Midterm Review

Be able to recognize these terms and their use in stories.

protagonist: main character in story; focal point of the story

antagonist: acts against the protagonist; point of conflict produces drama

drama: main focal point of conflict in story; disagreement or personality clash

irony: an event deliberately contrary to what the reader expects.

foreshadowing: hints of a future development through elements of the story

motifs: reoccurring symbols which appear throughout the story

climax: the heightened tension of conflict at its peak and results in the **conclusion/ resolution**

in medias res: latin: in the middle of, Many short stories use this technique. I'll point it out for you to see when we read specifically Poe, Bradbury.

epiphany: moment of clarity, sudden understanding, insight

All stories deal with **conflicts** and secondary-conflicts in one fashion or another:

    A. human vs nature   (wilderness / disease / animals)

    B. human vs human   (political / economic / religious / racial differences / society)

    C. human vs gods/God/ Fate   (Jonah vs God/ Oedipus vs Fate)

    D. human vs self   (mental illness / morality conflicts / physical endurance)

    E. human vs. technology   (computers / industrialism / corporations)

Folk-Tale, Fairy Tale: show a magical representation of the world, which in turn can teach a moral lesson—these are based on children's notions of the world as divided into black and white, no gray areas. These prepared children for the violent world of their times. More of an entertainment value than moralistic teaching. Depends on the creator. Usually protagonist is 100% good, and easily recognized as hero.

1

Fable: allegorical story with a moral; explicit message presented to reader at closing. Short fictitious work (some are only three sentences long). Usually involve animals or inantimate objects as actors within the story; animals and natural elements represent human characteristics or personality-types; some do use human-centered actors. Protagonists are not always 100% good. Can have mixed morals.

Parable: brief story, based in realistic terms, deals with human characters, and contain an explicit teaching of morality or philosophy.

Myth: story based on religious mystery. Presumed history of ancestors. A heritage. Involve a deity.

Grimm Brothers Fairy Tale Characteristics:

• magical creatures abound / magical situations

• protagonists down trodden: orphan, stepchild, cast-out prince

• protagonist goes through psychological/physical transformation

• protagonist proves worthiness

• protagonist generally is pure good } no in between grey areas

• villain pure evil } no in between grey areas

• extreme violence, gruesome situations

• set of threes, three tasks, three wishes, three journeys

　　　How does "Godfather Death" not follow the standard formula for folktales?

Archetypes

• Some of these figures in the popular Grim stories have become traditional symbols used and re-used in literature today as archetypes. In terms of literature there are patterns of personality traits/characteristics in folklore that can be applied to modern fictional characters; the original folktale acting as a prototype for modern works; symbols of a universal human condition.

Archetypes (continued)

• archetypes belong to a family of elements: epitome and stereotype

    1. epitomes are representatives or perfect example of a type of person

    2. stereotype as we all know are oversimplified and exaggerated characteristics

    which are applied to groups of people

• Some common archetypes:

The Hero , The Great Mother, The wise old man /woman, The Trickster or Fox

An image or event can be an archetype: the poison apple for Snow White for instance.

A **short story** focuses on one incident, has a single plot, a single setting, a small number of characters, and covers a short period of time. The short story is a literary genre of fictional prose-narrative that tends to be more concise and more to the point than longer works of fiction such as a novel. In general the accepted length for short fiction is a count of 7,500 words. Almost all begin in an ***in medias res*** fashion. Poe himself said the definition of a short story follows the notion that if a work can be read in one sitting it would be considered a short story. Anything that would require a bookmark classifies itself as a novella, or a short novel.

Remember elements of **Freytag's Pyramid:**

exposition (the introduction of setting, situation and main characters);

complication or inciting moment (the event that introduces the conflict);

rising action (escalating action, or points of crisis for the protagonist; proves the hero's commitment to a course of action); **climax** (the point of highest interest in terms of the conflict and the point with the most action); **resolution** (the point when the conflict is resolved with happy ending or ends tragically); in some cases a **moral** is implicitly expressed.

Be able to recognize **Types of Narration** in the various stories we read:

Objective Point of View: writer acts as narrator, relating what happens. The narration itself does not have an opinion regarding the action unfolding on the page.

Third Person Point of View: writer is not the story-teller. The narrator acts as an unseen character who does not participating in the plot as an actor, but does lets the reader know what the process of the characters' thoughts and goals.

First Person Point of View: In the first person point of view, the narrator *does* participate in the action of the story, but the narrator is *not* the author. It is important to consider whether the narrator can recount events in a non-biased manner. Likewise, the reader must question the trustworthiness of the account itself.

> *Who uses this primarily?*

Omniscient (third) Points of View: Narrators who knows *everything* about *all* the characters are all knowing, or omniscient. Writers may place themselves into this role OR use a secondary authoritative voice.

Limited omniscient point of view: a narrator whose knowledge is limited to 1 character, either major or minor

> *Who uses this type of narration?*

Poe loved working with the **anti-hero** concept—even before the term was invented. See "The Cask of the Amontillado" —Likewise, in this story, Poe layers multiple ironies on top of one another, a technique used for building suspense.

Be able to identify what makes his work fit in the Gothic genre. (Re-familiarize yourself with the list of basic Gothic elements.)

Kate Chopin and **Charlotte Gilman** are both considered to be forerunners of the feminist movement. Chopin however denied feminist leanings, more than likely because she didn't want her stories to be labelled as "women's work." She wanted her stories and novels to be considered as equal to men's work. Gilman however liked to be identified as a "radical," female author.

• Be able to break down the various symbols that exist in "The Story of an Hour" and the chain of events which lead the reader from Mrs. Mallard's room to the stairs.

• In particular pay attention to the chair, the open window, and the timing of the story.

• Be able to break down the final scene in "The Yellow Wallpaper."

• Be able to identify why it is considered a Female Gothic piece.

• Be able to identify the different stages of transformation of the main character.

William Faulkner: be able to recognize the central themes in his works:

the past is always with us. We pay for the consequence of our ancestor's mistakes.

The South is paying for its sins of participation in slavery and crimes against humanity.

• Be able to recognize archetypes and symbols in "A Rose for Emily."

• Be able to identify why it is considered a Southern Gothic.

• Know why Miss Emily qualifies as a tragic hero.

James Joyce: maintains a common theme within his short stories: modern living produces feelings of isolation and desperation. His epiphanies shown in his works display a sudden awareness of the futility of life; they display to characters their lowly position in the Universe.

• **Flash fiction** is a new classification; generally flash fiction is a short story of 2,000 words or less, yet maintains the traditional plot formula. Flash-fiction works contain the classic story elements: protagonist, conflict, obstacles or complications, and a sense of a slight resolution. *However, unlike the case with a traditional short story, the limited word length often forces some of these elements to remain unwritten, that is, hinted at or implied in the written storyline.*

• The parables and folktales are forerunners of these "modern" inventions.

• Keep in mind the basic intentions of the fable "The Fox and the Goat."

• James Joyce and Richard Wright both were in self exile from their home countries.

• James Joyce and William Faulkner centered their stories around a central
   setting: Faulkner - small fictional town of Jefferson, MS; Joyce - town of Dublin, IR.

• James Joyce and Kate Chopin both use windows as important symbols in their stories.

A list of the stories to concentrate your studies on:

Aesop "The Fox and the Goat" "Old Man and Death" *supplied*

Kate Chopin, "The Story of An Hour" p 227

Charlotte Gilman, "The Yellow Wallpaper" *supplied*

William Faulkner "A Rose for Emily"p 314

Brothers Grim "Godfather Death" *supplied*

N. Hawthorne, "The Birthmark" p 207   E.A. Poe "Cask of Amontillado" p 217

James Joyce "Araby" p 290 and "Eveline" p 3