Short Story / Novel

The Elements of Fiction

There are four main parts to every work of fiction.

* Character
* Setting
* Theme
* Plot

**Character**

**Protagonist** – The main character. The action revolves around this character

**Antagonist** – The person or force which has a conflict with the protagonist

**Minor** – A less-important character

*Characteristics* can be shown by:

* What the author says about the character
* What a character says about him/herself
* What other characters say about him/her
* What the character does

**Setting**

* Includes **the time** of the story (year, hour etc.)
* Includes **the place** of the story (country, city, street, etc.)
* Includes **the atmosphere** of the beginning of the story (use adjectives)

**Theme**

Theme is the central thought or **main idea** behind the story. It is usually a reflection of some important or significant aspect of life.

**The Plot**

Plot is what happens in the story. It is the framework for the story.

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1. A Plot Diagram 5.
2. Introduction

* Meet the *characters*
* Learn about the *setting and atmosphere*
* Identify the *main conflict* and type

1. Rising Action

* Events pile on events
* Conflicts intensify

1. Climax

* The turning point of the story
* (Sometimes the most interesting or exciting part of the story. You can also look at where the main conflict you identified in #1 changes or “shifts” )

1. Falling Action

* Find out how the protagonist wins or loses the conflict
* Loose ends are tied up
* The *suspens*e of the story decreases
* Can vary in length

1. Conclusion

* May state a *moral* or give an explanation
* May be a surprise
* May be an unresolved ending

**Literary Devices**

**Allusion** – A short reference to a famous person, place or event.

**Atmosphere** – The feeling or mood of the story.

**Audience** – The intended reader.

**Conflict** – A clash of opposing ideas, emotions, forces or persons.

Person vs. Person

Person vs. Self

Person vs. Environment

Person vs. Supernatural

**Contrast** – Placing two very different people, objects, ideas or feelings very close together.

**Emphasis** – A part that is made more significant or important.

**Foreshadowing** – A hint of what is to come. It is used to create suspense.

**Irony** –

**Dramatic** - A difference between what the audience knows and what a character knows to be true. Ex. Romeo and Juliet

**Situational** – A difference between what happens and what would be expected to happen. Ex. Straight A student gets a failing grade.

**Verbal** – Difference between what is said and what is meant. Ex. Wow! I’m so excited about doing all this homework for Cristina’s class!

**Metaphor** – a comparison between two unlike things using “is”

**Mood** – see atmosphere

**Moral** – the intended message or lesson

**Narrator** – the character telling the story

**Simile** – a comparison between two things using like or as

**Suspense** – something that keeps the reader wondering what will happen next

**Symbol** – a person, object or act that suggests something deeper. Ex. A dove = peace

**Title** – Gives a hint or clue about the story