

The Short Story

Definition: “A story that can be read in one sitting” (E.A. Poe)

General characteristics:

- **limited number of characters:** often only one main character/protagonist and little/no character development
(cf. novels e.g. by Charles Dickens with over 20 main characters)
- **no explicit description of setting** like in a novel
- **limited time span:** only a few hours, days or weeks
(cf. novels that cover a whole lifetime or even several generations)
- **a single theme/plot:** concentration on one decisive moment in a character's life or a so-called 'snapshot' of life (one moment you can think about)
(cf. novels that can deal with several/many themes and can have various sub-plots)
- **conflict:** key struggle between different characters within the plot or internal conflict

