

# 8 Elements of a Story

What to look for when reading literature

01

**Plot**

Focus on these key building blocks while reading and analyzing literature.

02

**Setting**

03

**Conflict**

04

**Characterization**

05

**Theme**

06

**Point of View**

07

**Language**

08

**Figurative Devices**

**01 Plot** – the sequence of interconnected events that occur within a narrative; a plot tells what, when, and why the events happened.

**02 Setting** – when and where the short story, play, or novel takes place

**03 Conflict** – the struggle that sets the plot in motion and then moves the action forward; the challenges characters face throughout a story

**04 Characterization** – the methods, incidents, speech, and other elements an author uses to reveal a character; it is depicted by what the character says, what others say, and by the character's actions.

**05 Theme** – the central or dominant idea behind the story; it is usually expressed indirectly, as an element the reader must figure out. It is a universal statement about humanity, rather than a simple statement dealing with plot or characters in the story.

**06 Point of View** – the way a story is told and the relationship between the story and the person who tells it

**07 Language** – the style, tone, and mood an author uses to tell the story

**08 Figurative Devices** – words and phrases used to communicate ideas in more poetic and effective ways than literal language