Game Level Assignment
Working backwards to create a good story

The following approach will help you work backwards toward an interesting and necessary level. You will begin by identifying the resolution of a single level, then identify what conflicts might precede the resolution. Finally, you will create an exposition that naturally leads to the resolution you need.

1. Write down (or review your prior list of) 10 major events in your game.

2. Choose one of the events. This will be the focus of your event.

   a. Example: PC's father dies in battle alongside him

3. List devices that might work well to precipitate the event. Don't worry if some devices exclude the possibility of others.
   a. PC fails to join his father's legion when ordered (could be used to indicate a character driven decision – selfish, independent, irresponsible)
   b. PC does not beat enough of the opposition to get to his father in time (player driven fault –player was not good enough at game play mechanics to get their)
   c. PC pursues another goal or a goal in conflict (player driven fault or character driven fault - character or player did not pursue mandated mission)
   d. PC decides to ally against father (player driven or character driven decision to change sides)
   e. PC withdraws from battle before the battle has finished (player driven decision)

4. Think about what types of things create the situation of your device. Typical game approaches are greed, lust, and love. Consider the seven deadly sins or the muses. Choose something that works best for all of the devices you like.
   a. Oppositions baits PC with riches for switching sides
   b. Opposition offers PC less riches if they duck out of the fight early
   c. Opposition offers power if the battle ends in their favor (perhaps lying about end results)
   d. NPC trickster encourages PC away from main mission – false opportunity for more warriors, more assets, or battle-free victory
   e. NPC trickster manipulates PC with promise of love
   f. NPC manipulates PC with promise of love, genuine intentions are good

5. Now review the list in reverse order. Draw lines linking your single central situation to the many devices, and then draw the lines back to your resolving event.

6. Does each path make sense?
7. Once you have at least on solid path from exposition to resolution, fully articulate your goals and level overview (as described in the level and story reading)
   a. Level Description
   b. Player Objective
   c. Game Play Objective
   d. Story Objective

8. Then articulate the player character's goals and their means of accomplishing those goals.
   a. Example: Player must battle through the enemy lines. They must kill 40 enemies with more than 20% health and in 10 minutes of game time.
      i. If they fail to do so then they will be kicked into sequence b1 (father dies because you were unable to save him and yourself)
      ii. If they reach the father with less than 20% health, see sequence b2 (PC withdraws from battle before he can save his father)
      iii. If the player kills no enemies and retreats from battle, display sequence . . .
      iv. If the player follows NPCtrickers, display sequence . . .

9. Lather, rinse, repeat as needed. Try it again for other scenes and important events. This structure might help you lead into important cinematics, or better yet, incorporate crucial events into standard game play.