**Elements of Fiction (Continued)**

**How NOT to Write about a Character**

Well, there’s like this dude, and he like, said some stuff, and like, there was another dude, and they got into a fight, and like, then one dude died, and I think hunting was involved.

**How to Write a Character Sketch**

* What is your first impression of the character?
* What did you learn from the character from how he/she acts or speaks?
* What do the other characters think or say about the character?
* How does the character behave or interact with the other characters?
* At what point in the story do you see a change in the character?
* Do the character’s name and appearance provide useful clues?
* Do you find this character believable?

**Conflict**

* Conflict is a struggle between opposing forces.
* Every plot must contain some kind of conflict for it to be interesting.
* Stories can have more than one (type of) conflict.

**Types of conflict**

* Internal conflict: a character struggles with his/her own personal and psychological issues and choices.
  + Character vs. Self
* External Conflict: a character struggles against an outside force.
  + Character vs. Character
  + Character vs. Nature
  + Character vs. Unknown/Supernatural
  + Character vs. Society
  + Character vs. Technology

**Point of View**

* The angle or perspective from which the story is told.
* It reveals who tells the story (narrator) and what that narrator “sees” or “knows.”
* The narrator is the character or voice that is telling the story.
* Note that the narrator is NOT the author.

**First-Person Involved**

* The narrator is a character (usually the protagonist) IN the story.
* This is a very personal type of narration that makes the reader feel involved with the character who is telling the story.
* The reader should be able to decide whether the narrator has changed or developed since the course of the story (round or flat character?).
* The reader must decide over the course of the story whether the narrator is a reliable source of information.
* “I” and “me” is used.

**First-Person Observer**

* The narrator may be a minor character in the story and have some role to play in the plot, or he or she may be observing the action from a distance.
* The writer creates some distance between the reader and the events by using this type of narration.
* The reader must question whether this narrator is telling the truth about events as he or she sees them or is involved in them.
* “I” and “me” is used.

**Third-person Reporter**

* When the narrator is a storyteller who isn’t part of the story.
* The narrator tells the facts, without going into any of the characters’ heads.
* The reader feels very distanced from this narrator as he or she cannot get into the heads of any of the characters and can only hear what is being reported.
* This narrator is only as reliable as his or her observations.
* Remember, this narrator cannot be in every place at one time and so we might be missing some details at to the action of the story.
* Uses “he”, “she”, “they”.

**Third-person Omniscient**

* When the narrator is a storyteller who isn’t part of the story.
* The narrator knows all, sees all, and tells all.
* This type of narrator is the most reliable since he or she can see inside and tell us, the readers, about every characters’ thoughts and feelings.
* Uses “he”, “she”, “they”.

**Theme**

* The central idea of a literary work.
* Can generally be summed up by one or more keywords.
  + Friendship
  + Violence
  + Adolescence
* The theme may be stated directly in the story or implied (reader must infer the theme).

**Moral**

* The implied lesson of the story.
* What we as readers learn as a result of reading the story.
* Often reflects the author’s views on human nature.
* Can be summed up as a slogan
* Friendship is too precious to throw away.
* Hard work will lead you to high places.
* NOT the same thing as a theme.