

English 9A
Short Story Unit
Literary Terms

1. Plot—a sequence of events; the “what happens” in a story.
2. Exposition—the background information at the beginning of a story.
3. Rising action—a series of complications in the plot leading to the climax.
4. Climax—the point in the story of the greatest intensity.
5. Falling action—a series of events leading to the resolution.
6. Resolution—at the end of the story, how the main conflict is brought to a close.
7. Character—person in a story, poem, or play.
8. Protagonist—the main character of a story—many times “the good guy”
9. Antagonist—the opposing force to the protagonist—“the bad guy”
10. Setting—the time and place of a story
11. Theme—Central idea of a work of literature. An idea the author is expressing about the subject.
12. Point of view—vantage point from which a writer tells a story.
13. First person point of view—character in story is narrating. Uses pronouns such as “I, we, me, us”
14. Third person point of view—narrator is not part of the story and may know the thoughts of one or more characters. Uses pronouns such as “he, she, they, it”
15. Irony—the contrast between expectation and reality.
16. Foreshadowing—The use of clues to hint at events that will occur later in the plot.
17. Symbol—Person, place, thing or event that stands for itself and for something beyond itself.
18. Conflict- Struggle between opposing forces (Person vs. person, person vs. society, person vs. self, person vs. nature)
19. Imagery – language that appeals to the senses, creates images in our minds

You will need to know these terms for upcoming discussions, assignments, quizzes, and tests.
Study!