

PLOT

- Sequence of events
- Concentrates on major happenings

CONFLICT

- A clash of actions, ideas, desires or wills
- Three kinds of conflict
 - Man vs. man
 - Man vs. environment
 - Man vs. self

All three kinds can be in the same story

PROTAGONIST

- Central character in the conflict
- Could be sympathetic or unsympathetic character (“good” or “bad” guy)

ANTAGONIST

- Forces working against the protagonist
- Could be persons, things, society, traits of the protagonist’s own character

INDETERMINATE ENDING

- No definite conclusion reached in terms of conflict

DILEMMA

- A situation in which a character must make a choice between two disagreeable, undesirable or unfavorable alternatives
- “Between a rock and a hard place”

CHARACTER

Two ways to present character:

1. **Direct presentation:** the author tells the reader what the character is like

Eg. "Sally was a quiet person who was easily scared of loud noisy people."

2. **Indirect presentation:** the author shows the reader the character in action

Eg. "Sally stared coldly at the stranger in the room. She haughtily ignored his friendly gaze and ignored all his attempts at conversation."

- Reader infers what the character is like
- Most often used by an author or a combination of both.

Character must observe three principles to be convincing:

1. Consistent behavior
2. Motivation for all actions of the character, especially a change in behavior
3. Plausible - life-like to others

Types of character:

Round: complex and many sided

A lot of detail given

Flat: can be summed up in one or two sentences – minor characters

Stock/ Stereotype: recurring character "types"

Ie. Mad scientist, evil stepmother

Realistic: seems real

Static: does not undergo a change in the story

Dynamic: Undergoes a significant change throughout the story

Believable Character Change:

1. Must be sufficiently motivated
2. Must have sufficient time for change to occur
3. Must be within the character's possibilities to change

SYMBOL and IRONY

SYMBOLISM: a literary device where something means MORE than what it is.

Eg.

	Literal meaning	Symbolic meaning
Dove	bird	peace
White	colour	purity
Black	colour	death

Look for symbolism in: -names of characters

- use of objects and actions (more important kind of symbolism)

- story must furnish a clue that a detail is to be taken symbolically through emphasis, repetition or position
- has meaning inside the story, but not necessarily out of it
- must suggest a meaning different in kind to its literal meaning. Eg. A dove does not symbolize birds.
- Can have more than one meaning.

IRONY: three different kinds of irony

- **VERBAL:** say the opposite of what is meant
 - Sarcasm

- **DRAMATIC:** contrast between what the character says or thinks and what the reader (audience) knows to be true.
- **SITUATIONAL:** Opposite of what is expected happens
 - Discrepancy between appearance and reality, between expectation and fulfillment, OR between what is and what would seem appropriate.
 - Most sophisticated type of irony

POINT OF VIEW

1st Person:

- tells the story from one character's point of view
- Use "I"
- More real
- No direct interpretation by the author

2nd Person:

- "you" are the main character
- Not that common
- "Choose Your Own Adventure" books
- The author tells "you" what you are doing
- Unnerving to the reader

3rd Person Limited Omniscient:

- Uses pronouns "he" "she" etc
- Viewpoint of one character in the story
- Can only see, hear, feel what that character sees, hears or feels
- Narrator follows one person in the story and knows only what they know

3rd Person Omniscient

- Pronouns "he" "she" etc
- Knows all, tells all about character's deeds, actions, thoughts and feelings

- Most flexible point of view
- Like a god that can see into every character

Objective:

- A reporter who is reporting what is happening
- Reader is spectator
- No interpretation or explanation for events, actions
- Reader can only infer what characters think, feel, etc by their actions
- Most speed and action

THEME

- A controlling idea or the central insight of the story
- Unifying generalization about life stated directly or indirectly by the author or characters
- Ask: What is the central purpose of the story?
- Theme can be stated briefly (one sentence) or at greater length
- Theme gives the story unity

- Not all stories have a theme
- Moral and theme are not the same thing
- May not always follow our ideas about life

Theme exists only when an author:

- Has seriously attempted to record life accurately or reveal some truth about it
- Has mechanically introduced some concept or theory about life and his story illustrates it

Important Principles of theme:

1. theme must be expressed in the form of a statement

ie. Loyalty (subject)

“Loyalty to a country often inspires heroic self-sacrifice” (theme)

2. Theme must be a **generalization** about life
3. Theme is the central and unifying concept of the story
4. There is no one way of stating theme
5. Avoid statements which reduce the theme to a cliché.
Ie. “You can’t judge a book by its cover”