



KEY STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS

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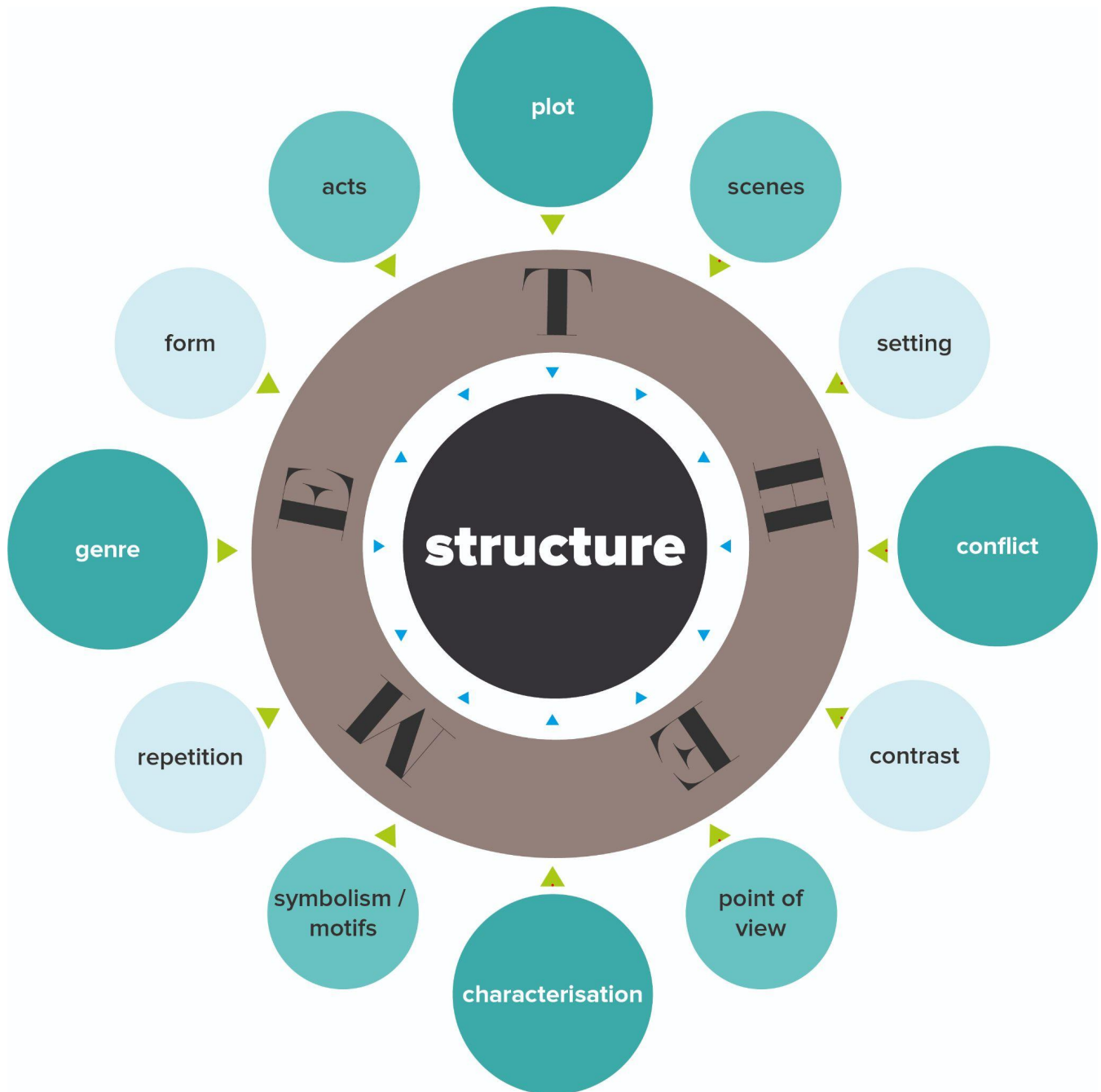
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ELEMENTS OF STRUCTURE





10 CORE COMPONENTS OF BEGINNINGS

The external goal, The internal goal, the inciting incident, backstory, a stellar opening sentence, language, character, setting, foreshadowing, theme

- Extracts in the GCSE English language paper are often taken from the beginnings of texts, even the opening scenes.
 - Therefore, it is important to understand how beginnings work
 - Beginnings, especially opening scenes, have ten core components:
 - The external goal
 - Also known as the initial surface problem
 - Win
 - Stop
 - Retrieve
 - Escape
 - Revenge
 - Deliver
 - Maintain
 - The external goal is an external, physical representation of the protagonist's internal goal
 - The internal goal
 - Also known as the story-worthy problem; a character can have one or all of these goals:
 - Positive relationships
 - Self-acceptance (positive evaluation of oneself and one's life)
 - Personal growth
 - Environmental mastery (the capacity to effectively manage one's life and the surrounding environment)
 - Autonomy
 - Purpose in life
 - the inciting incident;
 - The inciting incident of a story is the event that sets the main character or characters on the journey that will occupy them throughout the narrative.
 - Typically, this incident will upset the balance within the main character's world.
 - The inciting incident introduces this problem by either bringing to the forefront a buried problem or creating a new one, thus beginning the gradual revealing process that will encompass the rest of the story as the protagonist's—and the reader's—understanding of the true nature of the story-worthy problem deepens.
 - By the end of the story, the character realises the truth about this problem, and the truth reveals the irony of his/her initial beliefs





- backstory;
 - There are times when a backstory is necessary. In many
 - police procedurals,
 - mysteries,
 - thrillers
 - and related genres,
 - the story begins often with a crime being committed.
 - The protagonist is nowhere around the scene at the book's beginning.
 - The author has to decide when this backstory is necessary
- a stellar opening sentence;
 - This provides a hook and encourages the reader to find out what happens next
- language;
- character;
- setting;
- foreshadowing.
 - Foreshadowing is a literary device used to give an indication or hint of what is to come later in the story. Foreshadowing is useful for creating
 - suspense,
 - a feeling of unease,
 - a sense of curiosity,
 - or a mark that things may not be as they seem.
 -
- Theme
 - Beginnings introduce the themes that the rest of the story will explore

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GOALS OF OPENINGS

The opening of a story carries an awesome responsibility,

- and the ten core components outlined in the previous section work together to make sure the opening meets reader demands.
- The goals of the opening scene are:
 - (1) to successfully introduce the internal goal of the protagonist;
 - Also known as the story-worthy problem
 - (2) to hook the readers;
 - (3) to establish the rules of the story; and
 - (4) to forecast the ending of the story.
 - the beginnings of the best stories very often contain at least a hint of the ending.
 - As T.S. Eliot said, “In my beginning is my end.”
 - If the opening fails to accomplish any one of these elements, it will be faulty at best and unreadable at worst.





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7 WAYS AUTHORS START THEIR STORIES: INTRODUCTION

1. Action
2. Dialogue
3. Internal Monologue
4. Mystery
5. Premonition
6. Profound Statement
7. Setting

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7 WAYS AUTHORS START THEIR STORIES: ACTION

THE NUMBER ONE WAY to open a genre book is with action (in media res),

- Announce the action is taking place and place the enemy close, but not too close.
 - o This allows you to get your hero's reaction to the danger, providing valuable insight into
 - who they are,
 - where they are,
 - and what they are up to when the action occurs:
 - Logen plunged through the trees, bare feet slipping and sliding on the wet earth, the slush, the wet pine needles, breath rasping in his chest, blood thumping in his head. He stumbled and sprawled onto his side, nearly cut his chest open on his own axe, lay there panting, peering through the shadow forest.
 - o We learn Logen has an axe, so whatever he's running from is more powerful than he and his weapon can handle.
 - o We also increase the potential danger of his "bare feet slipping and sliding" from the first sentence by making Logen fall in the second.
 - That lets us know Logen is not invincible, nor is he immune to fear or accidents.
 - Abercrombie has efficiently humanised his hero right from the start by showing, not telling.
 - o If he'd simply told us Logen was afraid, that would have been lousy writing.
 - o Instead, he shows us through internal and external sensory details.
 - o The fast, choppy style conveys panic.
 - o As a result, readers can empathise with Logen.
 - The only problem is, we don't know much about him. That's where the second paragraph comes in....





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7 WAYS AUTHORS START THEIR STORIES: DIALOGUE

LIKE ACTION, when an author starts with dialogue, they are often in media res.

- Dialogue puts the author into the mouth of a character with something brief and important to say.
 - It can't be, "Hello, how are you?" or "Please, sit down."
 - Anything normal is the kiss of death.
 - Dialogue must be powerful, and, like action, it must refer to something exciting that either
 - has happened,
 - is happening,
 - or is about to happen,
 - so, authors try to make sure there is at least a hint of mystery or danger in their words.
 - "We should head back," Gared urged as the woods began to grow dark around them. "The wildlings are dead." — GEORGE R. R. MARTIN, *A GAME OF THRONES*
 - Although Gared is a minor character, this third person opening is still an excellent beginning.
 - We get an immediate sense of peril, and know that there has been a battle, yet some greater danger remains. What is it? We cannot help but find out. Also, notice how the author mentions the darkening forest between the dialogue. That helps set the scene... and the danger.

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7 WAYS AUTHORS START THEIR STORIES: (INTERNAL) MONOLOGUE

A monologue is a literary device by which the reader gains access to the interior thoughts and emotions of a character.

- This is usually called "internal monologue,"
 - Monologue has several advantages over dialogue,
 - chiefly its intimacy.
 - We are firmly rooted in the head of the protagonist.
 - The second advantage is it operates in the realm of thought, not speech, and theoretically, that frees the writer to talk about anything.
 - But whatever is thought or said must be filtered through the viewpoint of the protagonist,
 - so, it may not be entirely factual.
 - This is especially true in the case of unreliable narrators who may
 - lie to the reader,





- omit important facts,
- or steadfastly believe certain untruths, such as Holden Caulfield in J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*.

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7 WAYS AUTHORS START THEIR STORIES: MYSTERY

A MYSTERY MUST INTRIGUE the reader, raising a question worth answering.

- It is often expressed in the form of dialogue or monologue, though there is no hard or fast rule.
 - [Outside the blood spirals down.](#) — DAN SIMMONS, *SHAVE AND A HAIRCUT, TWO BITES*

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7 WAYS AUTHORS START THEIR STORIES: PREMONITION

PREMONITION IS an overwhelming but unprovable feeling that something important is about to happen.

- Usually, it's the anticipation of a negative event, but can be felt prior to positive events as well.
 - [Twenty minutes before the quake hit, Stanley Banks was standing at his living room window.](#) — RICHARD LAYMON, *QUAKE*

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7 WAYS AUTHORS START THEIR STORIES: PROFOUND STATEMENT

[The secret is how to die.](#) — DAN BROWN, *THE LOST SYMBOL*

- Some authors offer only a single line like Dan Brown,
 - or a few explanatory sentences before switching to how it relates to the hero:
 - [Some people are just born evil. No twisted childhood trauma, no abusive stepfather, or alcoholic mother, just plain God-awful mean. Dr. Jasmine Cooper, dream therapist and empath, believed that, knew that. She had spent too many years looking inside the minds of murderers not to believe it.](#) — LAURELL K. HAMILTON, *HERE BE DRAGONS*

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7 WAYS AUTHORS START THEIR STORIES: SETTING

ONCE THE MOST COMMON WAY to open a story, setting can be tricky to make interesting. It better be a very good (and brief) description if it's going to hook today's readers.

- Compare these examples





- o Darkness. Winter. A night of frost and no moon. — BERNARD CORNWELL, SWORD SONG
- o It was night. It was hot. The sea wasn't far away. — DAY KEENE, HOME IS THE SAILOR
 - What do these story hooks both have in common?
 - They both use short, choppy sentences to describe the setting.
 - o This tells the reader it is going to be a grim, nasty tale, and also an adventure—
 - perhaps one best not taken by the protagonist.
 - You don't have to use choppy prose; you can convey the same message in one clean sentence just as easily:
 - o It was one of those tourist traps that have turned the coast of Florida into a glittering facade. — ROBERT EDMOND ALTER, CARNY KILL
 - This paints a seedy picture of a world of greed and illusion, which is exactly what the carnival in question is: a cotton candy deathtrap of attractive exteriors and lies waiting for the protagonist to walk in...
 - Maybe the setting needs a slightly longer, more complex story hook:
 - o The place was on the Sunset Strip, a second-floor outfit with several big-lettered banners...

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IRONY - DEFINITION

Irony is another core structural element of stories

- Almost all good stories feature irony
 - Once an author has set an audience's expectations, they can control the relationship between expectation and outcome, and that means that they can generate irony.
 - irony is the heart of meaning.
 - o Irony can have many different definitions, but we can define it as
 - any meaningful gap between expectation and reality.
 - The tricky part is that word meaningful.
 - o Why are some gaps ironic, while others are merely unexpected?
 - In truly ironic situations, characters are trying to preserve a false expectation or prevent an unwanted outcome, and then reality upsets their expectations or efforts.

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IRONY - EFFECTS

Ironic story elements create meaning because they lure the audience into expecting a certain outcome and then upset that expectation in more ways than one.

- This not only piques the audience's interest,
 - o but it also upsets their certainties.





- It lets them know the author is going to do things they don't expect in ways they haven't seen before;
 - It also forces readers to question their ideas and values
 - and ultimately show them things they don't already know.
 - This is why almost every element of good writing should be packed with irony.
 - An ironic difference between expectation and outcome can be
 - comedic
 - (expected a hug but got a pie in the face, or vice versa)
 - or it can be dramatic
 - (sought justice but found injustice, or vice versa).
 - Either way, the greater the gulf between expectation and outcome, the more meaning the story will have.
 - Likewise, the smaller the gap, the less meaningful it will be, no matter how well it is written.

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IRONY – GENERAL TECHNIQUES

When stories seem meaningless, it is usually because they lack irony.

- When stories are especially powerful, you can be certain the author has packed it full of many different types of irony.
 - Learning to recognise and control irony in a story is one of the most important skills a writer can have.
 - Here are some techniques for creating irony
 - present a fundamentally ironic concept (which will sometimes be encapsulated by an ironic title).
 - For example, the things we love can be the things that destroy us
 - three major techniques for ironic characterisation:
 - a protagonist with an ironic backstory,
 - an ironic contrast between their exterior and interior,
 - and a great flaw that's the ironic flip side of a great strength.
 - Story structure is often centered around another great irony:
 - Though the protagonist might initially perceive this challenge as an unwelcome crisis, it will often prove to be a crisis that ironically provides just the opportunity they need, directly or indirectly, to address their longstanding social problems and/or internal flaws.
- Each scene will be more meaningful if the protagonist encounters a turn of events that upsets some pre-established ironic presumptions about what would happen.
- Likewise, the conclusion of each scene will be more meaningful if the character's actions result in an ironic scene outcome in which the events of the scene ironically flip the original intention, even if things turn out well for them.
- intentionally ironic dialogue, such as sarcasm.
- unintentionally ironic dialogue,





- o such as when there's an ironic contrast between word and deed or an ironic contrast between what the character says and what the audience knows.
- The story's ironic thematic dilemma,
 - o the story's overall dilemma comes down to a choice of
 - good versus good (or bad versus bad),
 - stories may also have several smaller ironic dilemmas along the way,
 - o in which the characters must consistently choose between
 - goods,
 - or between evils, throughout the story.

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DRAMATIC IRONY IN *BLOOD BROTHERS* BY WILLY RUSSELL

The ending of "Blood Brothers" by Willy Russell involves the tragic death of the two main characters, Mickey and Eddie, who are revealed to be fraternal twins separated at birth. The technique that Russell uses to end the play is dramatic irony.

Throughout the play, the audience is aware of the twins' true relationship, but the characters are not. This creates a sense of dramatic tension, as the audience knows that the boys' fates are intertwined, but the characters do not. In the final scene, the tragic consequences of their separation are fully realized, as Mickey shoots and kills Eddie in a fit of jealous rage. The irony of the situation is that the boys, who were originally separated in an attempt to give them better lives, end up losing everything as a result.

The use of dramatic irony in the ending of "Blood Brothers" serves to emphasize the play's central themes of class division, social inequality, and the power of fate. It also creates a powerful emotional impact on the audience, as they are forced to confront the tragic consequences of the twins' separation.

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POINT OF VIEW (POV) - DEFINITION

The narrative point of view—POV—is the perspective from which a story or at least a section of the story is told.

- It's like a lens through which readers view the events.
 - o POV makes reading a book a more intimate experience compared to other forms of storytelling such as movies and TV shows.
 - In novels and short stories, readers aren't limited to seeing just the outer actions and hearing the dialogue.
 - They get to
 - o dip into the minds of the characters,
 - o see the events through their eyes,
 - o and experience their emotions.





- They are
 - becoming the protagonist
 - and living the story instead of just watching it.
 - That's why as readers, we're often much more emotionally involved in books than movies.

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POINT OF VIEW (POV) – DRAMATIC FUNCTION

Point of view determines

- how readers will view characters,
- how close they feel to them,
- and with whom they will identify.

Point of view helps authors

- create tension
- and suspense by controlling how much information they give their readers about what's going on in the story.
 - Readers will keep turning the pages if they get to discover what will happen next along with the POV character.
 - A close point of view encourages authors to show instead of tell—
 - which basically means bringing the story to life instead of delivering a secondhand report.

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POINT OF VIEW (POV) – TYPES

Most novels are told either in first-person or third-person POV.

- These terms are derived from the pronouns used to tell the story.
 - First-person POV uses the pronoun “I”
 - while third-person POV uses the pronouns “he” or “she.”
 - Third-person is further divided into several subtypes.
 - First-person POV:
 - The narrator is one of the characters in the story,
 - so the reader has access to only this character's feelings and thoughts.
 - Second-person POV:
 - The narrator is an outside observer who tells the story using the pronoun “you,”
 - which casts the reader in the role of the protagonist.
 - The author supplants and explicitly directs the thoughts and emotions of the reader.
 - Third-person omniscient POV (also called omniscient POV):





- o The narrator is an all-knowing and often opinionated entity who's not a character in the story.
 - He or she can see into the minds of all characters.
- Third-person limited POV:
 - o The narrator is a neutral observer, not a character in the story.
 - He or she has access to the mind of only one character
 - and can tell readers only what this character is thinking or feeling.
- Deep third-person POV:
 - o Like in first-person POV, the narrator is a character in the story.
 - Like in third-person limited POV, readers can only be told about the thoughts and feelings of one character.
- Third-person multiple POV:
 - o This is a variant of third-person limited POV,
 - but it can also be used in a deep point of view.
 - The narrator is either a character or a neutral observer.
 - He or she has access to the thoughts and feelings of only one character per scene (or per chapter),
 - but the author can switch to the point of view of a different character at scene or chapter breaks.
- Third-person objective POV:
 - o The narrator is a neutral observer who views the action from the outside,
 - like a camera, and cannot reveal the thoughts or feelings of any character.

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SETTING - DEFINITION

Story setting is not merely the physical backdrop of the tale.

- It may also include the
 - o historical background
 - o and cultural attitudes of a given
 - place and time,
 - the mood of a time,
 - and how the story people talk.
- Also tied closely to setting may be such details as
 - o the author's style,
 - o a period's traditions,
 - o and the kind of story the writer wishes to relate.
 - All of these factors must dovetail properly with the story's
 - plot,
 - its characters,
 - the theme
 - the genre





- and the desired general emotional tone of the piece if the finished fiction is to "work" for the reader.
 - Would Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* have the same kind of impact if set in the English countryside?
 - Think about a story you have studied; how would a change of setting alter the meaning of the story?

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SETTING: EFFECTS - DECORATION & IMMERSIVENESS

good handling of a proper setting can

- "decorate" a story,
 - thus enhancing its
 - color
 - and general appeal as well as making it more convincing.
 - Reader involvement may be intensified by proper handling of setting because physical, sensory descriptions of the story world allow the reader to experience those surroundings through his own imagination —
 - as if he were "really there,"
 - seeing,
 - hearing,
 - breathing,
 - tasting
 - and feeling the world of the tale.
 - Vivid, evocative physical description of setting can transport the reader into the story's universe.
 - The reader may also derive an additional sense of involvement and satisfaction if he is given, as part of the setting, factual data which fascinates him and makes him feel he is learning something.
 - This kind of involvement and possible satisfaction not only predisposes the reader to be friendly to the writer, and generally relaxed, it also makes him more likely to believe the story's plot and characters because he is already having a pleasurable experience from the setting, and believes in the story world.

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SETTING: EFFECTS - MOOD





the setting can determine the mood of the story

- If the story is set in a gloomy, desolate, or eerie environment,
 - it may create a sense of
 - foreboding
 - and suspense for the reader.
- Alternatively, if the story takes place in a cheerful, bright, and lively location,
 - the reader may feel a sense of
 - joy
 - and happiness.
 - The mood of the story can help set the tone and establish the emotional connection that the reader will have with the characters and the plot.

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SETTING: EFFECTS - INFLUENCING CHARACTER BEHAVIOUR

the setting can influence the characters' behavior and actions

- People's surroundings can shape their
 - personalities,
 - habits,
 - and attitudes,
 - and this holds true for fictional characters as well.
 - The setting can create a certain atmosphere that can impact the characters' decision-making and the direction of the story.
 - For example, if the story takes place in a war-torn city, the characters may be forced to confront their fears and make difficult decisions in order to survive.
 - This can add depth and complexity to the story and make it more engaging for the reader.

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SETTING: EFFECTS - CHARACTER INSIGHTS

the setting can enhance the themes and motifs of the story

- The setting can serve as a metaphor for the character's
 - emotional state,
 - their journey,
 - and their growth.
 - For example, a character may start in a dark and dingy place and gradually move towards a brighter and more hopeful environment, symbolising their personal growth and transformation.

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DENOUEMENT (ENDING) TECHNIQUES: OVERVIEW

The ending has an enormous impact on how (and if) readers will remember a story in years to come.

- If they are dissatisfied at the closing of the final chapter, they won't likely read it again or share it with others.
 - While the start of a story might convince people to read the story in the first place, the end is what will determine if they turn from a reader into a fan.
 - Of course there's no universally right or wrong endings.
 - Art is subjective, after all, and every reader will like different things.
 - However, writers must consider reader expectations — and whether their story is best served by meeting or subverting those expectations.
 - A few things to consider when trying to determine reader expectations are:
 - Genre
 - Plot structure
 - Target audience
 - Theme and overall message

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DENOUEMENT (ENDING) TECHNIQUES: CYCLICAL STRUCTURE

Much of storytelling is cyclical.

- Sometimes, it's a metaphorical return home, such as in *The Hero's Journey*. In other cases, the cycle is quite literal — the story ends where it began.
 - William Golding uses this technique in his novel ***Lord of the Flies***:
 - **Return to Civilisation:** Throughout the novel, the boys descend into savagery and violence as they struggle to survive on the island without the structure of civilisation. However, in the end, they are rescued and return to the world of adults and civilisation. This can be seen as a cyclical pattern, as they return to the very world they were originally taken from.
 - **The Repeating Pattern of History:** The violence and chaos on the island can be interpreted as a microcosm of human society and the destructive tendencies of humanity. The ending, where the boys are rescued and return to civilisation, can be seen as a temporary solution to this problem. However, it is suggested that the same cycle of violence and chaos will continue in the future, as evidenced by the naval officer's own participation in a world war. This repetition of violence and chaos is a cyclical pattern in human history.
 - **The Return to Primal Instincts:** The descent into savagery on the island can be seen as a regression to primal instincts, where the boys act on their most basic desires and impulses. In the end, the boys are rescued and returned to civilisation, where they are expected to once again repress their primal instincts and act according to societal norms. This can be seen as a cyclical pattern, as humanity continually struggles to balance its primal instincts with the demands of civilisation.





- Mark Haddon also uses a circular narrative structure in *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, which creates a sense of closure and completeness for the reader, while also highlighting the growth and transformation of the novel's main character, Christopher Boone.
 - The novel begins and ends with Christopher writing a book about his investigation into the death of his neighbor's dog. This circular structure reinforces the idea that the novel is a self-contained story, with a clear beginning and end. It also suggests that Christopher has come full circle in his journey of discovery and self-discovery. At the beginning of the novel, Christopher is focused on solving the mystery of the dog's death, but by the end of the novel, he has expanded his horizons and is ready to explore the world around him.
 - The final sentence of the novel, "And I can go anywhere I want, even if school is closed, because I have lots of things to do," further emphasises Christopher's growth and transformation. This sentence highlights Christopher's newfound independence and agency, as well as his increased confidence and ability to navigate the world around him. The use of the word "lots" suggests that Christopher's world has expanded beyond the limited confines of his previous experiences, and that he is ready to take on new challenges and adventures.
 - The circular narrative structure also reinforces the novel's themes of order, logic, and predictability. Throughout the novel, Christopher is drawn to patterns and systems, and he often struggles to make sense of the unpredictable and chaotic world around him. The circular structure of the novel provides a sense of order and predictability that is comforting to both Christopher and the reader. By returning to the beginning of the story, the circular structure reinforces the idea that there is a logic and order to the world, and that even seemingly random events can be understood and explained.
 - Overall, Mark Haddon's use of a circular narrative structure in "The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time" creates a sense of closure and completeness for the reader, while also highlighting Christopher's growth and transformation. The circular structure reinforces the novel's themes of order, logic, and predictability, and provides a satisfying conclusion to Christopher's journey of discovery and self-discovery.
- Similarly, Dennis Kelly's play *DNA* uses a circular structure to end the play, creating a sense of closure for the audience while reinforcing the themes of guilt, responsibility, and identity that run throughout the play.
 - The play begins with a group of teenagers engaging in a bullying incident that goes horribly wrong, resulting in the death of a young boy. The rest of the play focuses on the teenagers' attempts to cover up the crime and the guilt and paranoia that begins to consume them. As the play progresses, the teenagers begin to turn on each other, with each trying to shift the blame onto someone else.
 - The circular structure of the play is revealed in the final scene, which echoes the opening scene of the play. In the final scene, the teenagers are once again gathered together, this time to recount the events of the night that the boy died. However, unlike the opening scene, the teenagers are no longer laughing and joking around. They are somber and reflective, realizing the consequences of their actions and the impact that it has had on their lives.
 - The circular structure of the play reinforces the idea that the teenagers are trapped in a cycle of guilt and responsibility, unable to escape the consequences of their actions. By returning to the opening scene, the play emphasizes the idea that the events of the night that the boy died have irrevocably changed the lives of the teenagers, and that they will never be able to return to the carefree and innocent existence that they had before.
 - The circular structure also highlights the theme of identity, as the play ends with the teenagers struggling to come to terms with who they are and what they have done. The final scene forces the teenagers to confront the reality of their actions and to take responsibility for their





- part in the crime. The circular structure of the play suggests that true healing and closure can only come from accepting responsibility for one's actions and facing the consequences of those actions.
- Overall, Dennis Kelly's use of a circular structure in "DNA" creates a powerful and thought-provoking ending to the play. The circular structure reinforces the themes of guilt, responsibility, and identity that run throughout the play, and emphasizes the idea that the consequences of one's actions can never be escaped. The final scene of the play leaves the audience with a sense of reflection and introspection, as they are forced to consider the impact of their own actions and the responsibility that comes with them.
 - In the play **Blood Brothers** by Willy Russel, the circular structure and dramatic irony are used effectively in the ending to create a powerful impact on the audience.
 - The circular structure of the play is evident in the opening and closing scenes, where the Narrator enters and exits the stage, essentially framing the story. The play begins with the Narrator introducing the audience to the central characters, Mickey and Eddie, and setting the scene for their tragic story. Similarly, in the final scene, the Narrator returns to the stage and delivers his final lines, which bring the story full circle and leave a lasting impression on the audience.
 - The use of dramatic irony in the ending of the play is also crucial to its impact. Throughout the play, the audience is aware of the fate of the two brothers, as it is revealed early on that they will die young. This knowledge creates a sense of inevitability and tension that builds throughout the play. As the two brothers grow up and their lives take divergent paths, the audience is acutely aware of the events that will lead to their tragic end.
 - In the final scene, the audience witnesses the culmination of these events as the two brothers come face to face for the last time. The dramatic irony is at its height as the two brothers, unaware of their true relationship, take each other's place in a game of Russian Roulette. As the gun fires, the audience is left in stunned silence, knowing the tragic outcome of the game.
 - The circular structure of the play is used to create a sense of closure, as the Narrator delivers his final lines, which echo those of the opening scene. The repetition of the opening lines serves to highlight the cyclical nature of life and death, as well as the inescapable fate of the two brothers. The circular structure also serves to reinforce the theme of social inequality, as the tragic fate of the brothers is seen as a consequence of their birth into different social classes.
 - The use of dramatic irony in the ending of the play has a powerful impact on the audience. The audience is left with a sense of tragedy and loss, as they witness the untimely deaths of two young men who were unable to escape their predetermined fate. The dramatic irony also serves to reinforce the theme of social inequality, as the audience is left with a sense of injustice at the way the brothers were treated by society.
 - In conclusion, the circular structure and dramatic irony are used effectively in the ending of "Blood Brothers" to create a powerful impact on the audience. The circular structure serves to reinforce the theme of social inequality, while the dramatic irony creates a sense of tragedy and loss. Together, these elements leave a lasting impression on the audience and make "Blood Brothers" a poignant and memorable play.

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DENOUEMENT (ENDING) TECHNIQUES: CLIFF HANGER





This type of ending asks more questions than it answers and, ideally, leaves the reader wanting to know how the story is going to continue.

- It lets them reflect on what the protagonist has been through and pushes them to imagine what is still to happen.
 - There will be some resolution, but it will, most likely, pose questions at the end and leave some doors open.
 - For example, J.B. Priestley's ***An Inspector Calls*** is a play that centers around the suicide of a young woman named Eva Smith and the subsequent investigation conducted by an Inspector Goole. Throughout the play, Priestley uses various dramatic techniques to engage the audience and build suspense, but perhaps one of the most effective techniques he employs is the cliffhanger ending.
 - The play ends with the revelation that the Inspector was not, in fact, a real police officer, and that there may be more to his identity than meets the eye. The final lines of the play are spoken by the character of the maid, Edna, who says, "Well, I don't think we want to tell the Inspector anything more, do we?". This line is significant because it leaves the audience with a sense of ambiguity and uncertainty, as it is unclear who or what the Inspector actually represents, and what his true intentions were.
 - Priestley's use of the cliffhanger is effective in several ways. Firstly, it leaves the audience with a sense of unease and tension, as they are unsure of what will happen next. This is particularly effective as the play deals with themes of guilt and responsibility, and the uncertainty at the end of the play leaves the audience with a sense of moral ambiguity. They are left to question whether or not the characters (especially the protagonist, Sheila) will take responsibility for their actions, and what the consequences of their actions will be.
 - Secondly, the cliffhanger ending also creates a sense of anticipation and encourages the audience to reflect on the play's themes and the characters' behavior. The play is set in 1912, but was written and first performed in 1945, after the devastation of World War II. The themes of social responsibility and collective guilt are particularly relevant in this context, and the cliffhanger ending encourages the audience to reflect on these themes and how they relate to their own lives and experiences.
 - Finally, Priestley's use of the cliffhanger ending also adds an element of mystery and intrigue to the play. The audience is left to speculate about the Inspector's true identity and motivations, which adds an extra layer of depth to the play and encourages the audience to engage with the text on a more analytical level.

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DENOUEMENT (ENDING) TECHNIQUES: PLOT TWIST

A plot twist is a story development that readers do not expect in which either something shocking happens or something shocking is revealed.

- Generally, the author will set up expectations and then "twist" those expectations by revealing new information through subsequent plot points.
 - If the author has led their readers to believe that their book will end one way, but at the last possible moment they add a plot twist that they didn't see coming, it creates an unexpected ending.





- For an author, this type of ending can be a thrill to write, but it must be handled with care.
 - Handled poorly, it will frustrate and infuriate readers.
 - An unexpected ending must be done in such a way that, while surprising, it still makes sense and brings a satisfactory conclusion.
 - For example, ***Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*** by Robert Louis Stevenson is a classic novel that tells the story of a respected doctor named Henry Jekyll, who becomes involved in a dangerous experiment that leads to the creation of an evil alter ego, Mr Hyde. The novel ends with a plot twist that reveals the true nature of the relationship between Jekyll and Hyde, and its effects on the reader are both surprising and thought-provoking.
 - The plot twist in "Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde" is revealed in the final two chapters of the novel. Throughout the story, Jekyll struggles to control his dark alter ego, Hyde, who is becoming increasingly dominant. Jekyll's friends and colleagues become alarmed by his strange behaviour and the violent actions of Hyde, and they begin to investigate the mysterious relationship between the two men. Mr. Utterson suspects that Hyde is attempting to blackmail Jekyll.
 - In the final chapter, Jekyll's friend and lawyer, Mr Utterson, discovers a letter that reveals the truth about Jekyll's experiments. Jekyll had created a potion that allowed him to transform into Hyde, but he found himself increasingly unable to control his transformations. The twist comes when Jekyll reveals that he has lost control of his transformations and is now permanently stuck as Hyde. He begs Utterson to help him before it is too late, but he dies before he can be saved.
 - The plot twist at the end of "Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde" by Robert Louis Stevenson, revealing that Jekyll and Hyde are actually two sides of the same person, has a significant effect on the reader's initial understanding of the relationship between the two characters. Prior to the twist, it was assumed that Hyde was blackmailing Jekyll, and that Jekyll was trying to rid himself of Hyde in order to protect his reputation and career. However, the revelation that Jekyll and Hyde are one and the same person changes the reader's understanding of this relationship and the motivations of both characters.
 - With the twist, the reader realises that Jekyll is not simply a victim of Hyde's evil influence, but that he himself is responsible for the atrocities committed by Hyde. Jekyll's transformation into Hyde is not a forced change, but a voluntary one, and the desire to indulge in his darker side is ultimately what leads to his downfall, which arguably also makes the story a tragedy. The reader's understanding of Hyde's blackmail is then reevaluated, and the realisation dawns that the "blackmail" was actually society's way of excusing Jekyll for deplorable behaviour.
 - The plot twist also adds a layer of psychological complexity to the novel. It is clear that Jekyll is aware of his own dark impulses and that he has created Hyde as a way to indulge in them without suffering any consequences. The reader is forced to question the nature of identity





and morality, and the degree to which people can be held accountable for their actions.

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DENOUEMENT (ENDING) TECHNIQUES: FRAMED NARRATIVE

A framed narrative is a literary technique where a story is presented within a larger narrative structure, typically referred to as the "frame".

- This larger narrative structure serves as a container or framing device for the main story, providing context and additional layers of meaning for the reader.
 - The frame story can take many forms, including a prologue or epilogue that introduces or concludes the main narrative, a narrator or character who tells the main story within the larger frame, or a series of stories that are presented within an overarching narrative.
 - The frame story is often used to create a sense of distance or detachment from the main narrative, highlighting its fictional nature and prompting the reader to consider the ways in which stories are constructed and interpreted.
 - For example, in ***The Woman in Black***, Susan Hill uses a "frame narrative" technique to end the story. A frame narrative is a literary technique where a story is told within another story or narrative. In the case of "The Woman in Black," the frame narrative is the story of Arthur Kipps, a retired solicitor, who has been telling the story of his haunting experience (at Eel Marsh House, many years earlier) to an audience of friends and family.
 - At the end of the novel, after Kipps has finished telling his story, the novel ends with a framed narrative in which the manuscript is read by an unnamed narrator, who provides a commentary on Kipps' account. The reader is reminded that Kipps is actually an elderly man who has been haunted by the events that he narrated. The final lines of the novel, "I sat on, with my hands before my eyes, thinking, thinking, and no longer conscious of my surroundings," reinforce the sense of Kipps' haunted state, even years after the events took place.
 - The framed narrative at the end of "The Woman in Black" has several effects on the reader. Firstly, it provides a sense of closure to the story. By framing the main narrative within the context of the manuscript, the reader is left with a clear understanding of what has happened to Kipps; The unnamed narrator reveals that Kipps' mental and emotional state was severely affected by his experiences at Eel Marsh House, and that he struggled to come to terms with what had happened to him.
 - The final pages of the novel suggest that Kipps has never fully recovered from his experiences at Eel Marsh House. He remains haunted by the ghostly apparitions that he encountered there, and is unable to shake off the feeling that he is being watched. The final sentence of the novel, "I have sat here at my desk, alone, and I have felt myself to be in the presence of the woman in black again", suggesting that Kipps continues to be haunted by the ghostly presence of the woman in black, despite the passage of many years.
 - Secondly, the framed narrative helps to create a sense of distance and detachment from the events of the main narrative. By presenting the story as a manuscript, the reader is reminded that what they are reading is a work of fiction, and this can help to





alleviate some of the fear and tension created by the ghostly events that have taken place. At the same time, however, the reader is also encouraged to consider the ways in which stories are constructed and interpreted, and how this can impact our understanding of the world.

- This technique is effective in building suspense and providing closure to the story, as it allows the reader to see the impact that the story has had on Kipps, and provides a sense of finality to the story.

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DENOUEMENT (ENDING) TECHNIQUES: AMBIGUITY

An ambiguous ending leaves the reader wondering about the “what ifs.”

- Instead of directly stating what happens to the characters after the book ends, it allows the reader to speculate about what might come next — without establishing a right or wrong answer.
 - Things don't feel quite unresolved, more just open to interpretation.
 - For example, ***Animal Farm*** by George Orwell is a political allegory that explores the events leading up to the Russian Revolution and Stalin's rise to power. The novel portrays a group of farm animals who rebel against their human owner and establish their own government based on the principles of equality and freedom. However, as the story unfolds, the pigs gradually become corrupt and establish a dictatorship, betraying the original ideals of the revolution.
 - The novel ends on an ambiguous note, leaving the reader with a sense of uncertainty and unease. The final scene depicts the pigs and the human farmers gathered in the farmhouse, playing cards and drinking together. The pigs, who have now adopted the same oppressive tactics as their former human oppressors, have become indistinguishable from them. The final line of the novel reads: "The creatures outside looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again; but already it was impossible to say which was which."
 - The ambiguity of the ending leaves the reader to draw their own conclusions about the fate of Animal Farm and its inhabitants. On one hand, it could be interpreted as a bleak and pessimistic commentary on the inevitability of power corrupting even the most idealistic movements. Despite the animals' initial commitment to freedom and equality, they ultimately become just as oppressive and exploitative as their human oppressors.
 - On the other hand, the ending could be seen as a call to action for readers to remain vigilant against tyranny and oppression. The fact that the pigs have become indistinguishable from the humans suggests that the struggle for freedom and equality is ongoing and that vigilance is necessary to prevent history from repeating itself.
 - The ambiguous ending also highlights the complex nature of political power and the difficulty of maintaining idealistic principles in the face of real-world challenges. The novel suggests that it is easy to proclaim a commitment to freedom and equality, but much harder to maintain those principles in practice. The pigs, who were initially seen as heroic figures, ultimately become corrupt and oppressive. This suggests that political power can be a corrupting force, even for those who begin with the best intentions.
 - In conclusion, the ambiguous ending of "Animal Farm" leaves the reader with a sense of uncertainty and unease. It is up to the reader to interpret the significance of the final scene, but it is clear that the novel raises important questions about power, corruption, and the struggle for freedom and equality. The ending serves to emphasise the complexity of political power and the difficulty of maintaining idealistic principles in the face of real-world challenges,





and it leaves the reader with a powerful reminder of the ongoing struggle for justice and equality.

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DENOUEMENT (ENDING) TECHNIQUES: EPILOGUE

Also known as an expanded ending, this type of ending describes what happens to the world of the story afterward in a way that hints at the characters' fates at some point in the future.

- An epilogue is a literary device commonly employed in works of fiction, drama, and even non-fiction, which serves as a concluding section that follows the main body of a narrative or a play. In essence, an epilogue is an extension of the main story, offering further insights into the characters, events, themes, or conflicts presented in the preceding sections. Typically, an epilogue appears after the final chapter or act and can take various forms, including a summary, a reflection, or a glimpse into the future of the story's protagonists.
- One of the primary functions of an epilogue is to provide closure to the story, allowing readers or viewers to fully absorb the impact of the plot's resolution. An epilogue may offer a sense of resolution, finality, or closure, offering a glimpse of how the characters' lives continue to unfold after the main events of the story have concluded. This closure can be particularly valuable for works with complex or ambiguous endings, allowing readers to interpret the narrative's themes or messages within a broader context.
- Another common use of an epilogue is to provide a commentary or reflection on the events of the main story. This can take many forms, such as an analysis of the characters' motivations or an exploration of the themes or conflicts that have emerged throughout the narrative. By offering these insights, an epilogue can deepen readers' understanding of the work and its meaning, encouraging reflection and analysis long after the story's conclusion.
- Finally, an epilogue may also serve as a bridge between the work and its audience. It can offer an opportunity for the author or playwright to address the reader or viewer directly, sharing their thoughts on the work or inviting feedback from their audience. This can create a sense of community around the work, encouraging further engagement and discussion among its readers or viewers.
- Overall, an epilogue is a powerful literary tool that can enhance the impact and significance of a work of fiction, drama, or non-fiction. By offering further insights into the characters, themes, or conflicts presented in the main story, it can provide closure, deepen readers' understanding, and foster a sense of connection between the work and its audience.

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DENOUEMENT (ENDING) TECHNIQUES: RESOLVED ENDING

A resolved ending leaves the reader with no lingering questions or loose ends.

- A resolved ending is part of most classic fairy tales ("And they all lived happily ever after..."), but also of countless classic novels.
 - Jane Austen's novel ***Pride and Prejudice*** is widely considered a masterpiece of English literature, and its ending is a crucial component in its success. The ending of the novel is crafted in a way that provides closure to the story while leaving a lasting impact on the reader. Austen employs a variety of





techniques to accomplish this, including resolution of the main plot and subplots, character development, and thematic elements.

- One of the most significant techniques Austen uses to end the novel is the resolution of the main plot. Throughout the novel, the reader follows the relationship between Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy, and the ending resolves the tension and misunderstandings that have kept them apart. This is achieved through the revelation of Darcy's true character and his love for Elizabeth, as well as Elizabeth's realization of her own prejudices and shortcomings. The proposal scene, in which Darcy confesses his love for Elizabeth, is a particularly powerful moment in the novel, as it marks a turning point in their relationship and sets the stage for the resolution of the plot.
 - In addition to resolving the main plot, Austen also brings closure to the various subplots in the novel. The subplot involving Lydia's elopement is resolved through the efforts of Mr. Darcy, who uses his wealth and influence to track down and bribe Wickham to marry Lydia. This resolution not only provides closure to the subplot but also reinforces the theme of the importance of social status and reputation in Regency England. Similarly, the subplot involving Mr. Collins and Charlotte Lucas's marriage is resolved, as they settle into their life together despite their mismatched personalities.
 - Austen's character development also plays a significant role in the novel's ending. Throughout the novel, Elizabeth undergoes a transformation, moving from a young woman who is quick to judge others to one who is able to see the good in people and acknowledge her own faults. This development is crucial to the resolution of the main plot, as it enables her to see Darcy in a new light and to recognize the sincerity of his love for her. Similarly, Mr. Darcy undergoes his own transformation, moving from a proud and aloof aristocrat to a man who is able to express his emotions and put others before himself.
 - Finally, Austen's thematic elements are also crucial to the novel's ending. The theme of social class is reinforced through the resolution of the subplot involving Lydia's elopement and Mr. Wickham's motives. The theme of love and marriage is also central to the ending, as Elizabeth and Darcy's love is shown to overcome the social and economic barriers that initially kept them apart. The novel's emphasis on the importance of self-knowledge and self-improvement is also highlighted in the ending, as both Elizabeth and Darcy acknowledge their own faults and work to overcome them.
 - In conclusion, Jane Austen's techniques for ending "Pride and Prejudice" are masterful in their complexity and sophistication. By resolving the main plot and subplots, developing her characters, and reinforcing the novel's thematic elements, Austen provides a satisfying and impactful conclusion to her novel. The reader is left with a sense of closure and a deeper understanding of the novel's themes and messages, making "Pride and Prejudice" a timeless classic of English literature.
- Shakespeare's tragedy ***Romeo and Juliet*** is known for its tragic ending that leaves a profound impact on the readers. However, despite the tragic events that unfold, Shakespeare employs various techniques to bring the play to a resolved style. In this essay, we will analyze these techniques and their effects on the reader.
 - One of the key techniques that Shakespeare uses to end the play in a resolved style is the resolution of the central conflict. Throughout the play, the central conflict revolves around the feud between the Capulets and Montagues. The tragic ending of the play is a direct result of this conflict, with Romeo and Juliet's deaths being the ultimate price paid for the hatred between their families. However, in the final scene, the Prince delivers a speech that brings the Capulets and Montagues together in their grief, finally ending the feud that had caused so





much destruction. This resolution of the central conflict provides a sense of closure to the play, as the main source of conflict has been resolved.

- Another technique that Shakespeare employs to bring the play to a resolved style is the use of symbolism. The play is full of symbols that add to its overall impact, and these symbols are also used to bring the play to a close. One such symbol is the image of the star-crossed lovers, which is mentioned throughout the play. In the final scene, Romeo and Juliet's bodies are laid side by side, and the Prince refers to them as "the sun and the moon." This symbolic imagery suggests that the two lovers have finally found peace, and that their tragic end has brought an end to their suffering.
- Additionally, Shakespeare uses dramatic irony to create a resolved style at the end of the play. Dramatic irony is when the audience knows something that the characters do not. Throughout the play, the audience knows that Romeo and Juliet's love is doomed, but the characters are unaware of this. In the final scene, when Romeo and Juliet both die, the audience knows that their love was true and that their deaths were a result of their families' feud. This dramatic irony creates a sense of resolution, as the audience finally sees the truth of Romeo and Juliet's love and the tragic consequences of the feud.
- Finally, Shakespeare uses language to create a resolved style at the end of the play. Throughout the play, Shakespeare employs poetic language to convey the intensity of Romeo and Juliet's love. In the final scene, Shakespeare uses simple, direct language to convey the tragedy of their deaths. For example, when Romeo discovers Juliet's body, he says, "O, here / Will I set up my everlasting rest, / And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars / From this world-wearied flesh." This language is powerful in its simplicity, and it adds to the emotional impact of the scene.
- In conclusion, Shakespeare employs various techniques to bring "Romeo and Juliet" to a resolved style at the end of the play. These techniques include the resolution of the central conflict, the use of symbolism, dramatic irony, and language. By using these techniques, Shakespeare provides a sense of closure to the play, despite its tragic ending. The play leaves a profound impact on the reader, as it explores themes of love, tragedy, and fate in a way that continues to resonate with audiences today.

