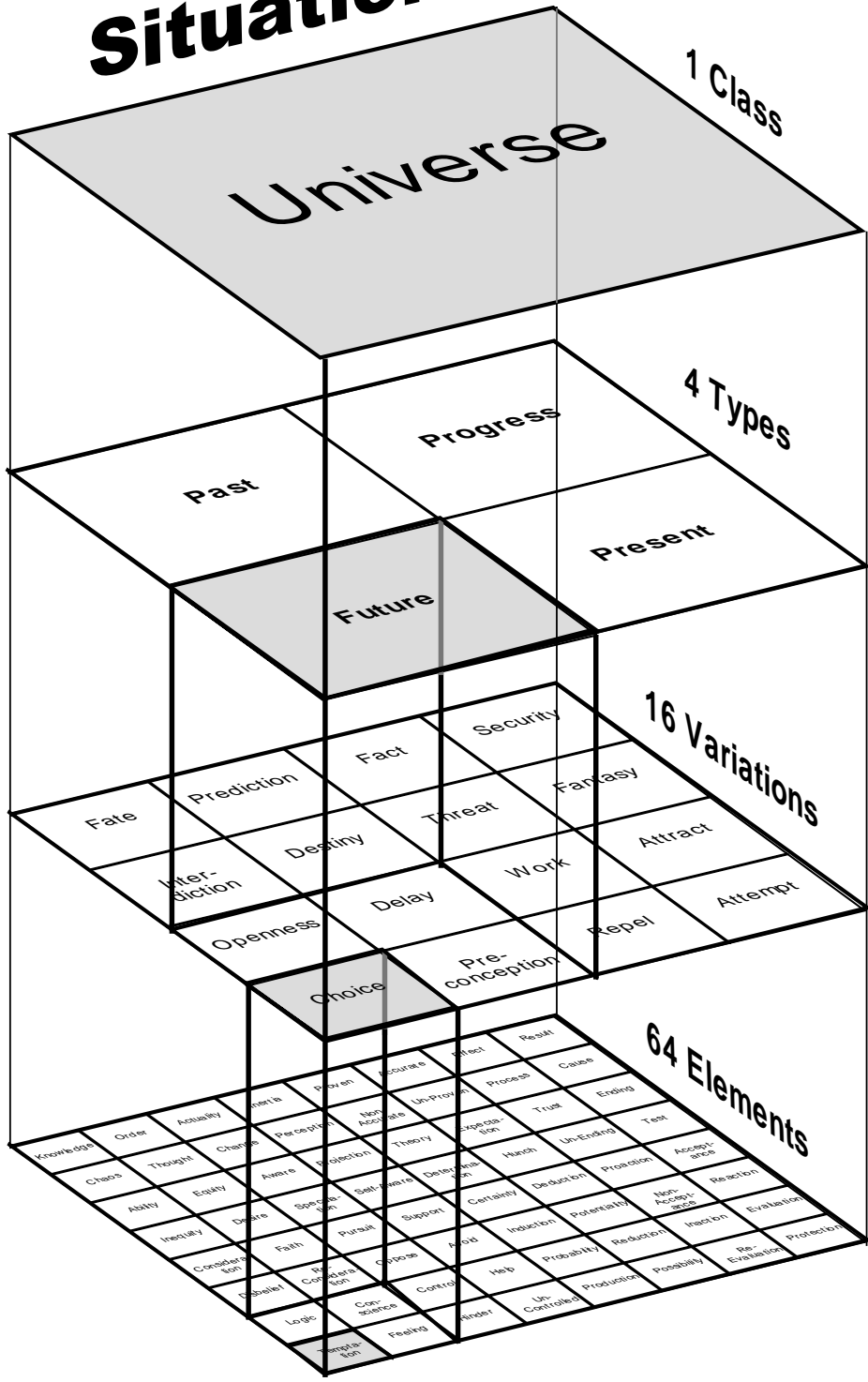
Items positioned diagonally across from one another in a quad are referred to as **Dynamic Pairs**. There are two dynamic pairs per quad. When considering the relationship of the items in a quad, dynamic pairs are the most likely to generate conflict.

In the illustration to the right, notice the two dynamic pairs: Approach/Attitude and Self Interest/Morality. The dynamic pair of Attitude and Approach is more likely to create conflict than either the pairing of Attitude and Morality or Attitude and Self Interest. Use dynamic pairs to heighten conflict in your story.

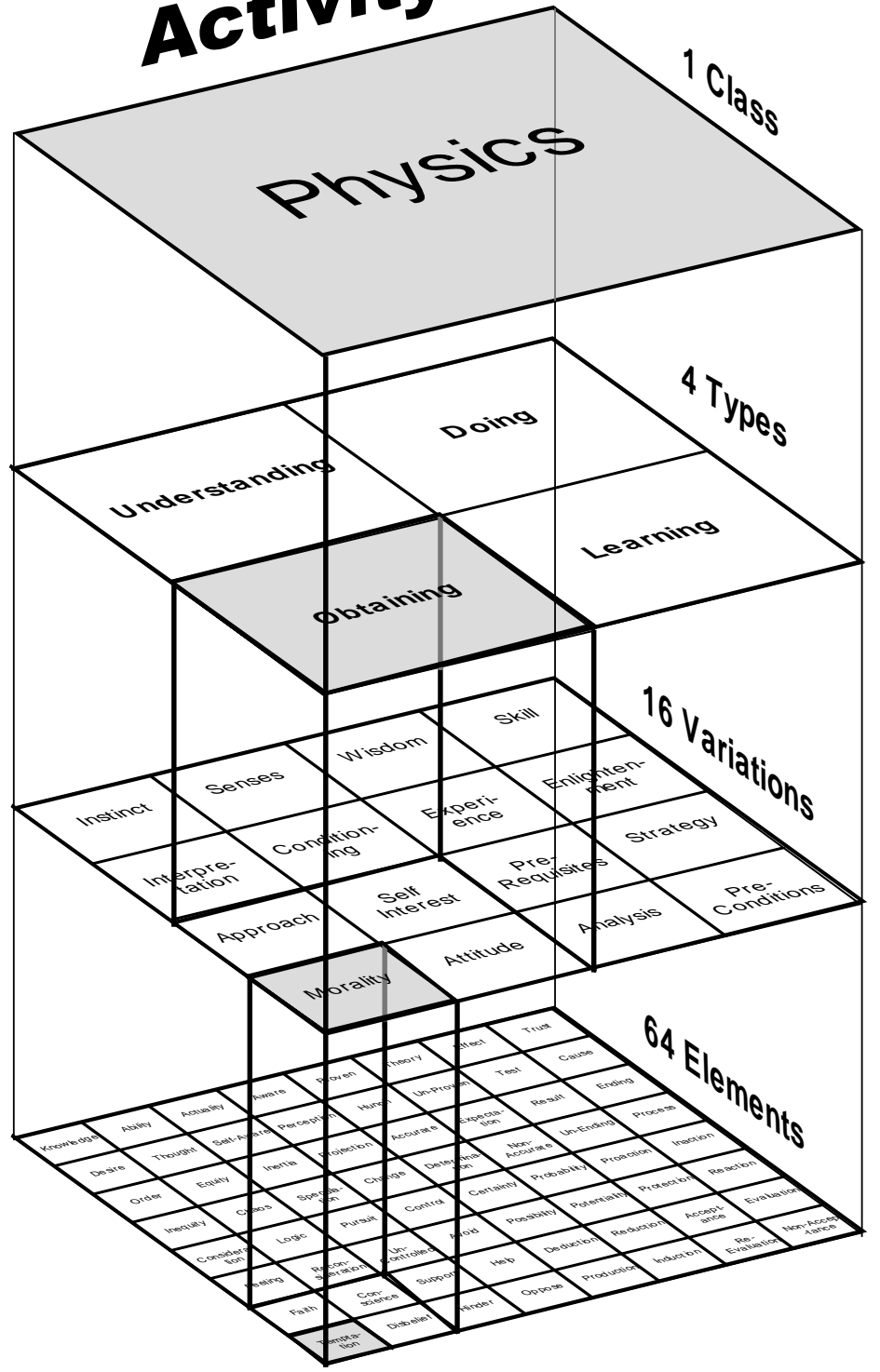


Example of one Quad with two Dynamic Pairs

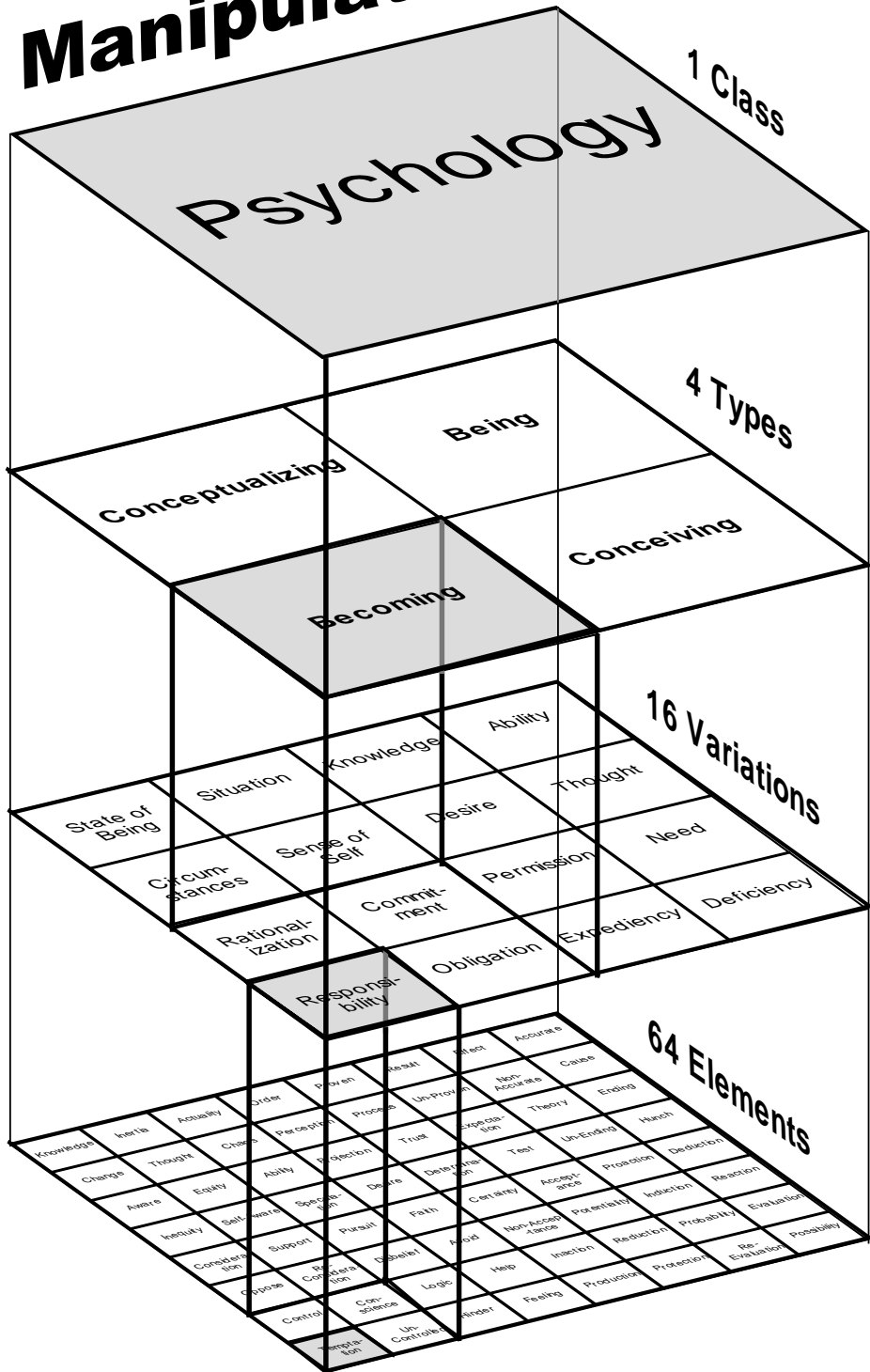
# Situation



# Activity



# Manipulation



# Fixed Attitude

