# **ENC 1102: Literary Terms: Short Stories**

1. **Antagonist**—the character or force in conflict with the protagonist. It may be another character, society itself, a force of nature, or conflicting impulses within the protagonist.
2. **Atmosphere**—the dominant mood or feeling within a literary work.
3. **Biographical Criticism**—analyzing a literary work by using knowledge of the author’s life to gain insight.
4. **Characterization**—the techniques a writer uses to create, reveal, or develop a character.
5. **Conflict**—the central struggle between two or more forces in a story.
6. **Dynamic Character**—a character who, during the course of the story, grows or changes in some significant way.
7. **Empathy**—appreciating and understanding another person’s experience.
8. **Flashback—**a scene relived in a character’s memory. Allows the author to include events that occurred before the opening of the story.
9. **Flat Character—**a character with only one outstanding trait. Flat characters are rarely the main characters in a narrative.
10. **Foreshadowing—**arranging events and information in such a way that later events are hinted at or prepared for.
11. **Formalist Criticism—**a school of criticism in which literature is discussed on its own terms without outside influences or information.
12. **Imagery—**images or descriptions in a literary work—they help us see, feel, touch, taste, etc., clearly.
13. **Imagination—**participation that requires the reader to visualize, question, and react to what he/she is experiencing within a story.
14. **Irony—**When a writer says one thing but means something quite the opposite.
15. **Verbal Irony—**a character says one thing but means another.
16. **Situational Irony—**something is about to happen to a character who expects the opposite outcome.
17. **Narrator**—a voice or character that provides information and insight about a story. This perspective greatly affects how a story is told.
18. **Nonparticipant Narrator**—does not appear as a character in the story but nevertheless reveals what’s going on in terms of plot.
19. **Unreliable Narrator**—relates events in a distorted manner. The author usually reveals early on that the narrator’s perception cannot be trusted.
20. **Plot**—the arrangement of actions and events that unfold in a story.
21. **Exposition—**the opening portion that provides background or introductory info.
22. **Rising Action—**all the events occurring between the exposition and climax.
23. **Climax--** the moment of greatest revelation or tension near the end of the work. When the outcome is decided or revealed.
24. **Resolution (or denouement)—**the final part of a story which follows the climax.
25. **Point of View**—the perspective from which a story is told.
26. **First person**—a character within the story narrates. All perspective is from his/her viewpoint and is, of course, limited to what he/she knows.
27. **Omniscient**—the story is told from an outsider’s perspective who knows what multiple characters are thinking and doing. This viewpoint is unlimited, especially if the author allows the reader to see inside the minds of each character.
28. **Protagonist**—the main character (principle character) in a literary work.
29. **Qualitative Judgment**—ability to look at complex situations and make reliable judgments. These judgments are common sense conclusions based on text evidence.
30. **Round Character**—a complex character who has depth and detail.
31. **Setting**—the time and place of a literary work. There are four aspects:

\*Place \*Time \*Weather \*Atmosphere

1. **Southern Gothic Literature**—focuses on grotesque themes and damaged, delusional characters. Inspired by Gothic writings in 18th century England. Rekindled in America in the 1920s by William Faulkner.
2. **Symbol**—a person, place, or thing that means something more than its literal sense.
3. **Theme**—The predominant idea or thought that makes up an entire literary piece. All literary devices point to this predominant thought.
4. **Tone**—the attitude toward a subject in a story. Tone may be playful, sarcastic, ironic, sad, etc.