Literary Devices Review

Characters

CHARACTERIZATION: the creation of a character by the use of a detailed description

            * Physical appearance
            * His or her thoughts and beliefs
            * His or her behavior
            * What other characters think of him or her
            * Dialect (how he or she speaks)

PROTAGONIST: the main character

ANTAGONIST: a character or force who opposes (goes against) the protagonist

DYNAMIC/ROUND CHARACTER: A character who changes/grows throughout the story

STATIC/FLAT CHARACTER: A character who does NOT change

FOIL: Character opposites → Used to emphasize particular characteristics

Plot

PLOT: a series of events that happen in a story

Elements of plot:
1. **Exposition**
   • The beginning of a story that reveals characters and setting

2. **Rising action**
   • Events that build suspense and lead to the conflict(s) and climax of the story
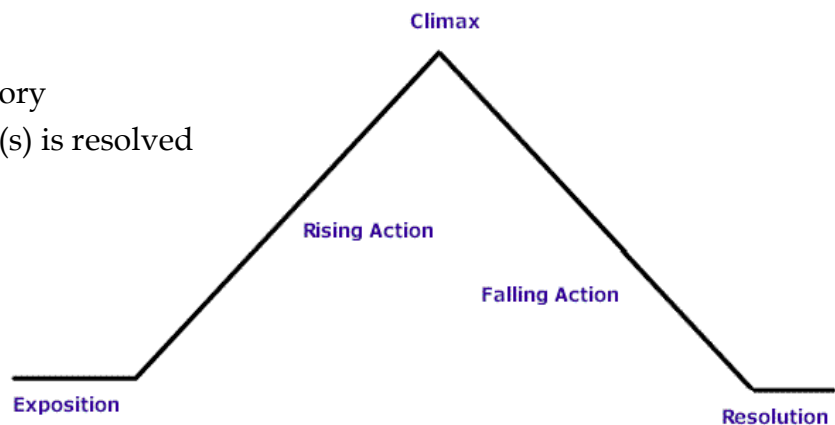
3. **Climax**
   • Turning point of the story; the most suspenseful part of the story
   • Usually the protagonist faces a conflict head-on and will change in some way

4. **Falling action**
   • Events that lead to the resolution of the conflict(s)

5. **Resolution**
   • The end of the story
   • How the conflict(s) is resolved

Climax

Rising Action

Falling Action

Exposition

Resolution

Conflict

CONFLICT: a struggle between opposing forces; the problem(s) present in the story

• **Internal Conflict**: A problem a character has within him/herself
                 (An internal struggle between a character's thoughts, ideas of
                 right and wrong, choices, etc.)

• **External Conflict**: A problem with others

Meaning

MOTIF: a recurring idea throughout a text

THEME: the main idea, lesson, or message of a story

ex.   Motif   Theme
  Love → Without love, life has no meaning.
  Relationships → Relationships give us strength and motivation to be better people.

Point of View

POINT OF VIEW: the perspective from which a story is told

NARRATOR: the one who tells the story
   - each type of narrator tells the story from a different point of view

Three most common points of view:

First Person	Third Person Omniscient	Third Person Limited

• The narrator **is** a character in the story
 	
• The reader has insight into <u>only that *one* character's</u> thoughts
 	
• Uses the pronouns:
  I, ME, WE
	• The narrator is **not** a character in the story
	
	• The narrator knows the thoughts and actions of <u>***all*** characters</u>
	
	• Uses the pronouns:
	  HE, SHE, THEY
	
	Omniscient means all-knowing
		• The narrator is **not** a character in the story
		
		• The narrator knows the thoughts and actions of <u>***one*** of the characters</u>
		
		• Uses the pronouns:
		  HE, SHE, THEY

Structure

SETTING: where and when the story takes place

FORESHADOWING: hints or clues about future events

IRONY: **Verbal irony**: sarcasm
    Situational irony: a contrast between what is expected and what actually
    occurs
    Dramatic irony: the reader knows something that the character(s) does not

JUXTAPOSITION: placing two things side by side for comparison and emphasis

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Language

IMAGERY: descriptive language used to appeal to the five senses

SYMBOLISM: the use of objects or images to represent and/or express abstract ideas

DICTION: author's specific choice of words that add meaning to and enrich the text

TONE: the author's attitude toward the subject matter, which creates the mood
    ex. sarcastic, excited, depressed

MOOD: the overall feeling/atmosphere of a given scene
    ex. stressful, fun, frightening

OXYMORON: combination of words that have contradictory (opposite) meanings
    ex. jumbo shrimp, living dead, minor crisis, pretty ugly

Language Cont'd

PERSONIFICATION: giving human characteristics to nonhuman things

METAPHOR: comparison between two different things without using "like" or "as"
        ex. Juliet is the sun

SIMILE: comparison between two different things using "like" or "as"
        ex. The lion's teeth are like knives

REPETITION: repeating something that has already been said or written

ALLITERATION: the same letter or sound at the beginning of closely connected words
        ex. Little Lola loved llamas

ONOMATOPOEIA: the use of words to imitate the sound they describe
        ex. Buzz, crack, zip, whoosh

HYPERBOLE: an extreme exaggeration
        ex. Let's eat—I'm starving!
        ex. His house is so big it could have its own zip code.