**Critical Analysis of a Short Story**

When doing a critical analysis of a short story, you should focus on how its chief characteristics (plot, character, setting, theme, tone, symbolism, point of view) contribute to the meaning of the story. It is important to remember that ***a critical analysis is NOT a summary of the story***, OR an attempt to pick out flaws.

Each of the following can be discussed in a short story critique/analytical essay:

* **Narration/ Point of View:** W ho is telling the story? W hat is his/her attitude toward the characters and events of the story (tone)?

* **Setting:** Describe it. How is the setting connected to the conflict? To the characters? Would the story change if the setting changed?

* **Plot:** W hat are the major complications leading up to the climax of the story? Are these events logical and believable?

* **Conflict:** W hat type is it? To what degree is the conflict resolved? Why does the story end when and where it does?

* **Dialogue:** Is the dialogue convincing?

* **Characters:** Static or Dynamic? W hat are the major personality and physical attributes of the protagonist? Antagonist?

* **Theme:** W hat is it? How are the characters, setting, and plot related to the theme?

* **Style:** Does the writer’s style suit the content of the story?

W hen commenting on style you will need to consider the following:

 Diction & Syntax- *word choice & sentence type –* *Are some words meant to be symbols or motifs?*

*Do the sounds of certain words have an impact on the story?* *Are the sentences short and choppy, long and complicated or both? Is there a lot of dialogue?*

 Figurative language–

*Does the author use metaphors, similes, personification, etc, to develop character, theme or mood in the story?*

* **Resolution:** Is the ending satisfying or rather open- ended?

* Which element, in your opinion, is strongest? i.e. setting, as in a war novel, plot, as in a mystery, character, as in a psychological drama?

* How realistic is this story? W hat changes might make it more appealing or relevant?