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ELEMENTS OF A NOVEL

THE BASIC PURPOSE WHEN READING A NOVEL IS TO UNDERSTAND:

- ✘ who is telling the story (point of view)
- ✘ where and when the story takes place (the setting)
- ✘ who are the main characters (characterization)
- ✘ what the characters are like (mood)
- ✘ what happens (plot)
- ✘ the author's central idea or message (theme)
- ✘ how the author expresses his or her ideas (style)

CHARACTERS

- ✘ These are the people, animals, or natural forces represented as persons in a novel.
- ✘ Types of Characters:
- ✘ Main characters - characters who the story revolves around the most.
- ✘ Minor characters - interact with the main characters and help move the story along.
- ✘ Static characters - stay the same over the entire course of the story, even though their situation may change.
- ✘ Dynamic characters - evolve as individuals, learning from their experiences and growing emotionally.

MAIN CHARACTERS

- ✘ **The main character is the most important character.**
The action of the plot and main conflict revolve around him or her.
- ✘ **The protagonist:** is the main character or hero in a narrative or drama, usually the one with whom the audience identifies.
- ✘ **The antagonist:** is the person, thing, or force that works against the protagonist. It can be another character, a family, a society, a force of nature, or a force within the main character.

CHARACTER

- ✘ **Characters** are the imaginary people about whom a writer writes in fiction or drama. Examples of fictional characters: Harry Potter, Hamlet, Oliver Twist, Cinderella.
- ✘ The main character of the story is called the ***protagonist***.
- ✘ In literature, as in real life, we can evaluate character in three ways:
 1. what the individual says,
 2. what the individual does, and
 3. what others say about him or her.

QUALITIES OF CHARACTERS

- ✘ Characters are carefully brought out by their appearance, speech, actions, and what other characters say of them.
- ✘ Characters must be shaped to fit the needs of the plot.
- ✘ Unless the people in fiction seem to be real people, the story will not hold audience interest.
- ✘ They are believable only if they are like the readers and we understand why they act the way they do.

CHARACTERIZATION

- ✘ The way the author develops a character is called characterization. Pay attention to these clues from the author:
- ✘ Physical appearance and personality
- ✘ Speech, thoughts, feelings, and actions
- ✘ Interactions with other characters
- ✘ Direct comments by the author

PLOT

- ✘ Plot is **what happens** in a work of fiction.
- ✘ It is concerned with what happens in the story: the **overall structure** of a work of art and **the order or sequence of incidents**.
- ✘ For a work of fiction to be worth reading, something has to happen by the end. The author takes the reader from Point A to Point B.
- ✘ This journey might be:
 1. **a change in the character** (for example, the character matures or overcomes a challenge).
 2. **a change in the situation** (for example, zombies take over the town).
 3. **a change in the readers' understanding** (for example, in the beginning, readers think the protagonist was falsely accused of murder, and at the end, readers understand that he is guilty).

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- ✘ **Plot** The series of events and actions that takes place in a story.
The plot is the sequence of events or what happens in a story. Many plots contain a central problem – something that goes wrong. Climax
Rising Action Falling
Action Denouement Beginning Expositions End Resolution
Plot Line
 - ✘ **Climax:** The turning point. The most intense moment (either mentally or in action).
 - ✘ **Falling Action:** all of the action which follows the Climax.
 - ✘ **Rising Action:** the series of conflicts and crisis in the story that lead to the climax.
 - ✘ **Exposition:** The start of the story. The way things are before the action starts.
 - ✘ **Resolution:** The conclusion, the tying together of all of the threads.

DIVISION OF PLOT

- ✘ **Exposition/Introduction** – Author introduce the characters, provide information about earlier events and present situation.
- ✘ **Rising Action** – Part of the complication
- ✘ **Crisis or turning point** – Choices and decisions lead to the inevitable.
- ✘ **Falling Action** – incidents follow from the turning point without decrease in intensity
- ✘ **Denouement/Resolution** – clarifies and relaxes the tension.

PLOT NOVELS AND SHORT STORIES MUST HAVE CONFLICT.



The characters also usually have a goal to achieve. The struggle to achieve this goal or solve the problem is the conflict. Without conflict there would be no story. There are different types of conflicts in a story. External Forces: Man vs. man - another individual or group of individuals Man vs. nature - something in the environment Man vs. fate – a problem that seems uncontrollable



Plot Internal Forces: Man vs. self – a physical, mental or moral struggle faced by the central character. By the end of a story, the character facing the conflict succeeds or fails. To identify the conflict, try to find the events that caused the problem. Pay attention to how a story ends. Many stories end by resolving their conflicts. The way a problem is fixed or solved is the resolution.

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- ✘ Plots usually progress through stages:
Exposition
 - ✘ Rising Action
 - ✘ Climax
 - ✘ Falling Action
 - ✘ Resolution

SETTING

- ✘ **Setting is where the novel takes place.** Setting might be a room, a forest, a battlefield, a spaceship, etc.
- ✘ **Setting can Create atmosphere** for fiction, helps the reader imagine the scenes.
- ✘ **Convey information about a character.** For example, if a character's life is in chaos, it is expressed by showing her in her messy home.
- ✘ **Provide plot opportunities.** For example, if the setting is a Florida swamp, and you put a hungry alligator in your character's path, then something interesting is likely to happen.
- ✘ Stories actually have two types of setting: **Physical** and **Chronological**.
- ✘ The **physical setting** is of course where the story takes place. The “where” can be very general—a small farming community, or very specific—a two story white house at Hill Street in Scott City, Missouri.
- ✘ Likewise, the **chronological setting**, the “when,” can be equally general or specific. It may be the past, present or future.
- ✘ The author’s choices are important.

- ✘ **Setting The time, place and period in which the action takes place.**

Setting is the environment in which a story unfolds. It includes: the time and period in history, the place, the atmosphere, the clothing, the living conditions, the social climate

- ✘ A story can be set in an imaginary place, such as an enchanted castle, or a real place, such as New York or Africa. The time can be the past, the present, or the future. The setting of a story is always important. It influences the way characters act and think and all aspects of their lives.

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- ✘ Setting -Covers the time, place, and the background.
 - ✘ places you've never been times long ago times in the future into the hearts and minds of others.
 - ✘ It involves not only geography but also the entire climates of beliefs, habits and values of a particular region and historical period.
 - ✘ Sometimes, it emphasizes a certain locality like Chinatown in Sta. Cruz, Manila in Edgardo Reyes' "Sa Mga Kuko Ng Liwanag". It is essential that the setting be in keeping with the story that is told.

MOOD

- ✘ Mood is the feeling, or atmosphere, that the writer creates for the reader. The author can use the setting to create a mood, which is happy, sad, exciting, or boring. As you read a novel, pay attention to how the setting affects the mood of the story and also how it affects the lives of the characters.

POINT OF VIEW

- ✘ The narrative perspective from which the story is told. (Who is telling the story?) The narrator is the guide. When you determine who is telling the story, you've discovered the narrative point of view. This is important because the narrator controls: what and how much is told, the kind of information given to the reader, even the shape of the work itself.

POINT OF VIEW

- ✘ *Narrative point of view* is the perspective from which you tell a work of fiction.
- ✘ Point of View is the “narrative point of view,” how the story is told—more specifically, who tells it.
- ✘ **The narrator is the voice that's telling the story.**
- ✘ A *first-person narrator* tells the story using the words "I" and "me," as if he/she were actually there.
- ✘ In the **First Person point of view**, the story is told by a character within the story, a character using the first person pronoun, I.
- ✘ If the narrator is the main character, the point of view is **first person protagonist**.
- ✘ If the narrator is a secondary character, the point of view is **first person observer**. Arthur Conan Doyle lets Sherlock Holmes' friend Dr. Watson tell the Sherlock Holmes story.

POINT OF VIEW

× First Person Point of View :

Story is told from point of view of one of the characters who uses the first person pronoun "I." This means that the narrator is a character in the story. He/she describes the action in his or her own words. What's shown is limited to the character's observations and thoughts.

Third Person Omniscient Point of View: The author is telling the story. Events and characters described by a character outside the action. Narrator is all-knowing: he can see into the mind of more than one character. Gives reader access to all characters.

POINT OF VIEW

× Third Person Limited Omniscient:

Third person, told from the viewpoint of a character in the story. The narrator tells the story from the perspective of only one character. The reader only learns what this person feels and experiences.

THIRD PERSON POINT OF VIEW

- ✘ *A third-person narrator* tells the story from the outside and doesn't use the word "I" and "me" to describe the story's events because he or she isn't a participant.
- ✘ Instead, this type of narrator describes the characters as "he/him" or "she/her," etc.
- ✘ In the **Third Person point of view**, the story is **not** told by a character but by an "**invisible author**" using the third person pronoun (he, she, or it) to tell the story.
- ✘ If the third person narrator gives us the **thoughts of characters** (He wondered where he'd lost his baseball glove), then he is a **third person omniscient** (all knowing) narrator.
- ✘ If the third person narrator only gives us **information** which could be recorded by a camera and microphone (no thoughts), then he is a **third person dramatic narrator**.

DIALOGUE

- ✘ Dialogue is the conversation between characters, presented directly on the page.
- ✘ Dialogue tags are phrases such as "he said," and "Marcia asked John," which let the reader know which character is speaking at each point in the dialogue.

CONFLICT

- ✘ Struggles or clash that is presented in the drama.

CLIMAX

- ✘ Scene or incident that is the fruition of the accumulated suspense, and that stirs the most intense feelings or emotions. • It can also be described as the turning point of the story. • Likely to be most elaborately presented scheme in the play. • A full-length play will have several big scenes. • The climax is different from the other big scenes by its greater intensity and its structural relationship to the denouement and development.

THEME

- ✘ universal truth found in the novel, the main idea or topic.
- ✘ The Theme the central idea of the novel that usually contains some insight into the human condition. The Theme is a general statement of the central, underlying, and controlling idea or insight of a work of literature. It is the idea the writer wishes to convey about the subject—the writer's view of the world or a revelation about human nature. It can be expressed in a single sentence. This is the message about life from the author to the reader. It is like a lesson for life, something you can learn from the story and apply to other life situations.

THE LITERARY ELEMENT OF THEME

- ✘ Identifying the Theme in Five Steps: To identify the theme, be sure that you've first identified the story's plot, the way the story uses characterization, and the primary conflict in the story. Summarize the plot by writing a one-sentence description for the exposition, the conflict, the rising action, the climax, the falling action, and the resolution. Identify the subject of the work. Identify the insight or truth that was learned about the subject. How did the protagonist change? What lesson did the protagonist learn from the resolution of the conflict? State how the plot presents the primary insight or truth about the subject. Write one or more generalized, declarative sentences that state what was learned and how it was learned.

tone and style

- ✘ **Tone expresses a writer's attitude.**

The tone of a literary work may be one of: Anger, approval, joy, sadness, humor
Writer's style involves these elements: Word choice, tone, sentence structure and length, and literary devices, such as figurative language, symbols, dialogue, and imagery. Imagery is the use of words and phrases that create pictures in the reader's mind. Imagery gives details that appeal to your senses – sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch – make the writing come alive.

- ✘ **Tone and Style Figurative Language A special way of using words**

Not meant to be taken literally
Creates a picture in the minds of the reader
Often involves a comparison

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- × **Practice Question** Which of the following provides important background information and introduces the setting, characters, and conflict?
climax
exposition
rising action
resolution
 - × **26 Practice Question** Which of the following is considered an internal force in the conflict of a novel?
man vs. man
man vs. nature
man vs. self
man vs. fate

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- ✘ Practice Question The main character or hero in a novel and usually the one with whom the audience identifies is the – antagonist protagonist narrator opponent
 - ✘ 28 Next time you open up a novel, think about the narrator's point of view, the characters, the conflict, the theme, and the writer's style and techniques. You'll see how they all fit together and can open up whole new worlds to you, the reader.
 - ✘ 29 **Daniel Defoe: Robinson Crusoe**
In this level, we will study the following novel: Daniel Defoe: Robinson Crusoe