Setting:

* Physical: the geographic location.
* Temporal: the time/time period it takes place in
* Social: the rules followed by the society in the story
* Atmosphere/mood: the feeling the reader gets based on details used in the story. Created by descriptions of the background and setting.

Character:

* Protagonist: the “primary” character in the story
* Antagonist: the character “opposed” to the protagonist
* Flat character: a character with very few defined traits
* Round character: a character with a large variety of defined traits
* Static character: a character who does not undergo a change
* Dynamic character: a character who changes (and/or learns) over the course of the story.
* Direct characterization: traits of a character that are explicitly told throughout the story.
* Indirect characterization: traits of a character that are implied – you need to make an inference in order to figure them out.

Conflict:

* Character vs. character: an external conflict where two forces conflict with each other
* Character vs. self: an internal conflict where a character’s own mind/body is against him/her.
* Character vs. society: a character stands against the rules of the society around him/her
* Character vs. nature: the environment is the primary antagonist

Point of View:

* first person: use of “I”, “me”, “we”, et al.
* third person limited: use of “he/she/it/they” pronouns. In LIMITED point of view, we often only get 1-2 characters’ thoughts, feelings, etc.
* third person omniscient: same pronouns as limited, but we get MANY characters’ points of view on the story.

Plot: The Events of the story

Narrative Hook: The opening of a story which “hooks” a reader’s interest and attention so (s)he will keep reading. It’s the opening: in a short story it may be the first few paragraphs, and in a novel it may be the first pages, or even chapters. Ideally, it is the first sentence.

Exposition: Portions of a story which introduce background elements. This might be information on the setting, events which occur before the main plot, character backstories, etc.

Rising Action: The events of a plot that lead to the climax. They introduce vital information, demonstrate conflict complications, or increase suspense. Whatever form it takes, rising action **leads to the climax**.

Climax: The crucial moment to the story. It is the turning point in a narrative, where tension is at its highest, the conflict is at its gravest, and/or when the action hits its big moment. This might be the point where characters are forced to change in some crucial way, the “big fight” occurs, or when the solution to the big problem is presented.

Falling Action: the events which occur in the aftermath of the climax. This might be where the villain seems to have the upper hand. Things can go most wrong for the protagonist. The protagonist, here, goes through that change.

Resolution: Also called denouement. All mystery is solved.

Foreshadowing: elements of a story which “hint at” future events.

Symbolism: a concrete element in a story (often an object) which SYMBOLIZES a more abstract concept. **Example: a picture of a heart SYMBOLIZES love.**

Imagery: visually descriptive/figurative language used in a narrative.

Inference: a conclusion made based on evidence and reasoning (see indirect characterization).

Irony: A reversal of expectations. 3 types:

Situational: a type of irony in which actions have an effect which is opposite from what is expected/intended.

Verbal: irony in which a person says or writes one thing, but means another; irony in which what is understood is different from what is meant.

Dramatic: irony unique to fiction/drama/speeches in which the audiences knows or understands something a character does not.

Denotation: A dictionary definition of a word/phrase

Connotation: an idea or feeling invoked (brought up) through word use.

Tone: the overall quality/feeling of a story – this is based on author intent, specifically on how the AUTHOR feels about the subject presented. The writer will PURPOSELY use word choice to show the reader how he/she feels about the subject.

Subject: The person(s), idea, or thing being discussed or dealt with.

Theme: The “main idea” of the story.