

* In the discussion of character development, the **social characterization** of any given character is the place that character has in society and includes employment, family, religion, friends, etcetera. John works as a nurse in an emergency ward, he is Catholic, married, with three kids, and he and his buddies play cards every Thursday night.

* In the discussion of character development, the **psychological characterization** of any given character gives insight to that character's motivations. This is what the character wants, needs or is striving for within the context of the story/plot. The serial killer was rejected by his first love who was a blonde. Therefore, all his victims are blondes as well.

* In the discussion of character development the **moral characterization** of any given character reveals the values that are important to that character. If a character sees someone drop a \$50.00 bill and returns it to them it says one thing, and if he pockets it, it says something else.

The most common stage type is the **proscenium stage**. It has an arch that, for most of the performance, separates the performance from the audience. This is called the proscenium arch and is often the place where the main curtain is lowered between acts and at the end of the performance. Because of this orientation the proscenium stage lends itself to a more representational type of performance.

The **thrust stage** is one that has part of the stage out in the audience area. It may or may not have a proscenium arch, but does have an area in the back where actors can make their entrances and exits. Because it is 'in' the audience it lends itself to a more presentational type of performance.

The **arena stage** is one that is in the middle of the audience. This unique stage type is best for smaller venues. The actors need to make their entrances and exits through the audience - there is no back stage. Also, since the audience is on every side, the characters need to make sure that too much time is not spent facing one direction with their back to part of the audience. Because it is 'in' the audience it lends itself to a more presentational type of performance.

A **representational** performance is one that does not acknowledge the audience. It is as if it were being played out as a typical television show or film; the action would take place whether an audience was present or not. This kind of performance will still react to laughter or other moments that require pauses based on the audience's reaction, but will not address the audience or interact with them in any direct manner. The opposite of presentational is presentational.

A **presentational** performance is one that, at the least, acknowledges the audience's presence and in some way directly engages them. In many cases, it goes further and actually involves the audience in some aspect of the performance. An example of this is when tinker bell asks the audience to clap if they believe in fairies in the play *Peter Pan*. The opposite of presentational is representational.

A **raked stage** is one that has the back of that stage raised. This borrows one aspect of linear perspective - that of objects that are higher being farther away. In this case it reinforces the depth of those objects or people on that stage. See an example of a raked stage here. It is also the source of stage directions such as upstage and downstage. A character that is downstage is closer to the audience.

be defined as one of the aforementioned. Characters can be flat or round. They can also be static or developing. In some rare cases a character is not a person within the plot but an idea or a prevailing circumstance.

A **round character** is one that the participant gets to know well. The physical, social, psychological and moral characteristics are usually all known about that character.

In theater and film, a **flat character** is one that has few dimensions. The character typically has very little impact on the substance of the main plot or even on the sub-plots. A typical flat character is someone that is like a cashier that rings up an item at the store, and that is all the information that is given about him.

* The **protagonist** is the main character of a story. This is the person around which the story seems to be organized. In Cinderella, Cinderella is the protagonist. In some cases, there is more than one protagonist. In even rarer cases, the protagonist becomes a character that is not one of the physical characters within the play. In that case, it is usually an idea that permeates the story.

* The **antagonist** is the character that creates the most conflict with the protagonist. In Cinderella, the antagonist is the step-mother. In some cases the antagonist and protagonist are the same character. In even rare case the antagonist is the situation in which the protagonist is placed. This is usually a central idea within the story/plot.

Conflict is one of the most important aspects of a story. Without it there is no tension or interest in the plot. Conflict is typically found between characters or within the psychological aspect of a character. The main conflict is often found between the protagonist and antagonist.

* A **foil** is a character that makes the characteristics of another more pronounced. The foil can exhibit the same characteristics or opposite characteristics. The two step sisters are mean and selfish. These characteristics are opposite those of Cinderella who is kind and caring.

* A **confidant** is a character to whom another character speaks so we can learn more about the second character. One misconception is that the confidant is a friend. That is not a necessary aspect of the confidant in a story. Cinderella shares her thoughts and desires with Prince Charming, the fairy godmother, and her step-mother. Through what she says to them the audience can better understand her motivations.

In theater, a **raisonneur** is a character that reveals the ideas that the playwright or screenwriter is trying to communicate. Most plays and films do not utilize this element in such an overt way, but many do. If there is a raisonneur it is a character that seems to know everything that is going on and helps the audience to see it. In some productions, a narrator fulfills this role and may or may not participate in the action, but is just more 'clued in'.

* In the discussion of character development the **physical characterization** of any given character is the look of that character. The question is does that character's appearance fit the part being played. Imagine someone that is super skinny playing the part of Superman.

happens early in the story, usually in the exposition that sets the action in motion. The rest of the main story is a consequence of that event. For instance, a story may feature a kidnapping (cause) that results in the other characters trying to find the kidnapper and retrieve the child (effect).

* A story or plot that is **organized by a character** has one character the main story revolves around. The other types of organization are idea organization and cause to effect. All three usually are present within a story, but one is usually dominant. *Forrest Gump* is an example of a story that has character organization. It also has elements of cause to effect and to a lesser extent organization by a central idea, but the main character is the most dominant aspect that creates continuity. Throughout the film the focus is on what happens to Forrest. Other characters come into play, but only in relationship as to how their interactions with Forrest are important.

* A story or plot that is **organized by a central idea** has one central point that is being made. Everything else within the main story revolves around that idea. The other types of organization are character organization and cause to effect. All three are often present within a story, but one usually is dominant. *2001: A Space Odyssey* is an example of a story that is organized by a central idea. It also has elements of cause to effect and to a lesser extent organization by character, but the main idea is dominant. It is the idea that there is another intelligence in the universe that is watching over us. The story takes place in the past, as well as in the near future at least from the perspective of when it was written. In three different times and periods a mysterious monolith appears representing that other intelligence.

Theater productions are divided into divisions called **acts**. Most productions have between two and five acts. However, some examples have only one act. When that occurs two one-acts are usually paired together in on performance. Each act is typically divided into scenes.

Acts within theater productions are often divided into **scenes**. Each of those scenes are defined by either an idea or set change. This helps the audience to note when some aspect of the play is going in a new direction.

* In arts that have a serial component **exposition** refers to the beginning of the work or first idea presented. It exposes the ideas upon which the work is based. In music is usually is a melodic theme (or set of themes). In stories it is the part that introduces the characters and the setting - the physical setting of where and when the story takes place, as well as the circumstances surrounding that story's beginning. Does the story begin with Cinderella living under the authority of her step-mother, or with her father before he remarries? The exposition introduces Cinderella, the step-mother, the two step-sisters, and a brief encounter with Prince Charming, although she doesn't know him as such yet. The setting is her father's house, and the circumstances is that she has become a slave now that her father is dead. Often an inciting incident will occur in the exposition. The exposition is also where the dramatic question is determined.

Some artworks that have a story (novels, theater productions, and films) utilize an **inciting incident** as a way to jump start the story. While Cinderella is drawing water from a well she meets a handsome stranger and begins to consider the possibilities of a life away from her step-mother.

* In artworks that have a story (novels, theater productions, and films) the main point of the story can often be determined through a **dramatic question**. This question is typically suggested in the exposition - will Cinderella live as a slave in her step-mother's house or will she find happiness in some other way? And, is typically not resolved until the denouement - she is rescued from her captivity by Prince Charming and lives happily ever after. If it is a superficial question - will Cinderella get her chores done so she can go to the ball - then it is answered early in the story and therefore not crucial to the main point of that story.

* In arts that have a story (novels, theater productions, and films) **complication** refers to the part of the story that develops the story lines. More specifically it refers to those moments in the middle of the story when the main plot or a sub-plot changes direction. All stories have complications. If they did not then the story would be uneventful and not hold the participant's attention. What would have happened had Cinderella not met her Fairy God Mother? What would have happened had she not lost a glass slipper? Complications can be conflicts, but do not need to be. The important aspect of the complication is that the direction of the story has been changed.

* In artworks that have a story (novels, theater productions, and films) **denouement** refers to the conclusion of that story. In most denouements the threads of the story are resolved. If they were not then it would suggest that the story is not yet over. This is also the point at which the dramatic question is answered. Prince Charming has found his true love and Cinderella lives happily ever after.

Character in a story, theater production or film usually refers to a person within the plot. The most common characters are protagonist, antagonist, foil, and confidant. Not every character can