

The Five Essential Elements Of A Story

A story has five basic but important elements. These five components are: the **characters**, the **setting**, the **plot**, the **conflict**, and the **resolution**. These essential elements keep the story running smoothly and allow the action to develop in a logical way that the reader can follow.

CHARACTERS

The characters are the individuals that the story is about. The author should introduce the characters in the story with enough information that the reader can visualize each person. This is achieved by providing detailed descriptions of a character's physical attributes and personality traits. Every story should have a main character. The main character determines the way the plot will develop and is usually who will solve the problem the story centers upon. However, the other characters are also very important because they supply additional details, explanations, or actions. All characters should stay true to the author's descriptions throughout the story so that the reader can understand and believe the action that is taking place—and perhaps even predict which character may do what next.

SETTING

The setting is the location of the action. An author should describe the environment or surroundings of the story in such detail that the reader feels that he or she can picture the scene. Unusual settings (such as a fantasy world) can be interesting, but everyday settings can help a reader to better visualize the story and feel connected to the plot!

PLOT

The plot is the actual story around which the entire book is based. A plot should have a very clear beginning, middle, and end—with all the necessary descriptions and suspense, called **exposition**—so that the reader can make sense of the action and follow along from start to finish.

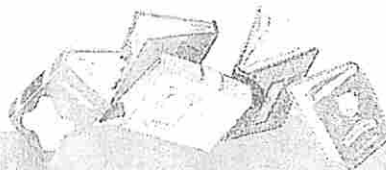
CONFLICT

Every story has a conflict to solve. The plot is centered on this conflict and the ways in which the characters attempt to resolve the problem. When the story's action becomes most exciting, right before the resolution, it is called the **climax**.

RESOLUTION

The solution to the problem is the way the action is resolved.

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Take notes on the five elements of a story as you read your book.

Characters

Setting

Plot

Conflict

Resolution