

## OLYMPIADS SCHOOL/GRADE 7 AND 8 WRITING/FALL 2016/HOMEWORK 1

Name (first and last): \_\_\_\_\_

There are five types of conflict. They are as follows:

Person versus Person  
Person versus Society  
Person versus Self  
Person versus Nature  
Person versus Fate

**Person versus Person** is easy. Your characters can have trouble with family, friends, or strangers. With whom do you struggle – your parents, a sibling, a teacher, or perhaps a bully? You've probably had personal experience with this type of conflict.

**Person versus Society** can be shown in a character having problems with a whole group of people, or who is an outcast, or who fights prejudice or unfair laws. *When Darren began hanging out with an ex-con, the whole town turned against him.*

**Person versus Self** is about the internal struggle of making a decision or choice. For example, if your character has a fear of large animals but dreams of being in a rodeo, then the conflict will involve overcoming that fear and chasing the dream.

Think of those disaster movies where the main character struggles to survive a burning building, a runaway bus, a shipwreck, an airplane crash, etc., and you have **Person versus Nature**. *Alone in the wilderness with wolves closing in, how will Jordan survive?*

**Person versus Fate** doesn't fit into any of the above. The conflict involves an unusual situation. The character has no control over what happens; nothing he does makes a difference. Tragedies are often created with this type of conflict. *Although Kitzy enjoyed a healthy lifestyle, she was struck with a disease. She tried every possible treatment, but nothing cured her, and she grew weaker every day.*

Plan your ending in advance. Will it end happily or sadly? Your story may be a comedy, a tragedy, a heartwarming drama, an action-adventure tale, or a mystery. Try not to copy plots that you've seen in the movies or on TV. (Your teacher may recognize them and deduct points. I speak from experience. It is very embarrassing!) Last of all, be creative and have fun!

If the conflict in a story requires more than a sentence to define, the plot is likely too complicated. Sounds silly, but think about the most complex tales out there and how succinctly the main conflict is presented. Most conflict can be defined in ten words or less. Try the "ten words or less" exercise for your favorite novel and see if it works.

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Use this diagram to plot the story you will hand in. You can search online for images that will help you build your setting and characters.

<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <b>CLIMAX</b> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <b>PLOT</b>              TITLE: _____              AUTHOR: _____           </div> </div>				
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <b>RISING ACTION</b>  <small>(List examples that create complications or suspense)</small> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px;"></div>				<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <b>FALLING ACTION</b> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px;"></div>
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <b>EXPOSITION</b>              Setting:               Situation/climate:               Characters:           </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <b>CONFLICT</b> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <b>PROTAGONIST vs. ANTAGONIST</b>              _____ vs. _____           </div> </div>				
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <b>RESOLUTION</b> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <b>THEME:</b> </div> </div>				

## No Exit

**Read the selection, and then answer the questions that follow.**

As the robot came closer, Zantur knew it would be almost impossible to escape. He slipped around a corner and held his breath as the metallic monitor clanked by. Zantur was determined to get out. . . . He didn't know why he'd let the others talk him into coming in the first place! They knew of his fear, yet they persisted, taunting him until he agreed to join them. But now . . . now he just couldn't go through with it! He carefully peered around the corner. The robot was nowhere in sight, so Zantur inched his way toward an EXIT sign flashing ahead of him. Just as he reached out to unlatch the pod covering, the robot grabbed his arm. "CAUGHT! CAUGHT!" it beeped loudly.

People came rushing down the hall. "Aha! It was you!" someone shouted. "Are you just getting here . . . trying to get in through a latched pod door?"

Zantur pulled his arm from the robot's clutch. "Ye-ye-yeah!" he stammered. "Sorry to be late. I'm really looking forward to this!" Then he forced a smile as he joined his graduating class in the dance room for the prom. He looked at Debu and she shyly smiled. He so wished he wasn't afraid to ask her to dance!

1. **What is the main conflict in this story?**
  - a. Zantur doesn't want to go to the prom.
  - b. Zantur needs to hide from the robot monitor.
  - c. Zantur forgot to get Debu flowers for the dance.
  - d. Debu wants Zantur to ask her to dance.
2. **Zantur plans to solve his problem by**
  - a. taking dance lessons.
  - b. dismantling the robot.
  - c. escaping from the building.
  - d. playing in the dance band.
3. **How does Zantur resolve the problem?**
  - a. He opens the pod and escapes.
  - b. He doesn't because he still has to go to the dance.
  - c. He decides he likes to dance.
  - d. He hides in a closet all night.

## Interior or Exterior Conflicts

\_\_\_\_\_ You love going to soccer practice every Friday night. However, last week you had to go to dinner with your family instead, and this week a friend has invited you to the movies.

\_\_\_\_\_ At a party, you spent a lot of time talking to a friend from your math class—just chatting. Now another classmate has spread rumors around school about the two of you.

\_\_\_\_\_ For the past month, you have been bullied on the school bus by older middle school guys. They typically call you names and sometimes even poke at you. Finally one day, you get fed up and scream, "Don't ever touch me again!"

\_\_\_\_\_ You have a project due on Monday. Even though you have had several weeks to read, by Sunday night you've only read half the book. To make things worse, your teacher has stated, "I have high expectations for this assignment."

\_\_\_\_\_ Your school has a state level ice-hockey team—for boys. When you and a group of girlfriends want to start a girls' hockey program, you're told that, although it's a nice idea, there just isn't enough money in the athletic budget.

\_\_\_\_\_ Although your friends say that you're very attractive, you think just the opposite. You are overly critical about physical appearance.

\_\_\_\_\_ You think someone from your fifth period class is extremely cute! You've been trying to work up the nerve to ask him/her out, but you're just too scared.

\_\_\_\_\_ Your dad is driving you and your friends to a big football game in town. Although you left in plenty of time, he seems to have lost his way. You think you saw the football field a couple of blocks back. When you tell your dad, he says, "Who's driving—you or me?"

**Read the story, answer the questions and then finish the story.**

### **The Dumpsite**

**Do you have a better title?** \_\_\_\_\_

Write a better opening sentence.

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"Did you ever see that old landfill?" Mason asked his friend Connor.

"Of course I've seen the landfill," said Connor, "but who wants to?"

"Not the regular landfill, the old one," said Mason. "This one's on the far side of that big hill out behind the old neighborhood way out by the train tracks. It's not like a recycling place, just a real old dump. Joey says you can get parts for bikes and stuff out there."

Mason gulped down the last of his Coke and put away the bag of Doritos the boys had been sharing. "We could check it out," he said.

Both boys decided that they didn't have anything better to do, and so they set out on an hour-long bike ride to see what they could discover.

At the old landfill, they saw heaps of rusting and rotting stuff that no one would want. They saw piles of plastic trash bags and rusting barrels. They saw tire tracks coming up from the bottom of the hill.

"Check that out," said Mason. "This might be an old dump, but it's still being used." Then the boys saw the creek that ran through the low lying area at the bottom of the hill.

"Wow," said Connor, "all this stuff could be polluting that creek just like we learned about in science."

"Let's check out those barrels," said Mason, "I'll bet they're full of toxic waste or something!"

"Hold on!" said Connor. "That could be dangerous."

"Suppose we, like, went to the police or something," Mason said.

"We might get in trouble for messing around here," said Connor.

"Well, someone should check this out," said Mason. "It just doesn't look right."

**Answer the following questions before you finish the story.**

1. If Connor and Mason decide to go to the authorities, what might happen next in their story?

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2. If they decide to investigate the dump themselves, what might happen next?

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3. If they decide to forget about the polluted dump, what might happen next?

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[illegible]

