EAC 234 Science Fiction Glossary of Literary Devices

Term	Definition
Alien ⌄	In terms of science fiction, *an 'alien' is a non-human creature from another planet* In the English language, 'alien' also means 'strange, other, different'. In Psychology, to be 'alienated' means to feel separated, set apart, left out of one's social environment, etc.
Allegory ⌄	This refers to an episode in a story (or even an entire story) that is symbolic of something else--i.e. the episode or story refers to something else (the power of the allegory is dependent upon the reader's knowledge of the situation, event, etc. being referred to)
Alternate History ⌄	This is a sub-genre of Science Fiction (which may have either Soft or Hard SF qualities--or both) where a real historical event is taken, put at the centre of the plot, and changed. It is a highly Speculative sub-genre of SF because it focuses on 'What IF this or that happened differently in history--what would be the result...?' Alternate History stories should have a clear 'point of divergence' from our real history, based on an event that happens 'differently' in the Alternate History story (differently from our own, real history). It can be considered from a 'Time' point of view but it is *NOT* the same as a time travel scenario. *Do not confuse it with 'Alternate Reality,' * either--as that type of SF scenario or sub-genre takes the PRESENT and changes it in a parallel or alternate reality or universe.
Alternate Reality ⌄	This very popular (especially in SF movies and t.v. shows) type of SF scenario or sub-genre takes the PRESENT and changes it, then portrays it in a parallel or alternate reality or universe type of setting. *Do Not* confuse this with 'Alternate History' or Time Travel.
Ambiguity ⌄	This occurs in a reading when something is unclear, in that its meaning balances between two possibilities. This is usually intentional, on the part of the author
Antagonist (character) ⌄	A character who works against the protagonist (who is the main character or possibly 'hero' of the story)

Apocalypse - Apocalyptic Scenario ⌄	Word Origins = Greek 'apokalyptein,' which means 'to uncover'. This translates into 'revelation' or 'to reveal' what is hidden (from Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary). . Biblical meanings lean towards the 'wrath of God' scenario, involving the destruction of all 'evil-doers'. *However, in SF, the Apocalyptic Scenario usually portrays the destruction of humanity and/or the Earth, etc., brought about by science and/or technology, aliens or just plain human arrogance* The Apocalyptic Scenario differs from the SF Disaster Scenario because unlike the disaster (where humans survive), the SF apocalypse eradicates all humans.
Archetype ⌄	A highly symbolic object or character type, which may often be identifiable across cultures and have ancient meaning (i.e. egg = life, fertility, sustenance)
Artificial Intelligence (AI) ⌄	According to the Encarta online dictionary, AI is "a branch of computer science that develops programs to allow machines to perform functions normally requiring human intelligence". In the mid-20th century (around 1950), Alan Turing published the important "Computer Machines and Intelligence," a computer was first programmed to play chess and Asimov fictionally wrote about the "Three Laws of Robotics" idea (see his story "Liar" and the more recent movie "I, Robot" plus Liu's story "The Algorithms for Love"). More recent advancements in AI include the Honda Asmio 'life-like' robot series, 'interactive' robot toys, 'intelligent' (predictive) web search engines (like google's) and the programmed rovers on Mars (now defunct) and Antarctica. Research continues in more advanced areas of AI--one of which is the area of study that is working towards 'uploading' the human mind into a machine or computer (long a science fiction plot scenario). See the aaai.org website for more information on all aspects of AI.
Artificial Life ⌄	Artificially created life (any form of 'life' that is either not biological or that is not 'born' in the usual way). In science fiction, robots, intelligent machines, self-aware computers or programmes, cyborgs, clones, etc. are different types of artificial life. Artificial Life does not have to be 'intelligent'--just appear to be 'alive' (but it often is portrayed as intelligent, in science fiction). Clones are a bit different--they are not mechanical or made out of circuits but they are 'scientifically created' in the lab. Aside from this, they are biological in every sense (living) as copies of their original being. We see an intelligent 'robot' in Asimov's story "Liar" and we see a biologically enhanced clone (copy of an original human) in McHugh's story "Necropolis". Science Fiction has long loved the idea of the human copy-clone. In terms of real

science, however, clones of cells and animals have been created (Dolly the sheep is the most famous) but so far, no humans have been (or are able to be) cloned (and primates in general continue to be a scientific 'problem'--being are too complex). In fact, there are many ethical (if not legal) edicts against the cloning of humans, all over the world.

Asimov's Three Laws of Robotics (plus one) ⌄	Background to the "Three Laws of Robotics" (if you have seen the Will Smith science fiction film *I Robot,* you will already be familiar with these 'laws': "To cope with the potential for robots to harm people, Asimov, in 1940, in conjunction with science fiction author and editor John W. Campbell, formulated the Laws of Robotics. The laws first appeared publicly in his fourth robot short story, 'Runaround'" *The 1940 Laws of Robotics* "First Law: A robot may not injure a human being, or, through inaction, allow a human being to come to harm." "Second Law: A robot must obey orders given it by human beings, except where such orders would conflict with the First Law." "Third Law: A robot must protect its own existence as long as such protection does not conflict with the First or Second Law." Note: the later "Zeroth" law (from the 1950 in the story "The Evitable Conflict") was designed by Asimov to come before the first law (thereby making it even more important than the first law?): "The Zeroth Law :A robot may not injure humanity, or through inaction, allow humanity to come to harm." *the above definitions and information were adapted from: http://www.rogerclarke.com/SOS/Asimov
Asimov's Zeroth Law of Robotics ⌄	The Zeroth Law of Robotics states that: "A robot may not injure humanity, or through inaction, allow humanity to come to harm." Asimov's later "Zeroth" law (from the 1950 in the story "The Evitable Conflict") was designed by the author to come before the First Law of Robotics (thereby making it even more important than the first law?): *the above definitions and information were adapted from: http://www.rogerclarke.com/SOS/Asimov
Cautionary Tale ⌄	This is an old sub genre of literature, which is commonly used in science fiction. A cautionary tale involves a 'warning,' which contains the ultimate message of: 'be careful what you wish for, do (or do not do), create,' etc.
Characterization ⌄	Character types include: round, dynamic, static, flat, stock. This refers to HOW characters in a story are portrayed. Round = very detailed; dynamic = they change during the story, static = no change in the story, flat = very little detail, stock = aligned to a 'type' or a job, etc.

Climax (plot) ⌄	The central problem of the story's plot, which the main character must deal with/resolve.
Closed ending ⌄	When a story ending neatly wraps-up, tying up all loose ends and resolving all climax problems. (There is no doubt as to what the ending means).
Core Science Fiction (SF) Concepts ⌄	(Also see "SF Core Concepts: below). There are four core SF concepts: discovery (or revelation), exploration, invention and transformation.
Cultural Difference or Clash Scenario ⌄	This scenario can be found in any SF subgenre or within any other type of scenario. It involves cultural conflict between characters, cultures or whole societies (possibly planets, time periods, etc).
Cyberpunk ⌄	-a sub-genre of SF, started in the 1980s, which often mixes computer technology with socially & politically disenfranchised, often male, characters; made famous by William Gibson with his novel NEUROMANCER.
Cyborg ⌄	Cybernetic (computer circuitry) + organism (biological, living). Think of the 'Borg' of Star Trek: the Next Generation.
Dark Comedy, Dark Humour ⌄	A type of story that includes a combination of tragedy and humour , often through irony, in order to illuminate some aspect of the story's genre and/or theme in a new, or unexpected way.. Also see 'Tragic Comedy' (aka tragi-comedy).
Description (style) ⌄	The words used by the author to describe setting, character, etc., to the reader, so that they can visualize what the author is trying to portray. SF description is usually very detailed.
Dialogue ⌄	This refers to the speech and conversation of characters and is shown through the use of quotation marks, usually (but not always).
Disaster Scenario ⌄	This is shown when an SF story's plot revolves around a large-scale 'disaster' (i.e. natural or technological disaster) of some sort. It differs from apocalyptic scenarios, however, because, while much damage is done and many lives are likely lost, the Earth and/or the human race survives.

Discovery (or revelation) ⌄	This is one of the four core SF concepts. Discovery involves finding something new, which the character knows little about: a place, a being, a situation, etc. (Revelation involves finding out something new about oneself or involves having some new information or insight about something important revealed to a character).
Double ⌄	The Double is a type of character who 'mirrors,' often through opposition, the main character.
Duality ⌄	when opposite characterisics exist within one thing, or are connected in a meaningful way through two things--more than just a simple opposition or contrast because of embedded symbolism, etc. (i.e. the 'living dead' is an obvious type of duality; shadow and sun, etc.).
Dynamic character ⌄	This is a type of character (usually round) who changes in some way during the course of the story.
Dystopian (or Dystopic) Literature ⌄	-the opposite of Utopian Literature and seen more often in 'modern times,' since the beginning of the 20th century. Dystopian themes are quite common in modern SF. A dystopian society reflected in this literary sub-genre portrays the deeply flawed, scarred, oppressive, dangerous, 'nightmarish' society or world. It is sometimes related to the Cautionary Tale.
Ecological Scenario ⌄	This Science Fiction type of scenario most often focuses on the alien ecology of an imagined planet and possibly its inhabitants--i.e. the biology, terrain, climate, etc. The SF short story "A Martian Odyssey" and the film _Avatar_ both illustrate detailed ecological scenarios. There is some overlap with the environmental scenario.
Epiphany ⌄	an epiphany is a sudden, profound insight about one's life, about others, the world, the universe, etc.: "a sudden manifestation or perception of the essential nature or meaning of something; an intuitive grasp reality through something (such as an event)...; an illuminating...realization..." (https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/epiphany
Exploration ⌄	This is one of the four core SF concepts. It involves intellectual, scientific or technological action and curiosity of some sort. It is the act of looking for something 'new'.
Feminist SF ⌄	--deals with women's (or female gendered) issues and concerns, primarily with regard to inequality of power relations between individuals or within a group (large or small) and imagines a solution to the inequality. Feminist SF explores these topics in an SF

setting/scenario, etc., especially where social/cultural gender expectations and biological sex are 'transformational' in nature.

Figurative Language ⌄	This is writing that goes beyond the literal or obvious meaning, to include metaphor, symbol, etc.
First person narration ⌄	This type of narration occurs when a character in the story tells the story. You can spot this type of narration through the use of "I" outside of dialogue.
Flat character ⌄	This type of character is the opposite of 'round' and is portrayed in a vague way or without much depth. In 'good' literature, a flat character should be a secondary character but never the main character.
Foreboding ⌄	A sense of impending anxiety or fear--as if the reader or even the character in the story knows or feels that something bad is about to happen, but they don't know what it is. This adds to an overall sense of creepy atmosphere and horror setting and mood, as well as psychological context.
Genre or sub-genre ⌄	A type or category of literature. Major genres are fiction, the novel, the short story, drama, poetry, and literary categories within those genres would be tragedy, comedy, romance, horror, fantasy, science fiction, ghost stories, Gothic ghost stories, vampire stories, zombie stories, etc.
Golden Age SF ⌄	-refers to a time period from the 1930s through to the end of the 1950s when some SF started to gain critical prominence (as opposed to the gratuitous, sensationalistic, comic-book plot style Pulp SF seen in 'cheap' SF magazines of the 1920s -1939s/1940s). Golden Age SF dealt with more mature, serious themes (published in 'higher quality' SF magazines) with better writing and more inventive scenarios than was often seen in earlier Pulp SF. Golden Age SF is thought by many (but not all) to be the core 'canon' of SF literature. [Weinbaum's "A Martian Odyssey" and Simak's "Desertion" are considered to be prime and very early examples of 'Golden Age' SF].

Hard SF ⌄	-a sub-genre of SF, which focuses on science and/or technology as the central elements to move the plot; it is often (but not always) military in focus and may portray weaponry, battles, etc.
Hero (character) ⌄	A heroic character is usually (but not always) a main character who acts in a heroic manner to save another character, a situation or overcome severe obstacles, often at risk to themselves.
Humour ⌄	the mental faculty of discovering, expressing, or appreciating the ludicrous or absurdly incongruous; something that is or is designed to be comical or amusing [from Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary]
Idiom ⌄	Specific language-related phrases, linguistic 'expressions' or 'sayings' that do not translate well into other languages. Idioms convey clear meaning to those who understand them but are also illogical and absurd, when analyzed too closely. For example: "It's raining cats and dogs".
Imaginary Setting ⌄	While all fictional/literary settings are somewhat 'imaginary,' SF imaginary settings are completely different from what we would recognize as 'real' in some, even small, way. It seems 'imaginary' and well imagined by the author. (Related to both general 'setting' and to 'world building').
in medias res ⌄	This is a device used to begin the story 'in the middle of things,' without much or any background. The reader is immediately 'thrown' into the plot of the story.
Intertext ⌄	A specific reference to a specific, real work of art (novel, story, film, painting, poem, etc.), within the story you are reading.
Invention ⌄	This is one of the four core SF concepts. Invention often involves the making of some sort of technology--from a single item to an entire system. Invention can also involve the creation of some new scientific method from an idea. [Other words that are often used for this are: fabrication, creation (made not born), 'fabril').
Irony (situational, verbal, dramatic) ⌄	This occurs when the opposite of what is expected/intended occurs (situational) or is stated (verbal) or shown to the reader but not a character (dramatic)
Metaphor (style) ⌄	This is a complex phrasing, often idiomatic in nature, where one idea, object or combination of words is used to express meaning. For example, the commonly used metaphorical expression

in English of "don't throw the baby out with the bathwater" means that an entire piece of work (baby) should not be eliminated because of one problem (dirty water) within it. Metaphors do not usually translate well between languages. Metaphors are to be understood figuratively not literally.

Military Scenario ⌄	This scenario is often linked with 'hard science fiction'. It occurs when the plot of an SF story revolves around the military, war, battles, etc., and the science/technology involved.
Monologue ⌄	This occurs when a character speaks only to themselves or to the 'reader'. Internal monologue = the self-conscious thoughts of a character.
Mood (style) ⌄	The emotions felt by the reader. This is related to tone but is reader-dependant.
Multiple points of narration ⌄	This occurs when there are several different narrative points of view in a story (they may not 'shift,' however, but be clearly organized).
Narration (point of view) ⌄	This refers to the way in which the story is 'told'--by an 'outside' narrator or by a character in the story, etc.
New Wave ⌄	-a style of SF which came about in the 1960s and 1970s, first in England and the U.S., then elsewhere, which focused more on social issues and experimental writing & themes than on the 'old-style,' often 'Hard' or militaristic SF of previous decades.
Open ending ⌄	This refers to an ending that is ambiguous in some way and is open to interpretation.
Pacing (plot) ⌄	This refers to the speed of the plot. Plots can be slow, meandering or fast paced.
Parody (related to Satire) ⌄	A parody humorously mocks, through mimicry, another established art form, which would be easily recognizable. Parodic SF would probably mock and mimic an established type of SF scenario, etc. [Think THE HITCH HIKERS GUIDE TO THE GALAXY].
Person vs. nature (plot conflict) ⌄	This occurs when a character is in conflict with natural forces--life & death, 'nature,' environmental cataclysms, etc.
Person vs. person (plot conflict) ⌄	This occurs when a character is in conflict with another character (verbal, physical, intellectual, emotional).

Person vs. society (plot conflict) ⌄	This occurs when a character has a conflict with the fictional society they inhabit (society = any type of organized social structure, i.e. 'a group')
Personification (also known as 'anthropomorphism') ⌄	This general literary device gives non-human characters or objects human-like qualities (intelligence, speech, emotions, etc.) in a story. Such a character is 'personified' within the story.
Philosophical Scenario ⌄	This occurs in an SF story when the plot revolves around or includes questions about life's existence, purpose, nature, etc.
Plot complications ⌄	These include foreshadowing, suspense, cliff hanger endings, etc.
Plot conflicts ⌄	A plot conflict involves a character or characters in a major conflict around the events of the story. There are four types of plot conflict: person vs. nature, vs. person, vs. self and vs. society. In Science Fiction the 'person' can be anthropomorphized.
Point of Divergence ⌄	This device is related to the science fiction subgenre of 'Alternate History'. Point of Divergence refers to the way a historical event (from our real history) happens 'differently' (how it diverges from real history, with the resulting different consequences, in the imagined, fictional Alternate History story. The reader needs to know the basic facts of the 'real' history that serves as the context for the Alternate History story, in order to fully understand the story-- how and why it is Alternate History, etc. Kim Stanley Robinson's story "The Lucky Strike" is an example of Alternate History, which has a very clear Point of Divergence.
Political Scenario ⌄	This occurs in an SF story when the plot revolves around politics and political systems,and how they impact the characters.
Progressive Plot ⌄	This is the most traditional type of plot, with a a clear beginning, middle and end and with rising action towards a climax and resolution.
Protagonist (character) ⌄	This is often the main character (but not always) who propels the story's action and plot. Their actions and choices determine the course of the plot.
Psychological Premise or Scenario ⌄	This type of fantasy story premise or scenario involves the inner, psychological states or conflicts of characters.

Psychological Scenario ⌄	This type of SF story scenario involves the inner, psychological states or conflicts of characters.
Reader Response: Awe, Wonder ⌄	-occurs when an SF reader experiences awe or wonder from any part of an SF story. This is commonly known as the 'wow factor' and is experienced when the reader encounters a completely new type of character, idea, description, setting, plot device, etc., etc., which they had not previously read of or thought of.
Reader Response: Confusion ⌄	-occurs when the reader of an SF story is utterly confused by the plot, scenario, premise, etc., of the story. This is often intentional, on the part of the author. The question, then, is to discover why we, as readers, are supposed to be 'confused' by the story and what the significance of our confusion may be
Real People, Fictional use of ⌄	this refers to the use of real people (who actually lived or are still alive) in fictional works in order to make a certain point or add a quality of 'realism' to the story, etc.--it may be related to intertext, parody or satire, depending on the story.
Robot ⌄	The word 'robot' comes from the Czech noun 'roboto,' meaning labour or even forced labour (work). To be 'robotic' means to be automatic, without emotion or spontaneity. The first time the word 'robot' was used in a science fiction story, to mean an artificially created worker-being, was in Capek's "R.U.R" (1921). The contemporary meaning of the word 'robot' is a type of mechanical device, which is programmed to perform a certain task (we have these in the 'real world,' often on factory floor assembly lines. In addition, Honda's Asimo robot series is programmed to walk, speak a few words, throw a ball, etc. The science fiction meaning of 'robot' is much more complex--along the lines of artificial intelligence (AI), resembling more human thought and action--see the Asimov's story "Liar" and Dick's story "Second Variety".
Round character ⌄	This is a character (often main) who is portrayed and described in great detail, so that the reader completely understands their motivations.
Satire ⌄	Satire mocks an established 'norm' of any kind to highlight and reveal its flaws or contradictions. Common examples of satire in our contemporary society involve comedy routine satires of politicians or celebrities. Some SF may be inherently satiric, many critics argue, when SF highlights the flaws or contradictions of our current or past societies.

Science Fiction ⌄	-a genre of literature also known as 'SF,' which uses the core concepts of discovery, exploration, invention and transformation to explore and sometimes transgress scientific and/or technological boundaries. The science and technology portrayed are often 'imagined' or mixed with current, 'real' science and technology. Common Science Fiction premises deal with the future, time travel, alternate realities or pasts, aliens, space, other worlds, artificial life, etc. ***"Science fiction is the literature of of the human species encountering change, whether it arrives via scientific discoveries, technological innovations, natural events, or societal shifts" (Chris McKitterick, "Defining Science Fiction," http://www.sfcenter.ku.edu/SF-Defined.htm)***
Scientific Scenario ⌄	This is shown in an SF story when any branch or branches of science predominate in the plot: biology, chemistry, physics, space travel, medicine, etc.
Scorched Earth ⌄	The word 'scorched' refers to something completely destroyed by fire; 'Scorched Earth' is a term that is: • 1. "relating to or being a military policy involving deliberate and usually widespread destruction of property and resources (as housing and factories) so that an invading enemy cannot use them". • 2. "directed toward victory or supremacy at all costs :ruthless<scorched–earth rhetoric>" from: http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/scorched%E2%80%93earth
Second person narration (rarely seen) ⌄	This type of narration seems to address the reader through the use of 'you' throughout the narrative (outside of dialogue). It is rarely used.,,,
Secondary (sometimes supporting) characters ⌄	These are minor characters of varying importance in a story.,,,
setting ⌄	This general literary device shows and details the time, place and situation of a story. Settings can be: 1) central--so important to the plot that to remove the setting would change the story's meaning completely, or 2) backdrop--easily replaced or ignored without any impact on

	the story's meaning. (Related to 'imaginary setting' and 'world building'). *Note: most SF stories have central settings.
Setting (integral, central, backdrop or antagonistic) ⌄	The place or time in which a story is set. An integral setting is crucial to the story's plot. Certain settings can also be 'antagonistic' for characters, by putting them in danger, etc.
SF ⌄	--an acronym for both 'Science Fiction' and 'Speculative Fiction'.
SF (Science Fiction) Core Concepts ⌄	(Also see C"ore SF Concepts" above). There are four core SF concepts: discovery (or revelation), exploration, invention and transformation.
Shifting narration ⌄	This type of narration may shift or change in a variety of ways--between 1st and 3rd person or between different characters and their subjective points of view.
Simile (style) ⌄	This is shown when a comparison (using the words 'as' or 'like') is made between two opposites or completely different things, in order to highlight the meaning of one of them. (Related to symbol and metaphor).
Social (a.k.a. 'soft') SF ⌄	-a sub-genre of SF, which focuses on social or cultural issues (and sometimes psychological responses to society and culture) through its characters. This SF sub-genre, which does not focus on science or technology but may, for example, be set in the future or in an alternate past, present, etc.
Space / Planetary Exploration Scenario ⌄	This is a common and well known SF story scenario, involving one of the core SF concepts of 'exploration' and it occurs when the plot revolves around the characters exploring (or traveling to) space or other planets.
Space Opera ⌄	-an SF sub-genre, which focuses entirely on long space battles or long battles on other planets, complex political and social interconnections or complex family dynasties and relationships (think DUNE).
Speculative Fiction ⌄	--a sub-genre of literature, similar to the speculative 'scenario' but 'bigger' in scope, where the entire story is 'speculative,' odd, different--asking the reader to think: "what if things were like that...?" These SF stories may not seem like 'traditional' SF and may not involve any science,

technology, aliens, space, etc., at all. *Some critics argue that this should be the official term for what we now call 'Science Fiction' because it encompasses more possibilities*

This type of SF scenario grounds a story in the 'what if' question; it may have a story's plot or characters examine an issue or topic in a 'new' way. This type of scenario can occur in any sub genre or with any other scenario. This type of scenario my not seem like 'usual' science fiction. **Speculative 'what if' scenarios are all about POSSIBILITIES.**

Speculative Scenario ⯯

If *"Science fiction is the literature of of the human species encountering change, whether it arrives via scientific discoveries, technological innovations, natural events, or societal shifts"* *(Chris McKitterick, "Defining Science Fiction," http://www.sfcenter.ku.edu/SF-Defined.htm)*, **then the SPECULATIVE SCENARIOS within Science Fiction (SF) force characters and readers to ask what could happen based on such encounters with these types of changes: how do SF characters respond to such changes, and why? What do we, as readers, learn about ourselves, the human condition and our place in the universe, etc., from these possibilities?**

Style ⯯

This refers to the way in which a story is written--the style of the writing used by the author. Fantasy stories may use a modern, plain style of writing or an older, more ornate style of writing",,,

Suspense (plot) ⯯

This is shown when a plot element or event produces a sense of anxiety in the reader, as they 'fear' for a character, or internalize a fictionally dangerous situation (through their suspension of disbelief).

Symbol ⯯

This refers to something that represents something else in terms of its deeper meaning. Often, concrete objects or simple ideas are used to infer symbolic meaning. For example, the colour red is literally just a colour but symbolically it is seen in many cultures to represent love, passion, anger, pain, death, etc.

Technological Scenario ⯯

This occurs in an SF story when the plot revolves around technology (made, fabricated devices used to perform a specific task) in some way (related to the core SF concept of 'invention').

Theme (explicit or implicit) ⯯

This is the main message or point of a story. It is not to be confused with plot events. Explicit theme is obvious or clearly stated whereas implicit theme is 'hidden' or open for

interpretation. Regardless of how imaginary the invented fantasy world of the story is, the theme should encourage readers to make connections to the 'real world' in some way.

Third person (fully) omniscient narration ⌄

This is shown through an 'outside, all-knowing' narrator who is NOT a character in the story. This type of narration knows everything about all characters and situations.

Third person subjective narration ⌄

This type of third person narration is more common in modern literature and revolves around the subjective thoughts of one character (usually the main character).

Time Travel Paradox ⌄

(Also known as the 'Grandfather Paradox'). The hypothetical travelling through time to the past is dangerous in Science Fiction; one might unknowingly encounter one's own grandfather, for example, and just through the encounter, change the future and possibly erase your own future existence.

Title Significance ⌄

This literary device refers to the significance or importance of the title to the story. Often, the title reveals something important about the story, provides important information about the story, is symbolic, etc.

Tone (style) ⌄

The tone of a story refers to whether, overall, the story is humorous, serious, depressing, satirical, etc.

Transformation ⌄	This is one of the four core SF concepts. Transformation involves change of some sort; it can involve single characters or whole societies, civilizations, worlds and can involve physical, social/cultural, temporal (time) or psychological change.
Utopian Literature ⌄	-a very old sub genre of literature, which explores and/or questions the possibility of a 'perfect society'. The Utopian societies portrayed in literature are often shown to be impossible 'dreams' which may turn into 'nightmares'. [The opposite of utopian is 'dystopian'--a highly flawed/nightmarish society].
Word use and choice (style) ⌄	This refers to the types of words chosen and used by the author--and to what effect.
Zeroth Law of Robotics (Asimov) ⌄	Also see above, under 'Asimov's Zeroth Law of Robotics'. The Zeroth Law of Robotics states that: "A robot may not injure humanity, or through inaction, allow humanity to come to harm." Asimov's later "Zeroth" law (from the 1950 in the story "The Evitable Conflict") was designed by the author to come before the First Law of Robotics (thereby making it even more important than the first law?): *the above definitions and information were adapted from: http://www.rogerclarke.com/SOS/Asimov