COMPREHENSION OF NARRATIVE TEXT
Narrative Text Genres

- Stories can be categorized in a number of ways.
  - By genres
  - More general subcategories
# Narrative Genres

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Fables

- Tales told to point out a moral

**Characteristics:**
- They are short.
- The characters are most often animals.
- The characters are one-dimensional—wise or foolish.
- The setting is vague and could be placed anywhere.
- The moral of the story is usually stated at the end.

**Examples:**
- The Ant and the Grasshopper
- The Boy Who Cried Wolf
Folktales

- Stories where the hero overcome adversity.
- Began as oral stories being told and retold by medieval storytellers.

Characteristics:
- Often begin with the opening “Once upon a time…”
- The setting is could be anywhere.
- The plot structure is simple.
- Characters are one-dimensional: stupid or clever
- Industrious or lazy
- The ending is happy often with the phrase “everyone lives happily ever after.”

Examples:
- The Gingerbread Boy
- Cinderella
- Jack and the Beanstalk
Myths

- Myths were stories created by ancient people to explain natural phenomena.

- Characteristics:
  - They explain creations.
  - The characters are usually heroes with supernatural powers.
  - The setting is not well defined.
  - Magical powers are required.

- Examples:
  - The Legend of the Bluebonnet
  - King Midas: The Golden Touch
Legends

- Legends include hero tales and tall tales. They tell of courageous deeds of people.
- There may be some basis in history that support that the characters were real people, but this cannot be proven.
- Examples:
  - **Legends**
    - Robin Hood
    - King Arthur
  - **Tall Tales**
    - Johnny Appleseed
    - Paul Bunyan
    - Pecos Bill
Modern Literary Tales

- Modern Literary Tales are related to folktales and fairy tales as having similar characteristics, but they have been written more recently and have identifiable authors.
- Examples:
  - The Snow Queen (Ehrlich)
  - The Ugly Ducking (Mitchell)
  - Alexander and the Wind-Up Mouse (Lionni)
Fantastic Stories

- Fantastic stories are realistic in most details, but explore alternative realities and contain elements not found in the natural world.

- Characteristics:
  - The events are things that could not happen in today’s world.
  - The setting is realistic.
  - The main characters are people or personified animals.
  - The theme usually address the conflict between good and evil.

- Examples:
  - Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher (Coville)
  - Poppy (Avi)
  - Charlie and the Chocolate Factory (Dahl)
Science Fiction

Science fiction stories are set in the future scientific world. Characters often travel through space or time.

Characteristics:
- The story is set in the future.
- The conflict is between characters and natural or mechanical forces.
- The characters believe in the technology.
- Detailed descriptions of scientific facts are included.

Example:
- Time Warp Trio (Scieszka)
High Fantasy

- High fantasy stories are based upon the conflict between good and evil and often involve a quest.
- Most include:
  - Magical kingdoms
  - Quests
  - Tests of courage
  - Magical powers
  - Superhuman characters
- Examples:
  - The Harry Potter Series
  - The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe
Contemporary Stories

- These stories are lifelike and believable. They portray today’s society.
- Readers are quick to identify with the characters.
- Characteristics:
  - Characters act like real people or like real animals of today.
  - The setting is today’s world.
  - The stories represent events of everyday life or important topics of today.
- Examples:
  - Going Home (Bunting)
  - Seedfolks (Fleischman)
Historical Stories

- Historical stories set in the past. Details included about food, clothing, and culture are accurate.

Characteristics:
- The setting is historically accurate.
- The conflict is between characters or characters and society.
- The language is appropriate to the time and place.

Examples:
- Crispin: The Cross of Lead (Avi)
- Sarah, Plain and Tall (MacLachlan)
- Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry (Taylor)
Writer’s Craft/Author’s Craft

- Writer’s Craft/Author’s Craft are the specific techniques that writers use to convey meaning or grab the reader’s attention.
- These are the same as the 6 + 1 traits identified by Ruth Culham.
  - Ideas
  - Organization
  - Voice
  - Word choice
  - Sentence fluency
  - Conventions
  - Presentation
Point of View

Stories are written from different points of view. The point of view impacts the readers’ understanding of the characters and events.

The Points of View:
- First-Person Viewpoint
- Omniscient Viewpoint
- Limited Omniscient Viewpoint
- Objective Viewpoint
First-Person Viewpoint

- The story is told through the eyes of one of the characters.
- Uses the pronoun I.
- The narrator tells the story as a participant in the events or as one observing first hand.

Text Example:

- The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs! (Scieszka)
Omniscient Viewpoint

- The author sees all and knows all, telling the reader the thoughts of each character.
- Text example:
  - Doctor De Soto (Steig)
Limited Omniscient Viewpoint

- The reader knows the thoughts of one character.
- It is told in third person.
- The writer concentrates on the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of the main character or one other.

Text Example:
- Hatchet (Paulsen)
Objective Viewpoint

 The readers are witnesses to the story.
 The reader knows only what is visible and audible.
 The reader does not know what the character thinks.
 The focus is upon telling the events of the story.
 There is generally little development of the characters’ personalities.

Text Example:
• Rumpelstiltskin (Zelinski)
Some stories are told from multiple viewpoints.

Text Example:
- Seedfolks (Fleischman)
Figurative Language

- Figurative language is a word or phrase that departs from literal meaning for the sake of comparison, emphasis, or clarity.
- Whenever you describe something by comparing it with something else, you are using figurative language.
Types of Figurative Language

- **Similes**
  - Different items are compared by the use of *like* or *as*.

- **Metaphors**
  - Different things are compared, but without the word *like* or *as*.

- **Personification**
  - Gives non-human objects human qualities.
Idioms
• Phrases that do not mean what it says literally.

Alliteration
• Repetition of a sound at the beginning of two or more words.

Hyperbole
• An exaggeration
- **Onomatopoeia**
  - Imitation of sounds in writing.

- **Puns**
  - A play on words that depends upon a word having more than one meaning or sounding like another word.

- **Oxymoron**
  - Combines two opposing or contradictory ideas.
Literary Allusions

- Literary allusions make reference to something other than what is directly being discussed.

- Literary Allusions allow the writer to give an example or get a point across without going into a lengthy discussion.
Allusion Examples

- This place is like a Garden of Eden.
- I was surprised his nose was not growing like Pinocchio’s.
- Chocolate was her Achilles’ heel.
- He was a Good Samaritan yesterday when he helped the lady start her car.