KEY ELEMENTS OF A SHORT STORY

**Setting**

* + **Mood:** the frame of mind, emotional tone or state of feeling created by a piece of writing
  + **Tone:** the speaker’s or author’s attitude toward the subject, which is revealed by the words he or she chooses.
  + **Time:** the time in which a work of fiction takes place; clock time, seasonal time; yearly time; historical time
  + **Place:** the space in which the work of fiction takes place; geographical location
  + **Atmosphere**: the over-all feeling/emotional impression of the entire environment in a story, conveyed in large part by the setting and the mood
  + **Local Colour:** the presentation of characters, their manners, customs, dress and dialect of the characters that clues us to where the story is happening

**TWO TYPES OF CONFLICT**

* **External conflict**: a struggle with a force outside one’s self
* **Internal conflict:** a struggle within one’s self; a person must make some decision, overcome pain, quiet their temper, resist an urge etc.
* **FOUR KINDS OF CONFLICT**
  + **Man vs. Man (physical)** - the leading character struggles with his physical strength against other men, forces of nature, or animals.
  + **Man vs. Circumstances (classical) –** the leading character struggles against fate, or the circumstances of life facing him/her
  + **Man vs. Society (social)** – the leading character struggles against ideas, practices, or customs of other people
  + **Man vs. Himself/Herself (psychological) –** the leading character struggles with himself/herself; with his/her own soul, ideas of right or wrong, physical limitations, choices, etc.

**Crisis:** the point in which the character (usually the protagonist) has to make a decision to either solve the problem or give up on the problem (usually right before the climax) (Fight or flight response)

**Devices/Techniques used in the story (examples):**

* **Symbolism:** an object that stands for, or represents, an idea, belief, superstition, social or political institution, etc.; an object that evokes ideas or associations not literally part of the object; e.g. a pair of scales represents justice.
* **Imagery:** language that creates pictures in a reader’s mind to bring to life an experience or feelings described in literature. It may be a metaphor, a simile, or a straightforward description. An image may also have a symbolic meaning.
* **Suspense:** a feeling of excitement, curiosity, or expectation about the outcome of a literary work; keeps the reader turning pages
* **Contrast:** difference emphasized to provide variety and understanding; used to draw attention and exemplify depth of character usually
* Other figures of speech commonly used – Allusion, metaphor, similes, repetition