Dr Badra Menouer

LMD1 Lectures

Genres in Literature

1.7.1. ProseThis is the most common form of written language, mirroring the natural flow of speech.It is a  
form of written or spoken language that follows the natural flow of speech and grammatical  
structure, without the metrical structure found in poetry. It is the most typical form of  
language and is used in everyday communication, literature, journalism, and many other  
fields and it is generally divided into two main types:  
1.7.1.1. FictionFiction is a genre of literature that includes stories, novels, and other works that are imagined  
or invented by the author, rather than based on true events or factual information. In fiction,  
the author creates a world, characters, and events that are not real but are designed to be  
believable and engaging to the reader. Fiction is any narrative that consists of imaginary  
people, places, and events in any format (writing, audio recording, or theatrical  
performances). The term" fiction" is generally used regarding creative works written in prose  
or ordinary language which does not follow a meter, as in poetry. Starting in the 1590s,  
“fiction” began to be used to describe works of prose created in the writer’s imagination.  
Fiction can take many different forms, such as realistic or fantastical, literary or genre-based,  
and can explore a wide range of themes and subjects, such as love, loss, politics, history, or  
science fiction. The main purpose of fiction is to entertain and engage the reader, but it can  
also serve to explore complex ideas and emotions, provide social commentary, or offer  
insights into the human condition.  
Examples of famous works of fiction include novels such as "To Kill a Mockingbird" by  
Harper Lee, "The Great Gatsby" by F. Scott Fitzgerald, and "Pride and Prejudice" by Jane  
Austen, as well as short stories such as "The Lottery" by Shirley Jackson and "The Tell-Tale  
Heart" by Edgar Allan Poe.  
1.7.1.1.1. Elements of FictionFiction is a diverse genre that encompasses a wide range of elements, each contributing to the  
creation of a compelling narrative. Fictional stories are built using various elements that  
contribute to their structure and impact.

**A) Setting  
Definition**: The setting is a crucial element of a narrative, as it establishes the time and place  
where the story unfolds, providing context and a backdrop for the events and characters. The  
setting contributes to the atmosphere, mood, and overall tone of the narrative. A different  
setting refers to a change in the established time, place, or environment where a narrative  
unfolds. Such changes can introduce new dynamics, themes, and challenges, offering a fresh  
perspective and potentially altering the course of the story.  
**Example**: In George Orwell's "1984," the setting is a dystopian future where the government  
exerts total control over citizens.  
The setting of a story includes several components that collectively create the environment in  
which the narrative takes place. These components help paint a vivid picture for the reader or  
audience, setting the stage for the events and characters.  
The main elements of a setting typically include:  
**Time**: The time period in which the story occurs, which could be historical, contemporary,  
futuristic, or a specific season, day, or time of day.  
**Place**: The physical location or locations where the story unfolds, which could be a specific  
city, country, building, or natural landscape.  
**Atmosphere/Mood**: The emotional or psychological ambiance of the setting, which can  
influence the tone and how the reader or audience feels about the story.  
**Cultural, Social, and Historical Context**: The societal, cultural, and historical background  
of the setting, which can impact the characters and events.  
**Symbolism**: The use of objects or elements within the setting to represent deeper meanings or  
themes.  
All of these components work together to create a rich and immersive setting, enhancing the  
reader's or audience's understanding of the story and its characters.  
**B) Characters  
Definition**: Characters are the individuals, animals, or entities that drive the story.  
These characters have their own personalities, motivations, and development arcs.

**Example**: In J.K. Rowling's "Harry Potter" series, Harry Potter, Hermione Granger,  
and Ron Weasley are central characters.

******  
***Figure 3 The various types of characters in Fiction***In fiction, there are various types of characters that authors create to populate their stories.  
These characters serve different roles and functions within the narrative. Here are some of the  
common types of characters found in fiction:  
•**Protagonist**: The protagonist is the central character in a story, and the narrative typically  
revolves around their experiences, challenges, and development. The protagonist is often the  
character with whom the reader or audience most closely identifies and supports. They are  
usually the main focus of the story's plot and its primary character in terms of emotional  
engagement.In many stories, the protagonist is on a journey, facing obstacles and conflicts,  
and often undergoing personal growth or transformation. The protagonist's actions and  
decisions are essential to the story's progression.  
It's important to note that not all stories have a single protagonist. In some narratives, there  
may be multiple protagonists with interconnected storylines. Additionally, the protagonist can  
take various forms, such as a hero, an antihero, or a more complex character.The  
identification of the protagonist is central to understanding the narrative and its themes, as  
they are often the characters with the most significant impact on the story's outcome.  
•**The antagonist**: The antagonist is the character, group, force, or element in a story that  
opposes or creates conflict for the protagonist. They are the primary source of tension and  
obstacles in the narrative and are often in direct opposition to the goals and desires of the  
protagonist. The antagonist's actions and motivations drive the central conflict of the story.

Antagonists can take various forms and may include:  
⮚**Villains**: These are traditional antagonists who are intentionally malicious, evil, or  
malevolent. They often have clear and nefarious goals, and their actions create direct conflict  
with the protagonist.  
⮚**Antiheroes:** In some cases, the antagonist may be an antihero, a character who possesses  
morally ambiguous qualities and may not adhere to traditional notions of heroism. Antiheroes  
can be complex and have their own motivations and justifications for their actions.  
⮚**Forces of Nature**: Natural elements, such as storms, wilderness, or disasters, can serve as  
antagonists, creating conflict and obstacles for the protagonist.  
⮚**Society or Institutions:** In some stories, societal norms, institutions, or the entire society  
may act as antagonists, with the protagonist challenging the status quo.  
⮚**Inner Conflict:** The protagonist's own inner struggles, doubts, or flaws can act as an  
internal antagonist, creating personal conflict and obstacles they must overcome.  
⮚**Foil Characters:** Some characters may serve as foils, embodying contrasting qualities  
and values to those of the protagonist, and thus acting as antagonists by highlighting the  
protagonist's weaknesses or flaws.  
⮚The antagonist's role is to test the protagonist, challenge their resolve, and provide the  
narrative with tension and dramatic stakes. The resolution of the conflict between the  
protagonist and the antagonist is often a central focus of the story and shapes its outcome.  
C) **Plot  
Definition**: A plot serves as the framework of a narrative, regardless of whether it's anovel,  
short story, play, film, or any other storytelling medium. It is a literary element that propels  
the story and captures the attention of the reader or audience. The most known plotstructure is Gustav Freytag's (1893). Typically, a plot comprises various essential  
components: Exposition, Rising Action, Climax, Falling Action, and Denouement  
(Harunet al. 2013)

***Figure 4 Freytag’s Pyramid of Plot-Structure*Exposition  
Definition:** The exposition is the beginning of the story where the author introduces the  
setting, characters, and the initial situation or conflict. It sets the stage and provides necessary  
background information for the reader.  
**Example:** In J.K. Rowling's "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone," the exposition  
introduces the Dursley family and the discovery of a mysterious letter addressed to Harry  
Potter.  
**Rising Action  
Definition:** The rising action is the series of events and complications that develop the central  
conflict. It builds tension and propels the story toward its climax.  
**Example:** In J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Fellowship of the Ring," the rising action includes the  
journey of the Fellowship and their encounters with various challenges and adversaries on  
their way to Mordor.  
**Climax  
Definition:** The climax is the highest point of tension and conflict in the story. It is the  
moment when the central conflict reaches its peak, and the main characters face a crucial  
decision or turning point.

**Example:** In William Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet," the climax occurs when Romeo and  
Juliet both die as a result of a tragic misunderstanding and the ongoing feud between their  
families.  
**Falling Action  
Definition:** The falling action follows the climax and addresses the aftermath of the central  
conflict. It begins to resolve the story's remaining questions and conflicts.  
**Example:** In George Orwell's "Animal Farm," the falling action reveals the consequences of  
the animals' rebellion and the rise of corruption within their society.  
**Resolution (or Denouement)  
Definition:** The resolution is the final part of the plot that ties up loose ends and concludes  
the story. It provides closure by explaining the fates of the characters and the outcomes of the  
central conflict.  
**Example:** In Jane Austen's "Pride and Prejudice," the resolution sees the resolution of the  
romantic entanglements and the marriages of the main characters.  
**Subplots  
Definition:** Subplots are secondary storylines that run alongside the main plot. They provide  
additional depth to the narrative and may intersect or impact the central plot.  
**Example:** In Charles Dickens's "Great Expectations," the main plot follows Pip's growth and  
evolution, while subplots involve other characters and their stories.  
**D) Conflict  
Definition:** Conflict is a central element of the plot. It refers to the struggle or problem that  
drives the narrative and creates tension. Conflict can be internal (within a character) or  
external (between characters or with the environment).  
**Example:** In Arthur Miller's "The Crucible," the central conflict is the witch trials and the  
impact of mass hysteria on the characters.  
**Conflict can take various forms in fiction**

**Character vs. Character**: This is an external conflict where a character faces opposition,  
resistance, or challenges from other characters in the story. This type of conflict often  
involves a protagonist versus an antagonist.  
**Character vs. Self**: This is internal conflict, where a character grapples with their own  
thoughts, emotions, or moral dilemmas. It represents a personal struggle within a character's  
own psyche.  
**Character vs. Nature**: In this type of conflict, characters must contend with natural forces,  
such as storms, wilderness, or environmental disasters, which pose challenges and obstacles.  
**Character vs. Society**: This conflict arises when a character goes against societal norms,  
values, or institutions, leading to resistance or opposition from the larger community or  
society.  
**Character vs. Technology or Supernatural**: Some stories feature conflicts with advanced  
technology, artificial intelligence, or supernatural elements, where characters confront  
extraordinary or otherworldly challenges.  
**Character vs. Fate or Destiny**: In these stories, characters may struggle against preordained  
events or a sense of inexorable fate.  
**Man vs. Machine**: This conflict often explores the tension between humanity and technology,  
raising questions about the impact of automation and artificial intelligence on human lives.  
Conflict is essential in storytelling because it:  
▪Drives the plot forward, creating a sequence of events.  
▪Provides a source of tension and suspense, engaging the reader or audience.  
▪Reveals character traits and motivations through how characters respond to challenges.  
▪Offers opportunities for character growth, transformation, and development.  
▪Adds depth to the narrative by exploring themes, values, and moral dilemmas.  
Effective storytelling often relies on a well-developed conflict that captivates the audience  
and keeps them invested in the narrative.