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# The Short Story

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# Characters

- Protagonist is the main character who the readers root for.
- Antagonist is the character that blocks or goes against the protagonist.
- Flat characters show readers only one side of their personalities and are easy to understand.
- Round characters are fully developed and complex; they show more than one side to their personalities.
- Dynamic characters undergo a major change in a story.
- Static characters do not change throughout the course of a story.
- Foil characters are a pair of characters who provide a striking contrast to one another.

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# Characterization

- Characterization is the process that the author uses to reveal the personality of a character.
- Direct characterization is when the narrator explicitly states the type of person a character is.
- Indirect characterization is when readers make inferences based off the following:
  - What the character says
  - What the character thinks or feels
  - How others feel about the character
  - The character's actions
  - The physical description of the character

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## Setting

- Setting is when and where a story takes place.
- The setting shapes the events and conflicts in a story. For example, weather can indicate danger or good fortune.
- Consider how in horror movies, there are often thunderstorms or it is night. It is harder for characters to function when they can't see well, which builds more suspense for readers/viewers.
- The culture of the time period (past, present, future) dictate how characters behave.

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## Plot

- **Plot:** the sequence of most significant events in a story; plot lines develop how the characters behave, interact, and details the main events that make a story whole
- **Exposition:** an introduction to the characters, conflicts, setting, and basic information about the story
- **Rising Action:** the conflicts start to heat up; tensions build and readers discover more interesting, in-depth details about characters and the story
- **Climax:** the turning point of the story; the point of highest tension; the conflict reaches its peak (some cliff hangers will end on the climax)
- **Falling Action:** conflicts calm down and readers are exposed to the aftermath of the climax where loose ends begin to get tied up
- **Resolution:** the ending of the story; tells where characters leave off; the final details of the story

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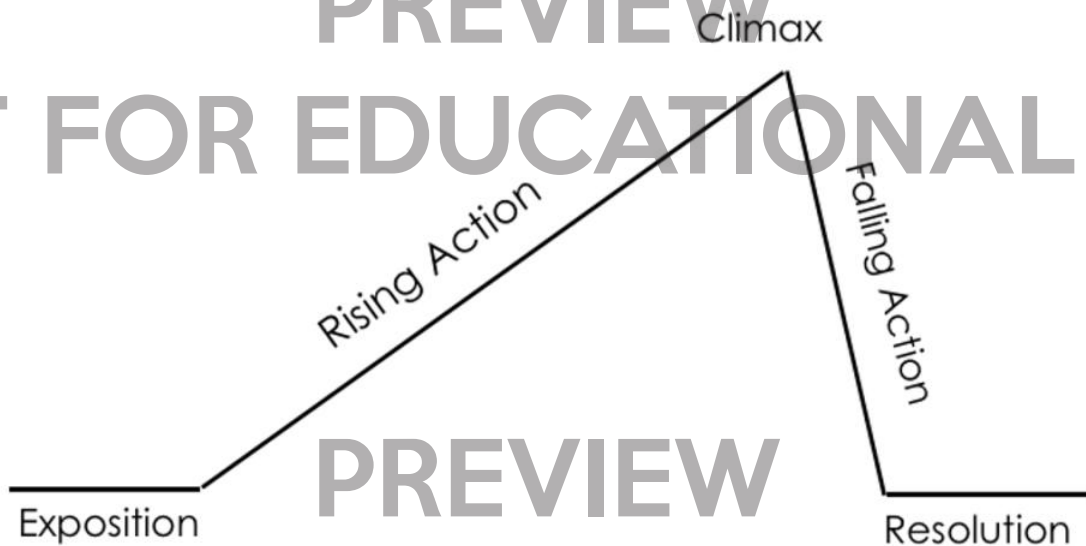
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# Plot Diagram

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# Conflict

- Internal conflict: a struggle that takes place in someone's mind.  
Example: make a tough decision.
- External conflict: a struggle that takes place between a person and some outer force.
  - Man vs. Man: two characters that verbally or physically have a conflict
  - Man vs. Nature: a character is conflicted by a natural force, such as weather or an animal
  - Man vs. Society: a character has a conflict with the way a society functions; they can be against its laws or social norms that most others live by; for example, if a character is anti-slavery during a period of slavery

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## Point of View

- First person: When a story is told from the perspective of the narrator.
- Second person: When the narrator addresses the audience or readers directly.
- Third person objective: The narrator tells the story without revealing or describing any of the characters' thoughts or feelings.
- Third person limited: The narrator only knows the thoughts and feelings of one character, usually the main character.
- Third person omniscient: The narrator reveals the thoughts and feelings of more than one (usually all) of the characters.

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## Flashback

- A scene in the story that takes the narrative back in time to a previous important event.
- Interrupts the chronology of the story to provide crucial information that connects to the narrative.
- Creates mystery, suspense, or surprise.

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# Foreshadowing

- Hints or warnings the author includes in a narrative to help readers develop the story
- Signs that future events may occur

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# Theme

Theme is the central idea of a work of literature that depicts a message from the author.

- It can be the moral of the story, and stories can contain more than one theme.
- Theme is not just one word, such as "love" or "war." It must be a concept expressed using a complete sentence, in message form, such as: "love requires sacrifice," or "war can turn ordinary people into heroes."
- A theme is not specific to one person or setting. It must be **universal**. You can express the same message to someone living in France in 1805 that can also be said to someone living in America in 1970.
- Theme doesn't have to be a true statement; it is just the opinion of the author based on evidence from the story.

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# Symbol

- Something that stands for something else more meaningful.
- Symbols can be abstract or concrete. They can be colors, people, weather, objects, a setting, or an image.
- For example, a dove is a symbol for peace.

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## Tone and Mood

- **Tone** is the attitude of the speaker or narrator.
- **Mood** is the feeling the reader gains from the story and describes the overall atmosphere of the story.

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# Irony

- Irony is used to create suspense, humor, or tension for a reader/audience.
- Dramatic irony is when a reader/audience knows information that one or more of the characters do not know.
- Situational irony is when something occurs that is completely opposite of what is expected.
- Verbal irony is when someone says the opposite of what they mean or feel.

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