Narrative writing glossary

Character – a person, animal, being, or creature in a story. Writers use characters to perform the actions and speak the dialogue, moving the story along a plot line.

Characterisation – a combination of techniques that a writer might use to make the character feel more realistic or believable. Most authors will describe the character's physical appearance, thoughts, actions and speech. An author may also describe how other characters react to the character.

Cliff–hanger – a device used by writers where a character or a situation is left without a definite solution.

Climax – the central turning point of the plot, or when the action or tension is most exciting or intense.

Epiphany – the moment in a story where a character has a sudden realisation or understanding of a situation or other character/s.

Exposition – the beginning of a story. Expositions often include information about characters and the setting and historical context.

Falling action – the sequence of events which follow the climax of a narrative.

Genre – categories of different types of writing. Different genres follow different rules, which are known as conventions, although sometimes conventions can overlap. There are many genres including: science fiction, fantasy, horror, romance, gothic, dystopian, tragedy, adventure and action.

Plot – the sequence of events that make up a story.

Resolution/Ending/*Dénouement* – usually found in the final parts of a story and leads towards the final conclusion.

Rising action – a sequence of events which lead towards the climax of the story. Writers use rising action to develop the story.

Setting – a device used by writers to share with the reader the time and location where a story takes place. The mood and atmosphere of a story can also be established with settings. Common features found in settings are references to weather, immediate surroundings, time, culture and location.

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