

APPENDIX C

LITERARY ELEMENTS HANDOUT FOR STUDENTS

It's easy to turn literary elements into prompts and questions to discuss fictional texts. You can introduce literary elements using the interactive read-aloud, and students can practice with narrative texts.

Antagonists: Forces that work against the protagonist and create tension in narrative texts. There are two kinds of antagonists:

External: nature, other characters, decisions, actions taken, interactions

Internal: thoughts within the character's mind and emotions

Climax: The moment or point of greatest intensity in the plot. Short stories usually have one climax, but novels can have small climaxes as the plot unfolds. The major climax is near the end. The climax, the highest point of the action, can deepen comprehension of plot details and also offer insights into themes.

Conflicts: Struggles or differences between opposing forces such as the protagonist and nature, two characters, the protagonist and a specific event or situation, or an internal conflict within the character. Some conflicts become problems. For example, the inner conflict of deciding whether to drive in a snowstorm leads to a problem when the person's car becomes stuck in a snowdrift on a desolate road. Observing how characters deal with inner conflicts and conflicts with other characters and/or a setting can reveal much about their personalities and the themes of the narrative.

Denouement or Return to Normalcy: Events that resolve the climax in a novel, short story, drama, or narrative poem are often referred to as the outcome. Understanding outcomes of a narrative can lead to figuring out themes and central themes and deepen readers' understanding of how the plot brought them back to a feeling of normalcy.

Other Characters: Observing how other characters relate to, dialogue, and interact with the protagonist can deepen readers' knowledge of all their personalities as well as the themes in a story.

Plot: Events that occur in a text and enable readers to observe characters in diverse situations. Plot supports an understanding of theme, conflicts, setting, and characters'

personalities. Often referred to as rising action, the plot in a text builds from the opening of the story to a high point of interest called the climax.

Point of View: This refers to who's narrating the story.

- A first person narrator is often the protagonist, and the author uses first person pronouns: I, me, mine, we, us, our, ours.
- An objective narrator acts like an observer who sees and records information and events from a neutral perspective and uses third person pronouns: he, him, his, she, her, hers, it, its, they, them, their, theirs.
- An omniscient narrator knows everything about the characters, their conflicts and problems, decisions and motivation, thoughts and feelings. Told from the third person point of view, it uses these pronouns: he, him, his, she, her, hers, it, its, they, them, their, theirs.

Protagonist: The main character in the narrative who has problems to solve. Observing how the protagonist interacts with others, makes decisions, and tries to solve problems offers insight into this character's personality and motivations.

Problem: Something that gets in the way of a character's desire or goal and requires an action or decision to overcome, such as whether to risk diving from the high board as required by the PE teacher when you're a weak swimmer or lying to your parents about where you've been to avoid punishment. Problems require characters to figure out solutions such as having no money for food or coping after a hurricane's wind and rain destroyed part of their town. How characters tackle problems and deal with their inability to resolve some can provide readers with deep insights into personality and decision-making processes.

Setting: The time and place of the narrative. A short text can focus on one setting while longer texts have multiple settings. How characters function in and react to a setting can deepen readers' understanding of characters' motivation and personality traits.

Symbolism: A symbol is one thing that represents an idea, emotion, or concept. For example, the U.S. flag symbolizes patriotism and love of country; white symbolizes purity; and red symbolizes blood or love. Narrative authors sometimes select objects to symbolize or represent an emotion or idea they're trying to help the reader understand.

Theme: This is a statement about people and life that the author makes with the narrative. In folktales and fairy tales, theme is frequently stated as a moral or lesson at the end of the story.