Elements of Fiction

Study Guide

1. Fiction is narrative writing that comes from an author's imagination.

2. There are many different forms of fiction. The two most common are Short Stories and Novels.

3. There are four major components of fiction: Setting, Characters, Plot, and Theme.

4. Characters are the people, imaginary creatures, and/or animals that take part in the action in the story.

5. Usually, there is one or a small number of characters on which the story is centered. These are the main or characters. Minor characters are those who provide background for the story or are in more of a supporting role when it comes to the plot.

6. Another name for the main character is the protagonist. The antagonist is the character or characters that the main character must overcome or opposes.

7. The setting includes both the time and place of the story.

8. Theme is the author's message or lesson, which is often not directly stated in the story.

9. Plot is the sequence of events in the story, which are often, but not always, arranged in chronological order.

10. Plots are built around some sort of problem or conflict.
11. Conflict can be either **internal** (man versus himself) or **external** (man versus man, man versus nature, or man versus society).

12. There are five main elements of plot structure:

- In the **exposition**, characters are introduced, the setting is described, and other necessary background information is given. At the end of this section, the **conflict** is revealed.
- As the plot moves along, **complications** start to arise. The characters struggle to find solutions to the conflict, and energy/excitement build. This section of plot is also known as **rising action**.
- The **climax** is the highest point of the story, where the action reaches a peak. This is the turning point in the story, where the outcome of the conflict is decided.
- The **falling action** includes plot events that occur after the climax.
- The **resolution** is the conclusion or end of the story.