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| **Allusion -** A reference to a statement, well-known person, place, or event from literature, history, mythology, politics, sports, science, or the arts. Allusions usually come from a body of information that the author presumes the reader will know. |
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| **Allusions to Classic Literature -** A reference to a well-known piece of classic literature such as a reference to a Shakespearean play like *Hamlet.* |
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| **Antagonist -** A principal character or force in opposition to a protagonist, or main character. The antagonist is usually another character but sometimes can be a force of nature, a set of circumstances, some aspect of society, or a force within the protagonist. The antagonist is often, but not always, the villain in a literary work. |
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| **Archetypes -** A typical example of a certain person or thing. "The character is a perfect archetype of the *hero* archetype." |
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| **Author’s Purpose -** An author’s purpose is his or her reason for creating a particular work. The purpose may be to entertain, to explain or to inform, to express an opinion, or to persuade readers to do or believe something. An author may have more than one purpose for writing, but usually one is the most important. |
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| **Character Development -** The method(s) a writer uses to create and develop characters. To develop a character, (a) a writer may describe a character’s physical appearance; (b) the speech, thoughts, feelings, or actions of a character may be used to reveal the character’s nature; (c) the speech, thoughts, feelings, or actions of other characters may be used to develop a character; or (d) the narrator may make direct comments about a character. |
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| **Character Point of View -** An important aspect within character development is character point of view. The viewpoint or voice of a character is developed by a writer and enables readers to better understand the events of a text through a character’s thoughts, feelings, beliefs, motives, or actions. |
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| **Character Traits -** Character traits are all the aspects of a person’s behavior and attitudes that make up that person’s personality. Everyone has character traits, both good and bad. Even characters in books have character traits. Character traits are often shown with descriptive adjectives, like patient, unfaithful, or jealous. |
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| **Character Types -** There are many types of characters in fiction – each having their own role and function within a story: protagonist, antagonist, round character, flat character, stock character, and so on. |
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| **Characterization -** Characterization is the concept of creating characters for a narrative. It is a literary element and may be employed in dramatic works of art or everyday conversation. Characters may be presented by means of description, through their actions, speech, thoughts and interactions with other characters. |
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| **Complex Characters** – Characters with multiple or conflicting motivations and how the character develops over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance a plot or develop the theme. |
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| **Conflict -** A struggle or clash between opposing characters, forces, or emotions that moves the plot forward in literary text. Almost every story has a main conflict (or problem) a conflict that is the story’s focus. |
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| **Cultural Experience** – Experiences or study of another country’s knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations. |
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| **Excerpt -** A passage or segment taken from a text. The length of the excerpt may be a phrase, a sentence, a paragraph, or an entire chapter. |
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| **Falling Action -** In the plot of a story, falling action is the action that occurs after the climax. During the falling action, conflicts are resolved and mysteries are solved. |
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| **Fiction -** Imaginative works of prose, primarily the novel and the short story. Although fiction may draw on actual events and real people, it springs mainly from the imagination of the writer. The purpose is to entertain as well as enlighten the reader. |
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| **Flashback -** An interruption in the action of a plot to tell what happened at an earlier time. A flashback breaks the usual movement of the narrative by going back in time. Flashback usually gives background information that helps the reader understand the present situation. |
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| **Foreshadowing -** A writer’s use of hints or clues to suggest events that will occur later in the plot. Foreshadowing creates suspense and prepares the reader for what is to come. |
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| **Irony -** A contrast between what is expected and what actually exists or happens. Irony involves the tension that arises from the discrepancy, either between what one says and what one means (verbal irony), between what a character believes and what a reader knows (dramatic irony), or between what occurs and what one expects to occur (situational irony). Exaggeration, sarcasm, and understatement are techniques writers use to express irony. |
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| **Moral -** A lesson taught in a literary work, such as a fable. For example, the moral *Do not count your chickens before they hatch* teaches that one should not count on one’s fortunes or blessings until they appear. A moral of a literary work should not be confused with a theme. |
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| **Myth -** A traditional story, usually of unknown authorship, that deals with basic questions about the universe. Heroes and gods often figure prominently in myths, which may attempt to explain such things as the origin of the world, mysteries of nature, or social customs. |
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| **Plot / plot development -** The action or sequence of events in a story. Plot is usually a series of related incidents that builds and grows as the story develops. There are five basic elements in a plot line: (a) exposition; (b) rising action; (c) climax; (d) falling action; and (e) resolution or denouement. |
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| **Point of View -** The vantage point from which a writer tells a story. The three main points of view in literary texts are omniscient, third-person limited, and first person. |
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| **Protagonist -** The main character in fiction or drama. The protagonist is the character upon whom the reader focuses attention, the person who sets the plot in motion. Most protagonists are rounded, dynamic characters who change in some important way by the end of the story, novel, or play. The protagonist is often, but not always, the hero in a literary work. |
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| **Resolution (or denouement) -** The portion of a play or story where the central problem is solved. The resolution comes after the climax and falling action and is intended to bring the story to a satisfactory end. An insight or a change as a result of the conflict is shown in the resolution. |
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| **Rising Action -** The events in a story that move the plot forward. Rising action involves conflicts and complications and builds toward the climax of the story. |
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| **Satire -** Type of writing that ridicules human weakness, vice, or folly in order to bring about social reform. Satires often try to persuade the reader to do or believe something by showing the opposite view as absurd or even as vicious and inhumane. One of the favorite techniques of the satirists is exaggeration, overstating something to make it look worse than it is. For example, George Orwell’s novel *Animal Farm* uses barnyard animals to mock the way people abuse political power. |
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| **Setting -** The time and place of the action in a story, play, or poem. Elements of setting may include geographic location, historical period (past, present, or future), season of the year, time of day, and the beliefs, customs, and standards of a society. Setting can function in several ways in a text: it can provide atmosphere, create conflict, or reveal character. |
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| **Symbolism -** The use of something concrete (e.g., an object, a setting, an event, an animal, or a person) that functions in a text to represent something more than itself. A symbol must be something tangible or visible, while the idea it symbolizes must be something abstract or universal. For example, a dark forest has often been used as a symbol of being lost and confused in life. In James Hurst’s “The Scarlet Ibis,” the fragile ibis functions as a symbol of the frail little boy and his unusual nature. |
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| **Tone -** An expression of a writer’s attitude toward a subject. Unlike mood, which is intended to shape the reader’s emotional response, tone reflects the feelings of the writer. Tone can be serious, humorous, sarcastic, playful, ironic, bitter, or objective. |
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| **Universal Themes -** An underlying message about life or human nature that the author wants the reader to understand and that may give readers insight into the author’s view of the world. A theme is a complex and original revelation about life that is usually unstated, yet it is vital. |
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| **World Literature -** A body of work drawn from many nations and recognized as literature throughout the world. |
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