

THE DIFFERENT ELEMENTS

There are different ways in which literature can be portrayed - a novel, drama, poetry, biography, non-fictional prose, an essay, an epic, or short stories. All these entities have elements. To complete a piece, a writer, dramatist, or a novelist needs to use certain elements, like a plot, character, theme, etc. However, elements of fiction and elements of drama differ from elements of poetry.

ELEMENTS OF FICTION

- 1. Theme**— Theme has to do with what you see as the story’s point, message, function, or implied view of life and conduct.
- 2. Plot and Structure**— Plot and structure have to do with the arrangement, sequence, and organization of events that make up a story. The narrative begins with an explanation of the situation and characters (the “exposition”) followed by a series of complicating factors (“complicating or rising action”). There is a turning point, crisis, or climax, following by falling action or result. The story ends with a “resolution” where the plot’s complications are sorted out and resolved. However, not all stories follow this pattern. Many stories are not chronological. We start in the future, only to look in the past. There is often simultaneous action, no climax, or no resolution.
- 3. Character** - The “character” refers to, and we all know that we should be preoccupied with who these characters are and how they act. To understand character, you need to look closely at narrative summary about characters, the metaphorical value of surface details of dress and physical appearance (and when it changes), what characters say and how they say it, what characters say about themselves—what they think and feel, how characters respond to what happens to them, how the characters interact with other characters and the change, if any, that takes place in a character.
- 4. Setting** - The location and time of a story is what we call “setting.” Setting is vital because the physical details of time and place often have metaphorical value. Setting can also convey the emotional or psychological state of characters.
- 5. Point of View** - Point of view refers to how the story is told. Who is telling the story? Why is he telling it? A story can be told by a distant third person, a mere observer who may or may not have privileged access to characters’ thoughts and feelings. We call this kind of a narrator an “omniscient” or “limited omniscient” narrator, depending on how much he knows about the characters. There is also the first-person narrator who tells his own story in his own voice.
- 6. Language and Style** - The way a writer chooses words, arranges them in sentences and longer units of discourse, and exploits their significance determines his or her style. Style is a kind of verbal identity of a writer that reflects the way a writer sees the world.
- 7. Imagery**— Language and style also includes images, the concrete representation of a sense impression, feeling, or idea. Images may invoke our sight, hearing, sense of smell and taste, and tactile perceptions.
- 8. Allusion**— Allusion is also important in that a writer may convey a larger meaning by alluding to (that is, “subtly referring to”) another story, character (fictional or real), place, event, or object. This is a subtle and economical way to suggest larger significance and meaning.

ELEMENTS OF POETRY

Poetry is literature in a metrical form. However, free-verse became the popular style towards the modern and post modern age. Like fiction, it may not have plots, setting, etc.; yet, it has a structured method of writing. There are various kinds of poetry, such as a ballad, sonnet, etc. All these forms have some elements, such as style, theme, rhyme, rhythm, metaphor, etc.

- 1. Style** - It refers to the way the poem is written. Poems are written in various styles, such as free verse, ballad, sonnet, etc., which have different meters and number of stanzas.
- 2. Symbol** - Symbol represents the idea and thought of the poem. It can be an object, person, situation, or action. For example, a national flag is the symbol of that nation.
- 3. Theme** - Like other forms of literature, poetry has a theme of its own. Theme contains the message, point of view, and idea of the poem.
- 4. Imagery** - Imagery is another important element that a poet often uses in poems that appeal to our senses. In the age of modernism, T.S. Eliot used images of urban life in his poems. Wordsworth used nature as poetic images in his poems.
- 5. Rhyme and rhythm** - Rhyme is an element that is often used in poetry. It's a recurrence of an accented sound or sounds in a piece of literature. Poets and lyricists use this device in various ways to rhyme within a verse. There is internal rhyme, cross rhyme, random rhyme, and mixed rhyme. It gives the poem a flow and rhythm. It contains the syllables in a poem. Every poem has a rhythm in it. It's about how the words resonate with each other and how the words flow when they are linked with one another in a poem.
- 6. Meter** - This is an important rhythmic structure of poetry. It is described as sequence of feet, each foot being a specific series of syllable types - such as 'stressed' or 'unstressed'. It makes the poetry more melodious.
- 7. Figurative language** - uses words in figures of speech: for example, through metaphor or analogy, metonymy, overstatement, understatement, comparison, multiple meanings, or referring to some common linguistic or cultural reference.

Elements of literature include all the elements that are essential to create a piece. These elements help a writer to create splendid poetry, superb drama, and a soul-touching novel. They are used to form the structure of a literary piece.