

# Various Important Terms

Throughout the course we will discuss these elements — be sure you are familiar with their meaning and function.

- 1. protagonist:** main character in story; focal point of the story
- 2. antagonist:** a person who the protagonist struggles against, or competes with; an adversary.
- 3. conflict:** clash of opposing views; actions between protagonist and antagonist
- 4. drama:** main focal point of conflict in story
- 5. climax:** the heightened tension of conflict at its peak and results in the **conclusion/resolution.**
- 6. epiphany:** moment of clarity, sudden understanding, insight
- 7. exposition:** establishment of the setting, prepares the fictional world for the reader; background history is shown.
- 8. flashback:** a scene relived in memory
- 9. foreshadowing:** hints of a future development through elements of the story
- 10. *in medias res*:** latin phrase meaning “in the middle of”—the action of a story begins with the unfolding situation already in progress.
- 11. irony:** an event deliberately contrary to what the reader expects.  
Additionally **dramatic irony:** the reader knows something which the character does not; the protagonists’ actions have significant meaning only known to the reader—the meaning can be unknown even to the main character him/herself.
- 12. motifs:** reoccurring symbols which appear throughout the story
- 13. plot:** main course of action; in addition **subplots** are minor, secondary story lines behind the scene of main action
- 14. setting:** the main scene of the story; time and location of main plot