LITERARY DEVICES (ELEMENTS AND TECHNIQUES) OF FICTION
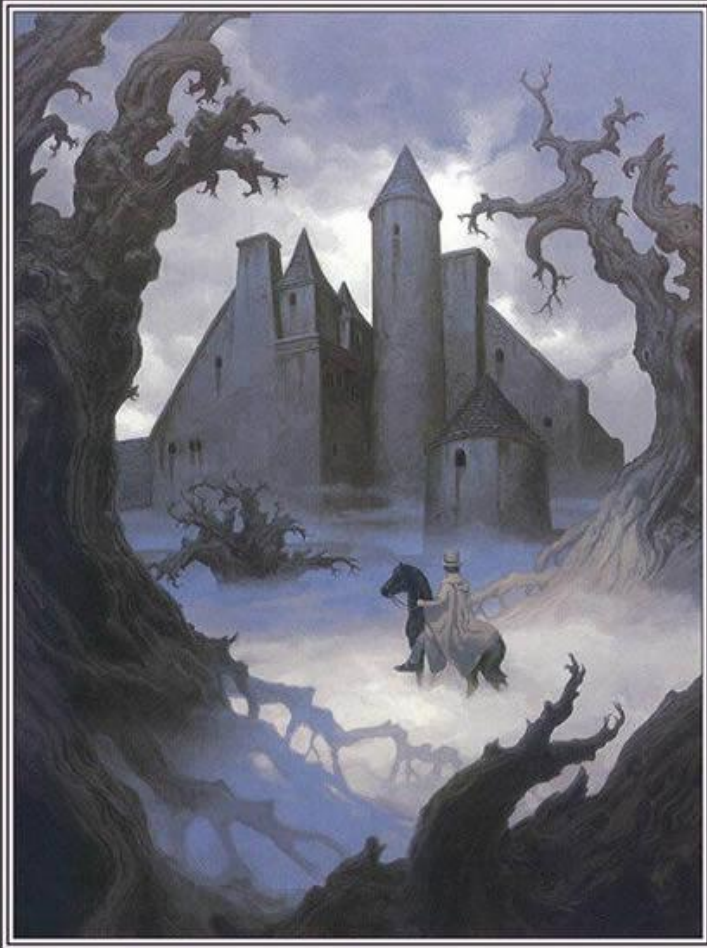
Literary Devices of Fiction

- Setting
- Plot
- Character
- Conflict
- Point of View
- Theme
- Mood
- Dialogue

- Rhetorical Devices
- Flashback
- Foreshadowing
- Figurative Language
- Sensory Details
- Allusion

Setting (element)

- The <u>setting</u> of a story is the time and place in which it occurs.

- Elements of setting may include the physical, psychological, cultural, or historical background against which the story takes place.
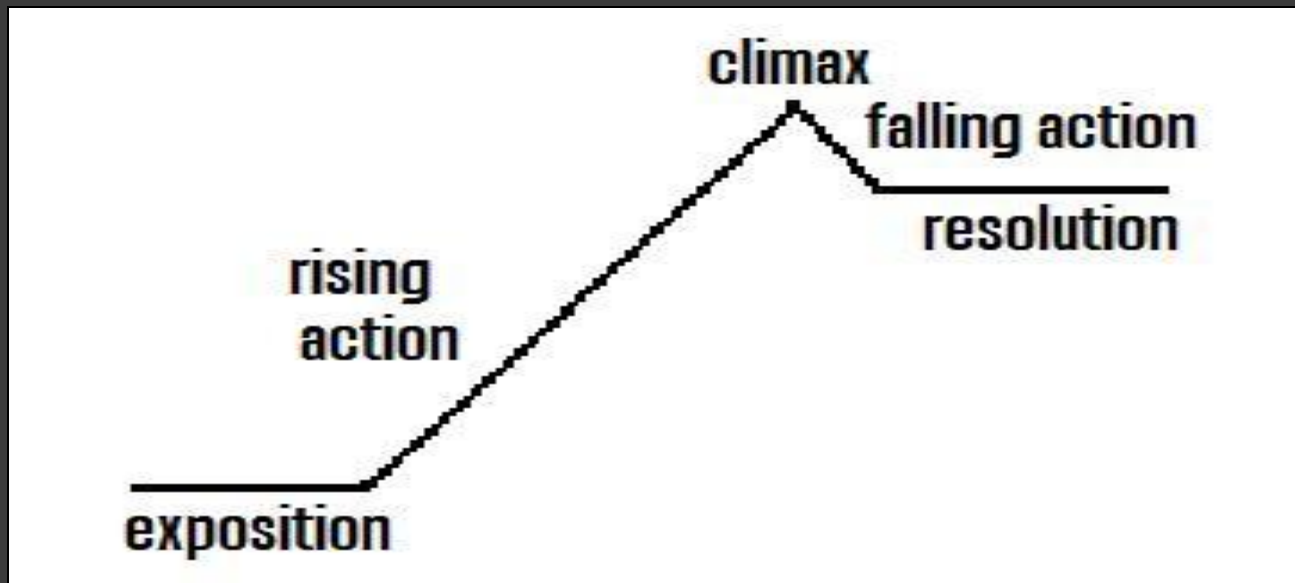
Mood (element)

- The <u>mood</u> of a story is the atmosphere or feeling created by the writer and expressed through setting.

Plot (element)

- Plot is the basic sequence of events in a story. In conventional stories, plot has five parts: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution.

Flashback (technique)

- A <u>flashback</u> is a literary device by which a work presents material that occurred prior to the opening scene.

- Various methods may be used such as recollections of characters, narration by the characters, dream sequences, and reveries.

Foreshadowing (technique)

⊙ <u>Foreshadowing</u> is the presentation of material in a work in such a way that later events are prepared for. The purpose of foreshadowing is to prepare the reader or viewer for action to come.

⊙ Foreshadowing can result from
  ● the establishment of a mood or atmosphere,
  ● an event that adumbrates the later action,
  ● the appearance of physical objects or facts, or
  ● the revelation of a fundamental and decisive character trait.

Figurative Language (technique)

Figurative Language

Simile

- A comparison of two things that are essentially different, usually using the words *like* or *as*.

- Example: "Oh my love is like a red, red rose." (from "A Red, Red Rose" by Robert Burns)

Metaphor

- A subtle comparison in which the author describes a person or thing using words that are not meant to be taken literally.

- Example: "Time is a dressmaker specializing in alterations." (Faith Baldwin)

Figurative Language

Imagery

⊚ The use of language to create mental images and sensory impressions. Imagery can be used for emotional effect and to intensify the impact on the reader.

⊚ Example: "such sweet sorrow"

Alliteration

⊚ The repetition of the same sounds at the beginning of two or more adjacent words or stressed syllables.

⊚ Example: "furrow followed free" (from *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* by Samuel Taylor Coleridge)

Figurative Language

Personification

⊙ Nonhuman things or abstractions are represented as having human qualities.

⊙ Example: "A tree that may in summer wear a nest of robins in her hair"

(from "Trees" by Joyce Kilmer)

Onomatopoeia

⊙ The use of words that sound like what they mean.

⊙ Example: "Hear the sledges with the bells— Silver bells! What a world of merriment their melody foretells! How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle, In the icy air of night!"

(from "The Bells" by Edgar Allan Poe)

Figurative Language

Hyperbole

⊙   An intentionally exaggerated figure of speech for emphasis or effect.

⊙   Example:
"All the perfumes of Arabia could not sweeten this little hand."
(from *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare)

Idiom

⊙   An expression that has a different meaning from the literal meaning of its individual words. Idioms are particular to a given language and usually cannot be translated literally.

⊙   Example:
Under the weather

Rhetorical Device (technique)

- A technique that an author or speaker uses to evoke an emotional response (e.g., analogy, simile, metaphor) in order to <u>influence or persuade</u> his audience.

Types of Characters (element)

- <u>Dynamic character</u>—a character which changes during the course of a story or novel

- <u>Static character</u>—a character who remains primarily the same during the course of a story or novel

Types of Characters

- <u>Protagonist</u>—the story's main character

- <u>Antagonist</u>—a character in opposition of the protagonist

- <u>Character Foil</u>—a secondary character who contrasts with the protagonist in order to highlight aspects of the main character's personality

Characterization

- Characterization is the creation of imaginary persons so that they seem lifelike. There are three fundamental methods of characterization.

Characterization

- The representation from within a character, without comment by the author, of the impact of actions and emotions on the character's inner self (internal characterization).

Character Development

- **Internal Character Development**
  - Feelings
  - Thoughts
  - Emotions

- **External Character Development**
  - Actions
  - Relationships
  - Dialogues

Irony (technique)

- Irony– the use of words to express something other than, and especially the opposite of, the literal meaning

  - Situational irony—a literary technique for implying, through plot or character, that the actual situation is quite different from that presented

Allusion (techniques)

- An <u>allusion</u> is a reference within a literary work to another work of literature, art, or real event. The reference is often brief and implied.

  - <u>Mythological allusion</u>—a direct or indirect reference to a character or event in mythology

  - <u>Biblical allusion</u>—a reference to a character or event from the Bible

  - <u>Historical allusion</u>—a reference to a person or event in history

Theme (element)

⊙ The <u>theme</u> is the central or universal idea of a piece of fiction; it is a perception about life and the human condition.

● An <u>implicit theme</u> refers to the author's ability to construct a piece in such a way that through inference the reader understands the theme.