

**English I Learning Packet for Week 2 (This actually covers the next 2 weeks.)**

**Wednesday, March 25, 2020 – Wednesday, April 8, 2020**

I know that this has been a stressful week in many ways, but I believe that maintaining our normal responsibilities (within the recommended restrictions) will serve us well in the long run. That being said, the best thing we can do right now, as students and teachers, is to continue our work. I hope that you found last week's articles and assignments interesting and well within your ability to complete.

So that you can continue to work, for this week I have made 2 power point presentations: "Elements of a Short Story" and "Analyzing Character, Structure, and Theme." All of you are asked to use these power points to complete the assignments. This is a review of the introductory work we did when we began our Short Story unit. For the following week, there is an additional assignment in which you put your information to use. You will write a short story using the directions I have included in this learning packet. Please read all instructions and do your best! I am counting on you!

**Assignments for Week of Wednesday, March 24, 2020**

View the power point "Elements of a Short Story"

Complete activity sheet "Elements of a Short Story"

View the power point "Analyzing Character, Structure and Theme"

Complete activity sheet "Analyzing Character, Structure and Theme"

Read from your library book for twenty minutes each day.

**Assignments for Week of Wednesday, April 1, 2020**

Write a short story using the assignment sheet included in this packet. You will write a rough draft at the beginning of the week, revise and edit your work and write your final draft at the end of the week.

Read from your library book for twenty minutes each day.

**Elements of a Short Story**  
(2 pgs.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: Wednesday, March 25, 2020

**Complete these statements using the power point presentation "Elements of a Short Story."**

(If you have your textbook, this material can be found on pages 18-19.)

1. **Short stories** are \_\_\_\_\_.
2. **Characters** are the \_\_\_\_\_.
3. **Traits** are \_\_\_\_\_ and **motives** are reasons for \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The setting is \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The **setting** often contributes to a story's **mood** which is \_\_\_\_\_.
6. The **plot** of a story is \_\_\_\_\_.
7. The **climax**, or **turning point**, occurs when a character reaches \_\_\_\_\_.
8. A **conflict** is a \_\_\_\_\_.
9. **Internal conflict** takes place \_\_\_\_\_.
10. **External conflict** takes place \_\_\_\_\_.
11. **Theme** is an \_\_\_\_\_.
12. A **symbol** is an \_\_\_\_\_.
13. In a story's **exposition**, the author \_\_\_\_\_.
14. The **rising action** includes \_\_\_\_\_.
15. The **climax** of a story is the moment of \_\_\_\_\_.
16. The **falling action** \_\_\_\_\_.
17. The **resolution** of a story, also called the \_\_\_\_\_, shows the \_\_\_\_\_.
18. List the five components of **Plot Structure** in order.
  1. \_\_\_\_\_
  2. \_\_\_\_\_
  3. \_\_\_\_\_
  4. \_\_\_\_\_
  5. \_\_\_\_\_

### Questions to Think About and Answer

1. Is **man vs. man** an external or internal conflict? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Is **man vs. nature** an external or internal conflict? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Is **man vs. society** an external or internal conflict? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Is **man vs. self** an external or internal conflict? \_\_\_\_\_

### Give a specific example of each of the following types of conflict:

5. man vs. man

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6. man v. nature

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7. man vs. society

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8. man vs. self

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Complete these statements using the power point presentation "Analyzing Character, Structure, and Theme." (If you have your textbook, this material can be found on pages 20-21.)

1. **Complex characters** share what three qualities?
  1. \_\_\_\_\_
  2. \_\_\_\_\_
  3. \_\_\_\_\_
2. In **direct characterization** \_\_\_\_\_
3. In **indirect characterization** \_\_\_\_\_
4. Narrators tell plot events mainly in **chronological order** - \_\_\_\_\_
5. **Flashbacks** are \_\_\_\_\_
6. **Foreshadowing** is \_\_\_\_\_
7. **Suspense** is \_\_\_\_\_
8. **Pacing** refers to the \_\_\_\_\_ with which a narrator relates events.
9. There are 3 types of **point of view**, or the \_\_\_\_\_ from which an author tells a story.
10. **Third-person omniscient**: Narrator is \_\_\_\_\_ the events of the story and tells the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ characters.
11. **Third-person limited**: Narrator is \_\_\_\_\_ the events of the story, but tells the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of only \_\_\_\_\_ character.
12. **First-person**: Narrator is a \_\_\_\_\_ and uses the pronouns \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
13. **Dramatic irony** is an effect that occurs when the reader knows \_\_\_\_\_ about what is going on than the \_\_\_\_\_.

## Writing a Short Story

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Now that we have reviewed the elements of short stories, I want you to author one. Your assignment is to write a short story suitable for children aged five to eight years old. The topic is the current COVID-19 or Coronavirus pandemic. Write a story in which the protagonist is an elementary student whose school has closed due to the pandemic. She/He is frightened and does not completely understand why there is no school or why she/he is not allowed to go play with friends or to the movies, etc.

Include the various elements of characterization that we have reviewed, such as direct and indirect characterization. Consider setting, mood, conflict, point of view, etc. Have your character interact with parents, siblings, care-givers, etc. to show what life is like for the child since there is no school. Consider whether the child was on an athletic team, a member of an after-school choir group, a Cub Scout, attended dance class, etc. How does the child feel? Is she/he sad or angry?

If it helps to think of the assignment in terms of a children's book, do that. Like short stories, children's books typically have a protagonist, antagonist, a particular setting, and a conflict that has to develop and be resolved rather rapidly.

You may choose to what degree to involve others in your story. You may decide to have a parent laid off from work or begin working from home. Either way, each of these scenarios bring a new dynamic to the child's life.

End your story on a positive or hopeful note. Perhaps the child discovers there are things she/he can do that will make a difference. You figure out what those might be. Maybe the child rediscovers activities that used to be enjoyed by the entire family like playing games together, reading or being read to, or baking cookies. Perhaps she/he learns to take on some new responsibility to help within the family.

Typed stories are preferable; however, I will certainly accept handwritten papers. Your story should be 2-3 pages of notebook paper in length.

# Elements of a Short Story

English I – Mrs. McCluney

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- Brief fictional narratives; can be read in single sitting
- Compressed narration and character
- Leaves reader with unified, strong impression-main effect

## Short Stories

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2

- People or animals who take part in action of story
- Details provide characters' **traits**, or qualities and **motives**, or reasons for acting
- Main effect of story may involve a change or revelation that a character experiences

## Characters

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- Time and place of action within a story
- Quite often is a single, unified setting, but action could occur in multiple places or times
- Setting contributes to **mood** – the general feeling the story conveys

## Setting

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- Sequence of events within a story
- Plot builds toward a **climax**, or turning point in which a character reaches an insight or undergoes a change

## Plot

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- Struggle between two opposing forces
- Short stories usually focus on one central conflict
- Internal conflicts occur in the mind of a character; character struggles to make a decision or overcome feelings
- External conflict takes place between a character and an outside force, such as another character or a force of nature

## Conflict

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- An insight into life resulting from the combination of story elements to create a unified effect
- Examples of theme include the following:

## Theme

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- An object or story element that stands for a larger meaning
- Readers develop an understanding of theme by making inferences from key elements, including symbols

## Symbol

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8

- Most stories share a basic plot structure. Understanding the structure can help readers appreciate how a story builds to a satisfying conclusion.
- Plot structure consists of five components which we will examine next.

## Plot Structure

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Author introduces setting and characters. Often includes an inciting incident, an event which establishes conflict that drives the story.

Types of conflict include:

- Man vs. man – a struggle between two characters;
- Man vs. nature – a struggle between a character and a force of nature

## 1. Exposition

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- Man vs. society – the struggle that occurs when a character has a strong belief against the majority of the community or surroundings and decides to act on it
- Man vs. self – a struggle that occurs within the mind of a character, such as a battle with guilt

11

Events and complications which intensify conflict.

## **2. Rising Action**

12

- Rising action leads to the **climax**, which is the turning point or the moment of highest tension or suspense. The climax makes readers want to continue the story to determine what happens next.

## 3. Climax

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- Falling action sets up the story's ending. The intensity of the conflict lessens and events wind down.

## 4. Falling Action

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- The resolution shows the outcome of the conflict. In some stories, the conflict is settled or solved. In other stories, the conflict may be left unsettled. In still other stories, the ending may revisit the characters after time has passed to show how the situation changes after the conflict is resolved.

## **5. Resolution/Denouement**

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# Analyzing Character, Structure, and Theme



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## Developing Complex Characters



In the best stories, main characters are interesting and **complex**, or well-rounded. Complex characters share 3 qualities:

- ❧ They show multiple or even contradictory traits.
- ❧ They struggle with conflicting motivations, or reasons for acting as they do.
- ❧ They may change by the end of the story.

2

# Examples



## Contradictory traits

Bob's ability to organize ideas leads the debate team to victory – but his room is a mess.

## Conflicting motives

After high school, Bob wants to stay near his friends; he also wants to go to the best college he can.

3

# Characterization



To create and develop a character, a writer will use techniques of characterization

✎ Direct characterization – the narrator makes direct statements about a character's personality.

*Tim focused on just one thing at a time, but the depth of his focus was remarkable.*

*Before a race, his single-minded trance could only be broken by the sound of the starter's whistle.*

4



✧ Indirect characterization – readers learn what characters are like by analyzing what they say and do as well as how other characters respond to them

*Summer or winter, in sun, wind, or rain,  
Jess rose before dawn and jogged the two-  
mile loop around the reservoir. After a quick  
shower and two chocolate doughnuts, she  
always felt ready to face the day.*

5

## Characters Advance Plot



As characters interact with one another and struggle to overcome problems, their choices move the story along. A character's action—or decision *not* to take action—can lead to new plot developments and intensify conflict, heightening tension or suspense in the story.

6



## For example:



### **Conflict**

*Cindy is friendly with Tisha. Cindy's friends Bianca and Anne do not like Tisha and put pressure on Cindy to shun her.*

### **Character's interactions**

*Cindy decides Bianca and Anne are being unfair and makes a point of attending a school game with Tisha.*

7

## Example cont'd.



### **Result: Intensified conflict**

*Bianca and Anne invite everyone to their party except Tisha.*

8

# Characters Develop Theme

A character's struggles with a situation can teach a general lesson. In this way, characters help develop a story's **theme** – the central insight that it conveys. Watch for how characters change and for the lessons they learn. These details point toward the story's theme.

9

## For example:

### **Character's experience**

*After struggling to please her friends, Cindy realizes they are shallow and decides to let them go.*

### **Theme**

*As people grow, they may outgrow their friendships with others.*

10

# Plot Structure



Authors make decisions about the order in which to present information as well as the pacing of events.

- ❧ **Sequencing:** narrators tell plot events mainly in chronological order – the order in which events occurred.
- ❧ **Flashbacks:** sections of a narrative that describe a time before the present time of the story. A flashback might give insight into a character's motivations.

11



- ❧ **Foreshadowing:** hinting about what will happen later in the story, as when a narrator says, *"That would be the last time they spoke."*
- ❧ **Suspense:** a reader's feeling of anxious uncertainty about the outcome
- ❧ **Pacing:** the "speed" with which a narrator relates events. Giving many details "slows down" the pace.

12

# Point of View



The **point of view**, or narrative perspective, from which a story is told determines the information an author includes. There are 3 main types.

13

# Points of View



- ❧ **Third-person omniscient:** narrator is outside the events of the story and tells the thoughts and feelings of all characters.
- ❧ **Third-person limited:** narrator is outside the story but tells the thoughts and feelings of only one character.
- ❧ **First-person:** narrator is a character in the story and uses the pronouns *I* and *me*.

14



Point of view may be used to create striking effects. For instance, if the first-person narrator is naïve, or unsophisticated, the reader may know more about what is going on than the narrator, creating an effect known as **dramatic irony**.