

<p>Introduction To English Literature Stage :First L7 Second Semester</p>		<p>Instructor :Dr. Mugdad</p>
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What Are The 6 Elements of Fiction?

Most fiction writers and academics agree that the six elements of fiction are **theme, plot, setting, characters, point of view and style.**

What Are The 6 Elements of Fiction?

- 1) Theme
- 2) Plot
- 3) Setting
- 4) Characters
- 5) Point of View
- 6) Style

With no further ado, let's take a look at all six, with a proper interpretation of each element:

1) Theme

The theme in fiction is the **driving force behind the story.** In essence, it's the abstract idea or the universal truth that the story's all about. The theme is pivotal, around which the characters, plot, point of view, and all the other elements of fiction revolve.

The theme is so deeply woven into the plot; which is usually a device to convey and present the theme.

The theme is usually implied, in which it's not merely started or uttered, rather, it's deduced and abstracted from the workings of the plot and the characterization of certain impactful characters.

Explicit themes; in which the writer is openly states the intended theme, are usually found in children's books, where the writer wants to make sure that the young reader can easily extract it.

It's perfectly fine to have a bizarre, unusual theme. However, the theme must remain the same throughout the whole story. The story must not carry 2 contradicting themes, and the details, be it major or minor, must abide by the existing theme.

Common themes used in any literary works are usually social or psychological issues as love, aging, maturity and such.

Don't confuse the theme with:

- Symbolism; which merely reflects an idea behind a single, small part/event of the story. It could be relevant, or irrelevant to the theme.
- Moral of the story; which is what the writer or the author thinks about the theme or how they view it.
- The [subject](#); which is what the story is generally about.

2) Plot

The plot is simply **the order of events in a story**. A typical plot opens up with an exposition or an introduction that includes the following:

- Sufficient background information so that the preceding events make sense to the reader
- A description of the story's setting
- An introduction to the main characters

As the plot progresses, it develops a multitude of intensifying complications or conflict that finalizes itself in a moment where tension goes downpour called a crisis.

A much bigger tension than that of the crisis takes form in the climax or the turning point, where it modifies the crisis in some sort of way, that's till all the action falls down and we reach the point of resolution.

What we've mentioned above, it's the most traditional way by which a plot unfolds. However, it's not common in modern literature to find deviations from the traditional model of a plot.

Aside from conflict, crisis, climax, and resolution, there are a number of devices and techniques used to further enhance a plot. These are [suspense](#), [foreshadowing](#), [flashback](#), symbolism and telescoping.

Symbolism

Symbolism is one of the most common devices used in fiction.

It's executed by the addition or the association of a certain meaning to an object, name, event, or literally anything in order to shed light on it, produce an impact the reader, as well as encourage the reader to view the symbol in a new light.

3) Setting

The major elements of setting in fiction are the **place, time, and the surrounding social environment** in which the characters are confined to.

The elements of the setting usually aren't just there for informational purposes. Each one of these elements contributes to constructing the world the characters live in and are influenced by.

The setting makes the reader subconsciously formulate a certain image about the characters based on it alone, as well as deduce why or how a certain character acts and behaves. It can also be utilized to evoke a certain mood in preparation for events to come.

A setting that's so well-described is capable of heightening the reader's experience as it truly immerses the reader in the plot and the feel for the characters.

A writer can make use of various devices and elements as a means to further convey the story's setting in extra detail.

Examples of these elements are clothing, means of transportation and communication, and given information about the philosophy, psychology, and religion of certain characters. All of these contribute to an intricately woven setting.

4) Characters

Characters are **beings that take part in the story** overall. They're differentiated from one another as separate entities through their own mental, emotional, and social qualities.

Properly written characters' are a must in the success of a piece of literature. Characters are extremely important; as there has to be someone the reader invests in, sides with or against.

Even if the rest of the elements of fiction are astoundingly channeled and utilized; without characters, these elements quickly become empty shells with no meaning or relevance.

Characters may be static or dynamic, and major or minor. A major character is a pivotal being representative of the story's theme. A conflict is usually present between the major protagonist and antagonist characters.

On the side are minor characters, they have multiple purposes but their main function is to place major characters under the spotlight.

Minor characters may be static; in which they remain the same without undergoing any sort of character development from the start till the end of the literary work.

They may also be dynamic; in which they experience change, be it in their attitude, behavior or purpose.

Characterization

Characterization is the method by which the writer presents and reveals a character and its qualities, be it through a direct description of that character or through other characters that help define it.

5) Point of View

The point of view in fiction is the **standpoint from which the story is narrated** and how it's told. It's akin to an angle from which you view the story, and it's usually from a first-person or third-person perspective.

There is a multitude of ways to narrate a story, and you can actually include numerous points of view in one story. But generally, methods of narration are divided into two major categories.

Third-Person Narration

[Third person narration](#) is the most common type, where the narrative uses pronouns of he, she, it, or they. It may either be:

- **Omniscient narration** – In which the narrator is a know-it-all and takes the reader into all the characters' thoughts, feelings, and purposes. The narrator also shows what the characters say and do and how they behave. The narrator has access to any character's psyche at any given time.
- **Limited Omniscient narration** – In which the narrator takes the reader into one (or at most, very few) character's minds but not all.

Objective narration

In which the narrator [has no access to any of the character's minds](#), but simply tells the dialogue and reports actions and events without informing the reader how characters think and feel. It could be:

- **First-Person Narration** – In first-person narration, the narrator uses 'I and us' pronouns, and takes form in one of the character's consciousness. The entire story is conveyed to the reader through this character's eyes only, so the story is limited to what only the first-person narrator knows, feels, thinks and discovers by interacting with other characters
- **Second-Person Narration** – This is seldom used in fiction, due to its difficulty and it being generally unnecessary in a typical fictional

setting. Second-person narration is when the narrator addresses another character, usually, the audience, using ‘you, you’re, your’ pronouns. It’s akin to breaking the fourth wall.

6) Style

Style is **akin to a writer’s fingerprint**. No two writers possess the same style of writing.

The style of a story encompasses not only the choice of words (diction), but also how these words are laid out in a coherent sentence (syntax), how these sentences build-up, and how they convey the writer’s thoughts.

A writer’s style also includes the author’s use of literary devices like imagery and hyperbole, as well as numerous other linguistic features that the writer tends to heavily focus upon.

It also reflects each writer’s individuality, so they can be instantly recognizable if you look close enough in their numerous works.

Style isn’t created through some conscious effort, it’s instinctive. Numerous factors play a role in a writer’s style including the writer’s own intelligence, sharpness, and even a writer’s personality.

Tone

The tone in writing is the author’s behavior towards a certain subject, issue or event, which is exhibited through his writing style.

A writer’s tone may be happy, sad, ironic, angry, or depressed. It’s generally inclusive of any emotions human beings experience that the author wants to verbally express.