



# Short Stories

Elements of a Story

## Introduction

- A short story always deals with conflict.
- Authors create characters who must overcome some problem or obstacle.
- By empathizing with the struggles the main character has to undergo, the reader is drawn into the story.
- Empathy-feeling the experiences and challenges of the main character
- Conflict in literature will be resolved in many different ways.

## Plot

- The organized pattern of events in a story.
  - Simple and Straight forward
    - Story has one action to follow
  - More complicated
    - Story has surprise ending
    - more than one action to follow
- Four parts of Plot
  - Exposition, Conflict, Climax, Resolution

## Exposition

- The introduction of the story
- Usually tells the setting and lifestyle of the main character

## Conflict

- The problem that occurs in the story
- The main character has a conflict with nature, self, or society

## **Climax**

- The turning point of the story
- The main character confronts the conflict

## **Resolution**

- The problem is resolved and the story draws to an end
- The main character decides what direction will be taken.

# Character

- Primary importance of most stories
- Story focuses on main character
- Interactions of characters reveal personalities of characters and help reveal plot

## Point of View

- Like the camera in a movie, the lens through which you view the action

## Types of Point of View

- First person: told by main character "I"
- Third person omniscient: told from outside the story, but revealing feelings, thoughts of all characters *all knowing*
- Third person limited: told from outside the story, only told the feelings, thoughts of one character

## Setting

- The time and place of the action
- Varies from strange and exotic to the familiar



## Theme

- An idea about life
- Occasionally expressed directly through the author's comments
- Generally not directly stated in the story

## Close Reading

- The better you understand how such elements as plot, character, setting, point of view, and theme work together, the better you will understand and appreciate the author's intent and meaning.

*Ask yourself questions*

## Close Reading

1. Read actively for pleasure and insight.
2. Ask questions
3. Make predictions *Answer the questions*
4. Draw conclusions
5. Look for clues
6. Note point of view
7. Find central idea/theme