

Prose forms

allegory	A story or situation written in such a way that it has two coherent meanings, one being used to suggest another interpretation or hidden secret meaning.
autobiography	The story of a person's life written by that person
biography	An account of a person's life
diary	Regular (usually day-by-day) record of a person's life made by that person.
essay	A short prose discussion of any subject, which tries to persuade the reader to adopt a particular way of looking at the subject.
legend	A story about a heroic person, whether fictional or historical, such as Robin Hood or King Arthur
myth	A story, usually concerning super-humans or gods, generally related to explain religious beliefs.
novel	A long fiction text written in prose which almost always concentrates on a range of characters and incidents, and usually contains a plot
parable	A tale told in order to illustrate a religious doctrine or principle.
panegyric	A speech of praise of a person or events, generally of an elaborate or formal character.
parody	An imitation of a specific work of literature devised so as to ridicule the characteristic features of that work of literature.
satire	Literature which exhibits or examines vice and folly and makes them appear ridiculous or contemptible.
short story	A short fiction text written in prose which almost always concentrates on a few characters and is organised to focus on a single incident or the progress of a single character.

Language features in fiction

The following language features are used in a range of text forms such as plays, short stories, film and novels:

antagonist	The chief force opposing the protagonist; usually the antagonist is a person but it may be, for example, society, a group of people, nature itself.
atmosphere	The prevailing feeling or mood of a literary work
bathos	Anticlimax, e.g. 'She went home in a flood of tears and a taxi.'
caricature	A characterisation which exaggerates certain traits for comic effect.
characterisation	Method by which the reader is able to determine the nature of the characters in a literary work.
characterisation - direct	Situation in which the author, narrator, or another character informs the reader about the nature of the characters.
characterisation - indirect	Situation in which the reader is left to infer the nature of a character in a literary creation from that character's actions.
chronological	Events in the text occur in time-order sequence.
conflict	Opposition between people, forces idea and/or interests which generates tension and thereby drama
epilogue	A set piece/section occurring at the end of a narrative.
flat character	A one-dimensional character, often stereotyped.
foil	A character designed to contrast in some way with a more important character.
foreshadowing	Occurs when there are 'hints' about something that is going to happen later in the story; these 'hints' may take the form

	of symbols and dialogue.
<i>in medias res</i>	Latin for 'in the middle of things'; a technique of beginning a story at a critical point in the action.
juxtaposition	events/descriptions/words placed directly together for contrast or emphasis.
narrative technique	The method of telling the story; how a story unfolds; the way a story is told; links to structure and point of view.
narrator	The storyteller; the person (or people) who tells the story or from whose vantage point the events are viewed.
plot	<p>The sequence of events in a story; often following this pattern; exposition; complication; climax; denouement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Exposition</i>: Main characters/settings are introduced; a problem situation arises that sets the story going (when a specific event sets the story going it is called an inciting incident). • <i>Complication</i>: As the story develops the protagonist faces obstacles/difficulties these may be internal or external forces) that complicate the initial situation. As the protagonist (and other characters) deal with the complication(s), they may come to a turning point, a moment when the fortunes of the protagonist are reversed/changed. • <i>Climax</i>: This is the moment of highest tension/drama in the story when events reach a peak or crisis (an anti-climax occurs when the ending is deflating or disappointing, often due to some event detracting from the climax). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Denouement (or resolution)</i>: The story is resolved and we discover the fate of the characters
point of view	<p>The perspective from which the story is told (determined by the author's choice of narrator)</p> <p>Point of view can be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>omniscient</i> - there is an all-seeing, all-knowing narrator who knows the thoughts/feelings/actions of all the characters • <i>limited</i> - the narration is limited to one character's point of view (the narrator cannot 'roam' around the story); can use first-or third-person narration • <i>first person</i> - the story is told through the eyes of one character, who is narrating it using first-person pronouns ('I', 'me', 'my') • <i>third person</i> - the story is told from an outsider observer's perspective, not through a character's eyes' uses third-

	person pronouns ('he,' 'she', 'they', or characters' names 'Sam, Joanne').
prologue	A set piece/section before the story starts; often it is a direct or indirect address by the author to their audience used to establish setting, mood, theme or character.
protagonist	The main character in a story; the anti-hero is a protagonist lacking the usual qualities associated with heroes.
round character	A believable character who seems to have some of the complexity we find in real people; the character has several dimensions.
stereotype	A standardised image based on a preconceived idea about a group of people.
stream of consciousness	A writing technique in which the narrator's thoughts as well as actions are shared first-hand with the reader
subplot	A coherent story running alongside the main story, often reflecting an aspect of the main story (such as theme).
subtext	Meaning or significance which is implied rather than stated directly.
unreliable narrator	A narrator whose judgement the reader/viewer has reason to doubt.