

# SHORT STORY TERMINOLOGY

## Narrative Point of View

Refers to the position chosen by the narrator from which he or she views and reports about the characters or events in his or her narrative story

- a. First person: the narrator's character is telling the story (uses "I" and "me," for example)
- b. Third person, omniscient: the narrator is not a character in the story, and is "god-like" in his or her ability to describe the thoughts of the characters
- c. Third person, limited: the narrator's ability to describe characters in limited wherein he or she is unable to describe the thoughts of all the characters

## Plot

Plot is the plan of action of the story. The plot is a "series of imagined events" so patterned as to establish a conflict leading to a climax which is followed by a resolution. Events occur in the following order:

- a. Exposition: introduces setting and characters
- b. Rising Action: the conflict or complications are introduced to the protagonist which he or she struggles with.
- c. Conflict: The protagonist will struggle with at least one kind of conflict:
  1. *Person versus person*: the tension is between two or more people
  2. *Person versus self*: the tension is very internal; the character struggles with himself
  3. *Person versus society*: the tension is between a person and members of society (i.e. an idea held by society that the character struggles with)
  4. *Person versus environment*: the tension is between the person and an element of nature or technology
- d. Climax: moment of greatest emotional tension, usually marking a turning point in the plot at which the rising action reverses to become the falling action
- e. Falling Action: diminishing tensions of conflict are beginning to be resolved
- f. Resolution or Denouement: the final resolution or insight that the protagonist or reader takes at the end of the story

## Theme

Theme is a general statement that the story makes about some significant aspect of life. The theme merely describes life as it is lived. Try not to confuse theme with "moral" (moral uses the word "should").

## Setting

Refers to the time, place, mood, and weather

Atmosphere: refers to the feeling generated by a place. A place has atmosphere.

Mood: refers to the feeling experienced by the reader. A person has a mood.

## Characterization

Refers to the qualities that a person has which make up his or her personality and identity; these qualities or characteristics let the reader know what a character is really like.

A protagonist is the main character of the conflict.

An antagonist is the person who opposes the protagonist

### Methods used to reveal character

#### Direct characterization

- a. What the narrator says about the character (direct)
- b. What other characters say or how they react towards the character

#### Indirect characterization

- a. What the character does (indirect)
- b. What the character says (indirect)

## The Writer's Tools

Diction: the author's choice of words; the vocabulary of the story

Syntax: the organization of those words in different sentence structures

### Irony

Verbal Irony: an indirect form of communication wherein what is stated is the opposite of what is meant

Situational Irony: occurs when what happens is the opposite of what is intended or expected to happen

Dramatic Irony: occurs when the audience knows certain information that other characters in the literature do not know

### Figurative Language

Describes language that moves, for meaning or effect, beyond standard or literal meaning

Flashback: an incident which occurs before the time established in the story.

Foreshadowing: an indication of future events is given in the form of a hint or a clue

Metaphor: a comparison not using "like" or "as"

Simile: a comparison using "like" or "as"

Oxymoron: comparison of two unlike things

Personification: human attributes given to non-human things

Symbol: a comparison whereby something stands in for something else

Suspense: the choice of words or events allows the author to create anticipation and eagerness to learn what is about to happen