



Plot (*MPT*, pp. 2-3): the events that make up a story (what happens)

- **Conflict:** struggle or problem faced by the character(s) in a story
 - **External Conflict** is when the character must struggle with something outside of him/herself: character vs. character, character vs. group, character vs. natural force/nonhuman, character vs. fate
 - **Internal Conflict** takes place within a character's mind or heart: character vs. self (e.g., guilt, fear of rejection, doubt)
- **Exposition:** basic situation or background information a reader must understand
- **Complication:** introduction of problem/conflict; character takes action to address it, which often leads to further complications; gets the action of the story moving
- **Rising Action:** events, problems, and complications that occur as the main character addresses the conflict; level of excitement and suspense builds
- **Climax:** most exciting part of the story; character comes face to face with the problem; we learn the outcome of the conflict
- **Resolution:** how it turned out; the conflict is over (for now); life may return to normal or the reader may learn what happened afterwards as well

Chronological Order: the order in which the events take place; time order: first-to-last

Flashback: interrupt the chronological flow of events to present an episode from the past

Flash-forward: interrupt the chronological flow of events to present a future episode

Foreshadowing: hints or clues about what is going to happen in the story

Setting (*MPT*, pp 48-49): where and when a story takes place; may influence *mood*

Characterization (*MPT*, pp. 84-85): the ways readers learn about characters

1. Appearance – the way a character looks
2. Speech – what a character says (dialogue)
3. Actions – what a character does
4. Inner Thoughts – what a character thinks or believes
5. Opinions of Other Characters – how others in the story feel about the character

Protagonist: the main character, “lead,” or “hero”; the character the audience sides with

Antagonist: the character (or challenge) that causes the problem for the main character

Narrator (*MPT*, pp.148-149): the “voice” telling the story (“narrative voice”)

Point of View -- There are three points of view a narrator can assume:

1. **Omniscient (Third Person):** narrator is not a character in the story and does not refer to him/herself directly; narrator knows everything about every character
2. **Third Person Limited:** narrator is not a character in the story and does not refer to him/herself directly; narrator only knows what one character knows, so the reader experiences the story from that character's limited perspective
3. **First Person:** narrator is a character in the story and refers to him/herself as “I”; reader knows only what the first-person narrator knows

Style (*MPT*, pp. 496-497): the way a writer uses words to tell a story, includes **diction**, **tone**, and **mood**; writers often develop a personal style that their readers recognize

Diction: word choice, sentence patterns, figures of speech (figurative language)

Tone: the writer's feelings or attitude toward a subject, character, or the audience

Mood/Atmosphere: the way a story makes the reader feel; the emotional effect

Irony (*MPT*, pp. 284-285): the difference between what we expect (or what seems suitable) and what actually happens; incongruity between expectation and outcome

- **Verbal Irony**: words used to suggest the opposite of their literal meaning; when a speaker says one thing but means another
- **Situational Irony**: when the opposite of what is expected happens
- **Dramatic Irony**: when the audience knows something a character in the story does not know

Imagery (*MPT*, pp. 402-403): Description that appeals to any of the five senses

Figurative Language (*MPT*, pp. 428-429): language that uses comparisons and non-literal meanings

- **Simile**: comparison that uses a specific word of comparison: like, as, than
- **Metaphor**: a comparison in which one thing is said to be another thing
- **Extended Metaphor**: a comparison that is carried throughout the poem as a unifying element
- **Personification**: a metaphor in which a non-human thing is given human characteristics

Symbol, symbolism (*MPT*, pp. 340-341): an image (object, event, person, animal) to which we have attached extraordinary significance or meaning; something that represents an idea greater than itself

Motif: a recurring image, act, or structural device that develops (points to) a theme; a repeated detail that contributes to the deeper meaning of a story

Theme (*MPT*, pp.208-209): a general insight about life (stated as a complete sentence!) that is illustrated by the story

- NOT a moral
- NOT a piece of advice, a warning, or a “should” statement
- NOT a judgment of right/wrong, good/bad

