

Narrative Elements

<http://www.nadasisland.com/literature/>

2.1 - The Point of View: Who is the narrator?

<http://www.nadasisland.com/literature/pointofview.html>

We should remember that someone is always between the reader and the action of the story, that someone is telling the story from his or her own point of view. This angle of vision, the point of view from which the people, events, and details of a story are viewed, is important to consider.

TYPES of Point of View:

A- First Person

- He is recognizable by use of first person pronoun, generally "I" but sometimes "we"
- He offers a singularity of perspective

When reading stories in the first person, we need to realize that what the narrator is recounting might not be the objective truth. We should question the trustworthiness of the accounting.

B- Third Person

An outside force without any clear identity tells the story

- **Omniscient**: narrator moves freely about in time and space and into characters' thoughts and feelings. He knows everything about them, interprets and comments on their behavior, and even comments on the significance or meaning of the story.
- **Limited omniscient**: Like omniscient, the story is told in third person, but the author tells it from the viewpoint of only one character. The author looks at events through the eyes, mind and emotions of that one character. The writer moves inside and outside the character and knows what that character sees, hears, feels, and thinks. However, nothing is revealed about the other characters except for what his chosen character knows or infers. This point of view is closer to the conditions of real life and may serve to unify the story since all details are seen through the eyes and experience of one person.
- **Objective**: The narrator refrains from any editorial commentary. He can go anywhere, but can only record what is seen and heard. He tells what happens without stating more than can be inferred from the story's action and dialogue. He never discloses anything about what the characters think or feel, remaining a detached observer.

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2.3 - Characters: Who are they? What do you know about them? How can you describe them physically and morally? Which character do you like the most?

<http://www.nadasisland.com/literature/characters.html>

Characters are either major or minor.

In most pieces of fiction, one or two characters predominate and the action revolves around them; they are called the major characters, and among them lies the central character or the protagonist with whom the reader associates; s/he is the individual who experiences the greatest struggles or conflicts.

The essential nature of major characters, and particularly that of the protagonist, is often emphasized through the use of character foils.

A character foil is any character whose nature, actions, or motivations serve to emphasize or highlight the nature, actions, or motivations of another character.

The antagonist: main character (person, animal, climate, etc.) that creates the conflicts with the protagonist.

The hero: once-used reference to character with wholly-positive qualities.

The villain: once-used reference to character with wholly-negative qualities.

“Static characters”: those who do not have the ability to change their beliefs or behaviors.

“Dynamic Characters”: those who, because of experiences and events, have the ability to change their beliefs or behaviors, though they do not have to.

Minor characters: they often play an important role in stories, a role that should not be overlooked because it may serve as an important key to discovering the themes that the novel is exploring.

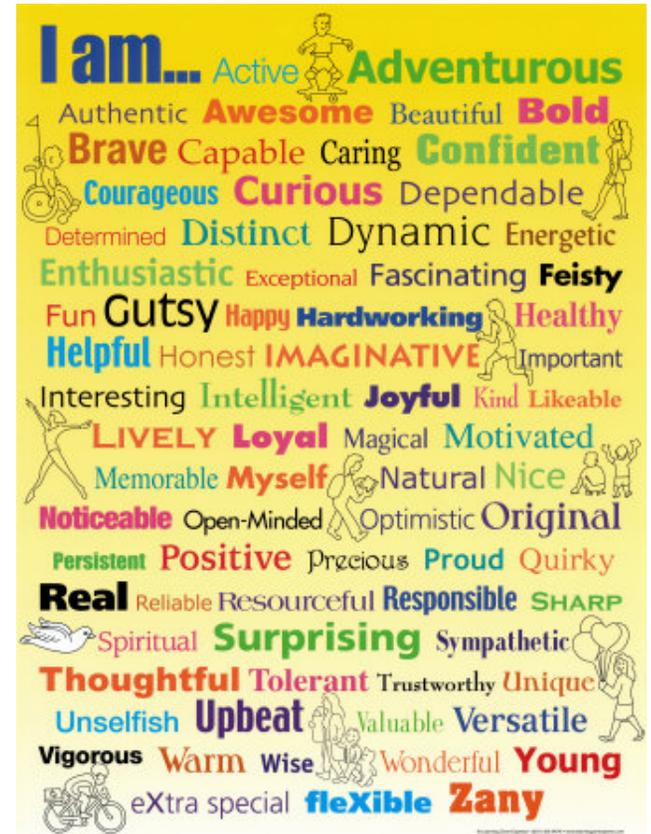
Readers can learn about characters in many ways, including: Physical traits, Dialogue, Actions, Attire, Opinions, Points of view

To determine the nature of a character we should consider the following questions:

- 1- How does the character behave? What does the character choose to do, choose not to do, or fail to do?
- 2- What motivates a character?
- 3- If a character changes, why?
- 4- Who or what are the antagonists (the forces seeking to prevent the protagonist from achieving his or her goal)? How does the protagonist deal with the antagonists?
- 5- What internal conflicts, if any, does the protagonist experience?

Character's Personality Traits:

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| 1.) OUTGOING | 19.) FORCEFUL |
| 2.) ORGANIZED | 20.) IMPULSIVE |
| 3.) HONEST | 21.) CALM / QUIET |
| 4.) UNDERSTANDING | 22.) DETERMINED |
| 5.) TALKATIVE | 23.) DEMANDING |
| 6.) AGGRESSIVE | 24.) NEAT |
| 7.) SENSITIVE | 25.) PERSUASIVE |
| 8.) CONVENTIONAL | 26.) ALERT |
| 9.) BOLD | 27.) CHARISMATIC |
| 10.) CHARMING | 28.) SLY |
| 11.) CAREFUL | 29.) MANIPULATIVE |
| 12.) CONVINCING | 30.) PERCEPTIVE |
| 13.) SOCIABLE | 31.) INTELLIGENT |
| 14.) RELAXED | 32.) SELF-CONTROLLED |
| 15.) CAUTIOUS | 33.) COURAGEOUS |
| 16.) PERSISTENT | 34.) DEXTEROUS (Skillful in handling things) |
| 17.) COMPETITIVE | 35.) ENERGETIC |
| 18.) PLEASANT | 36.) STRONG/WEAK-WILLED |



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2.5 - The Setting: When and where a story takes place is called the setting.

<http://www.nadasisland.com/literature/setting.html>

- Time: When did this story take place? Identify any dates or time clues mentioned in the story. Try to determine how much time passes in the story.
- Place: Where did this story take place? Identify evidence which pertains to the specific places mentioned.

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2.7 - The Tone & Mood: How can you describe the Tone and Mood in this story?

<http://www.nadasisland.com/literature/tonemood.html>

Tone = Style or Manner of expression in speech or writing.

Mood = Atmosphere, State of Mind.

Some Adjectives to Describe:

a- Tone: Formal, Informal, Serious, Humorous, Angry, Playful, Conciliatory, Gloomy, Sad, cheerful, Ironic, Clear, Detailed ...

b- Mood: Fictional, Imaginary, Fanciful, Idealistic, Romantic, Realistic, Optimistic, Pessimistic, Gloomy, Melancholic, Mournful, Sorrowful...

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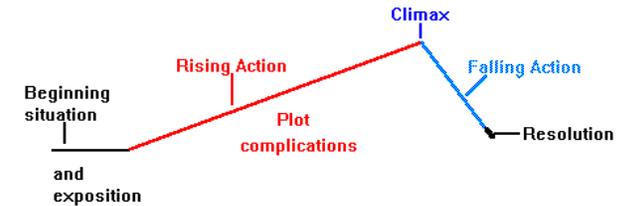
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2.9 – The Plot: Which are the different parts of the plot in this story? Identify Who is and What is in conflict and Pinpoint the Climax on the basis of textual support.

<http://www.nadasisland.com/literature/plot.html>

What Goes into a Plot?

- 1- Exposition: introduction that includes the setting—time and place; introduces main characters; provides background information; sets scene; establishes potential for conflict. (no action)
- 2- Rising point: the point at which the exposition ends and the first action begins; the catalyst that begins the major conflict.
- 3- Complication or Rising events/action: a series of events that lead to the climax. Characters engage in conflicts; antagonism is heightened.
- 4- Climax: moment of greatest emotional intensity, the highest point in the story where there is the most suspense, turning point.
- 5- Falling events/action: immediate consequences of crisis, the events that bring the story to an end.
- 6- Resolution/Denouement: the conclusion that includes unraveling of tensions; most questions answered; characters left to deal with consequences of conflicts. (no action)



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2.11 – The Theme: Identify the theme(s) of the story to reinforce understanding and encourage further levels of appreciation beyond the limits of the story itself.

<http://www.nadasisland.com/literature/theme.html>

→ Identify the topics that the story touches upon → Write a statement about the story including one of those topics .

Answering the following questions will help us to uncover the theme in a story:

- a- What does the title tell us? Sometimes it tells us a lot about the theme.
- b- What do the repeating patterns and symbols show us? Sometimes these lead us to the theme.
- c- What allusions are made throughout the story?
- d- What are the details and particulars in the story? What greater meaning may they have?