









Important Elements of Literary Texts

This anchor chart defines eight important features of literary texts: characters, plot, setting, theme, central idea, point of view, structure, and word choice. This chart could be used to supplement explicit instruction in developing higher-order questions related to literary texts. For more information on this skill, read the Iowa Reading Research Center blog post [“Student Generation of Higher-Order Questions”](#) by Leah Zimmerman, Ph.D.

Important Elements of Literary Texts

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|  <p>Characters</p> | <p>Motivations, thoughts, feelings, reactions</p> |
|  <p>Plot</p> | <p>Exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution, conflict, tension, suspense</p> |
|  <p>Setting</p> | <p>“When, where, weather;” effect on mood or plot</p> |
|  <p>Theme</p> | <p>The author’s message to the reader; how the author develops the message</p> |
|  <p>Central Idea</p> | <p>A main idea in the text; how the author develops the main idea</p> |
|  <p>Point of View</p> | <p>The type of narration used and how it affects the reader’s understanding; how the author develops the point of view</p> |
|  <p>Structure</p> | <p>Contribution of a sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza to a theme or central idea</p> |
|  <p>Word Choice</p> | <p>Figurative language; sensory details, connotative meanings; impact on meaning and tone of the text</p> |