Story and Novel Terms 12

This list of terms builds on the preceding lists you have been given at Heritage Woods in grades 9-11. It contains all the terms you were responsible for learning in the past, as well as the new terms you are now responsible for learning for the exam.

o *The new terms are marked with (NT): New Term.*
o *Government exam terms are marked with an asterisk (*).*

Short Stories: General

Short Story: A fictional tale of a length that is too short to publish in a single volume like a novel. Short stories are usually between five and sixty pages; as a result, they can be read in a single sitting. Usually, short stories concentrate on a single event with only one or two characters.

The short story has three elements: **plot**, **characterization**, and **setting**. In addition, short stories also contain other devices/features including: **theme**, **conflict, point of view**, **suspense**, **foreshadowing**, **flashback**, *deus ex machina,* and *in medias res*. Theme is so vital to the short story, however, that some critics consider it the fourth element, rather than a device or feature.

Short Story Elements

A. Plot*: The events of the story or the series of actions that make up the story are referred to as the plot. Basically, the plot is what happens in the story. Traditionally, it is divided into five parts.

1. **Introduction:** The reader meets the characters and discovers the setting. Reader interest is aroused here. The conflict that drives the story's action is discovered at the end of the introduction, with the initiating incident.

2. **Rising action*:** Builds up the story (the longest part)— a series of steps that lead to the climax. You get more information about conflict and character here.

3. **Climax*:** Here, the reader finds out what happens to the conflict, or how the conflict might be resolved. The story may not yet be finished, but the reader now has a good understanding of what way it is going to go.

4. **Falling Action*:** The plot begins to wrap up in this section of the story, which is usually brief.