

Name _____
Date _____

Style Style is a product of the unique conscious and unconscious choices that an author makes concerning sentence structure, setting, subject matter, tone, and numerous other elements of fiction.

Tone Tone refers to the manner of speaking that an author uses. An author's tone may be revealed in the attitude toward the characters and subject, the construction of sentence patterns, word usage, figurative language, or any number of other literary devices. By controlling tone, an author creates spirit and attitude.

Irony Irony in literature is usually differentiated into three main categories. *Verbal irony* is that which occurs when what is said contrasts with what is meant. *Dramatic irony* is the discrepancy between what the author says and what the reader knows is true. *Irony of situation* illustrates the disparity between what is and what is logically expected. The contrasts generated by the use of irony add dimension to the theme of a story.

Symbolism Symbolism is the literal use of an object, person, action, or other item that suggests a larger, perhaps more universal, meaning. For example, a character's voyage may be used to suggest a journey through life, or the use of water within a story may suggest a cleansing through spiritual rebirth.

Elements of Fiction

- Setting** The background against which the story takes place is referred to as *setting*. This includes such factors as geographical location, placement of physical objects, and the time or period in which the action occurs. The emotional environment of the characters (religious, social, etc.) can also be used in the analysis of setting.
- Character** Fictional characters are developed through description, actions, thoughts, and speeches, direct statement from the writer, and/or opinions voiced by other characters. Depending on their importance in the story, characters are developed to different degrees. Characters can be identified as *static*, meaning they undergo no changes in the story, or *dynamic*, meaning that a permanent change, for better or worse, in personality, outlook, or some other aspect of character occurs within the framework of the short story. The effectiveness of the writer's development of characters correlates with the emotional response of the reader.
- Plot** *Plot* can be defined as the pattern that results from the events in the story in the order in which they are presented. Most plots involve conflict, external and/or internal, as characters participate in a series of actions. In some stories, plot may not be the emphasis; the author may instead use revelation, in which the character or reader moves toward a particular insight or understanding.
- Theme** This term refers to the central idea or dominating thought, which results from the other elements contained in fiction. Theme may be a complex, abstract concept, but one which summarizes the author's purpose in writing the narrative.
- Point of View** The vantage point from which the author presents the action of the story is called *point of view*. Point of view encompasses voice, involvement, knowledge, and reliability. The main types of point of view are described below:
- Third person, omniscient—The narrator is an outside observer who never refers to himself/herself as "I," "me," or "we." This narrator has unlimited access to all characters and knows everything that all of the characters do, think, see, and feel.
 - Third person, limited omniscient—The narrator's knowledge of thoughts, actions, visual perceptions, and feelings is limited to one or a few characters.
 - Third person, objective—The narrator becomes a camera, recording actions and behaviors without comment or interpretation. This narrator cannot record thoughts or feelings.
 - First person—A character (either major or minor) refers to himself/herself as "I" while telling the story. This narrator's knowledge is limited to personal interpretations, observations, and experiences.

Authors are not restricted to these main types of point of view, and they may use combinations or may experiment with various methods of storytelling.