**Elements of Fiction**

**1. Internal Conflict:** when a character struggles with himself / herself

\* Man vs. Self *(usually a decision)*

**2. External Conflict:** when characters struggle with an outside force

\* Man vs. Nature

\* Man vs. Man

\* Man vs. Technology

\* Man vs. Fate

\* Man vs. Society (societal expectations)

**3. Plot Map: C**

**B D**

**A E**

\* A- Exposition:sets the stage

\* B- Rising Action: events that build suspense

\* C- Climax: turning point for characters

\* D- Falling Action:events that occur between climax and resolution

\* E- Resolution: “wrap up” (not every story has one)

**4. Plot Summary / Précis:** a retelling the story briefly in your own words

**5. Character:** Person or an animal who takes part in the actions of

a literary work

**\* Protagonist:** main character (frequently a “good guy”)

**\* Antagonist:** character or force in conflict with the main character

**6. Characterization:** How the character is described or revealed.

**\* Direct Characterization:** Things we know about the character

because we are told directly.

**\* Indirect Characterization:** Things we know about the character

because we observe them or figure

them out without being told directly.

**\* Character Trait:** describes character’s personality (not physical)

**\* Motivation:** reason for a character’s thoughts, actions, etc.

**7. Character Development:**

**\* Round:** shows many different traits, faults as well as virtues

**\* Flat:** does not show many different traits

**\* Dynamic:** Develops and grows, may be positive or negative

**\* Static:** character does not change or grow

**8. Setting:** time and place “backdrop” of the story

**9. Mood:** the feeling or atmosphere the writer creates for **the reader**…

impacted by descriptive words, setting, and figurative language.

**\* Suspense:** feeling of uncertainty or curiosity about events in a story.

**10. Author’s Purpose:**  why the author wrote the piece of literature

**11. Style:** the way a piece of literature is written… not *what* is said, but

*how* it is said… impacted by word choice, sentence length, tone,

figurative language, and point of view.

**\* Tone:** the attitude **the writer** takes toward a subject

**12. The Big Picture… Terms easily confused and misused**

**\* Moral:** the lesson the author wants the reader to learn

*Ex: Don’t take candy from a stranger*

**\* Theme:** message about life or human nature the author tries to convey

*Ex: In life, it can be difficult to know who you can trust*

**\* Motif:** an idea that is repeated throughout a piece of literature

*Ex: If the characters are forced repeatedly to make decisions about*

*people and whether or not to trust them, a motif in the story*

*might be “trust” or “decisions”*

**13. Point of View:** the narrator’s perspective

**\* first person narrator:** story is told by someone inside the story

(look for “I” or “we”)

**\* third person narrator:** story is told by someone outside the story

(look for “he,” “she,” or “they,” WITHOUT “I” and “we”)

***\* omniscient:*** narrator sees into the minds of more

than one character in the story

***\* limited:*** narrator knows only what one person thinks,

feels, and observes

**14. Allusion:** a reference to a well-known literary work, work of art, person, place, or event

**15. Symbol / Symbolism:** When something represents something

bigger / deeper than itself.

*Often, a symbol is a concrete object… something that can be touched and maybe held.*

*The symbolism is frequently a concept word that cannot be touched or held.*

*Ex: a key (I can hold it) is a symbol for freedom (a concept… cannot be “held”)*

**16. Irony:** a contrast between appearance and reality, expectation and

result, or meaning and intention

**\* Situational:** a contrast between what is expected to happen and

what actually happens… you can usually “feel” the impact of it

**\* Dramatic:** a contrast between what a character thinks and

what the reader or audience knows to be true

**\* Verbal:** a contrast between what is said and what is meant

**17. Figurative Language:**

**\* Imagery:**  writing that appeals to one or more of the five senses

\* **Simile:** comparing two unlike things and saying they are similar

using “like,” “as,” or “than”

*Ex: His room is* ***as*** *messy* ***as*** *a pig sty.*

\* **Metaphor:** comparing two unlike things directly.

*Ex: His room* ***is*** *a pig sty.*

**18. Cause and Effect:** when one thing leads to, causes, another

**19. Foreshadowing:** clues that hint at future events and outcomes

**20. Foreboding:** foreshadowing of something bad

**21. Prediction:** the active reading process of trying to predict what will happen

**22. Making Inferences:** Using information in the story, as well as your own

common sense, to make logical guesses about…

*author’s purpose characters main ideas narrators plot & much, much more*

**Additional Terms and Practice**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Element / Term** | **Literature** | **Definition / Example** |
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