

Narrative Writing Lesson



“Some books make us free; some leave us free.”

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Session I

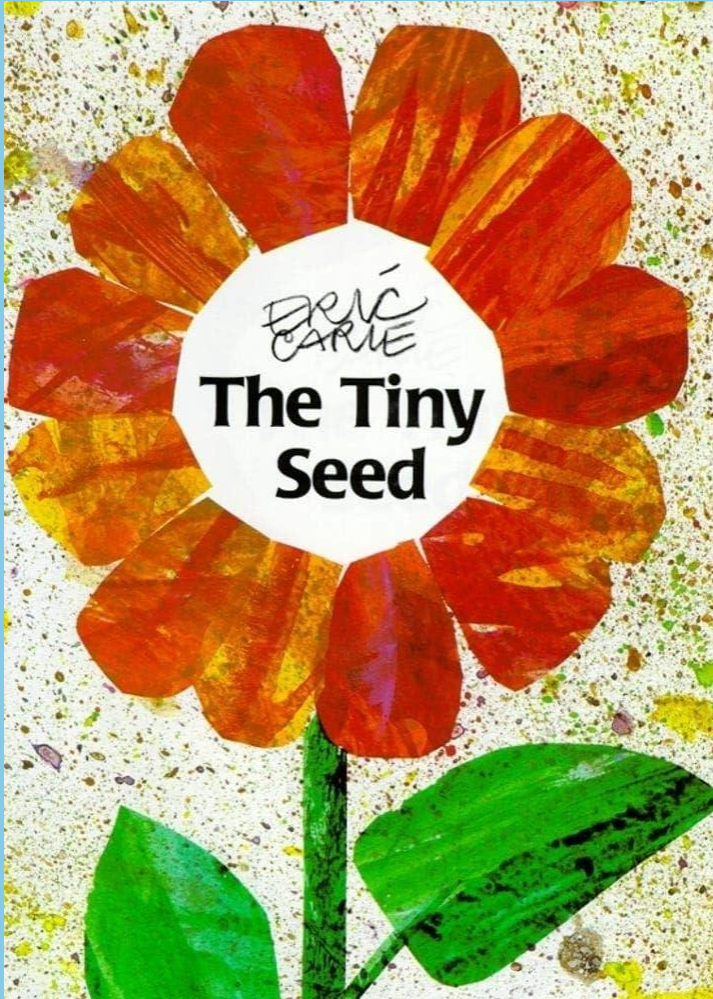
Review rubric for EOC:

https://lor2.gadoe.org/gadoe/file/ba53bbce-40da-44a3-92ed-a8da5dfd28be/1/Rubrics_AmLit.pdf

What is narrative text?

Narrative writing is a style and genre of literature that tells a story. It can include (nonfiction) actual events told in chronological order or it might be a fictional story conceived from an author’s imagination. Engaging fictional narratives sustain a reader’s attention by helping them “visualize” scenes via the use of imagery, figurative language, and vivid descriptions.

Pictured: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (1931 – 2019), author of *Purple Hibiscus*, *Half of a Yellow Sun*, *Americanah*, and *We Should All Be Feminists*.



Teacher Read-aloud: *The Tiny Seed* by Eric Carle.
Activate and discuss prior knowledge about narratives both nonfiction and fiction.

Diagnostic: Create a one-page story (narrative) based on the following paintings. (Writing Descriptively):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RSorZTtwgP4>

CHOICE BOARD

Choice A: “Hunted Slaves” (1861) by Richard Ansdell



Choice B:
“The Starry
Night” (1889)
by Vincent
Van Gogh

Choice C:
“Le Penseur”
(1904) by
François
Auguste René
Rodin

Choice D: “Christina’s World” (1948) Andrew Wyeth

Choice E: “The Scream” (1893) by Edvard Munch

Choice F: “Impression Sunrise” (1872) by Claude Monet

Choice G: “The Great Migration” (1940 – 1941) by Jacob Lawrence

Choice H: “American Gothic” by Gordon Parks

Session II

Let’s analyze and discuss a few of the following short, famous narratives:

(1) “The Gift of the Magi” (1905) by O. Henry (1862 – 1910)

(2) “Thank you, Ma’am” by Langston Hughes

(3) “Fish Cheeks” by Ami Tan

(4) “The Necklace” by Guy de Maupassant

(5) “Daedalus and Icarus” (Greek Mythology)

Narrative Poems

“The Hunter” (2012) by Cynthia Buhain-Baello

“Those Winter Sundays” (1962) by Robert Hayden

“Out, Out—“ (1916) by Robert Frost

“Annabel Lee” (1849) by Edgar Allan Poe

Session III (Review)

Key Elements of Narrative Text

Pictured (right): Best-selling author, Nic Stone

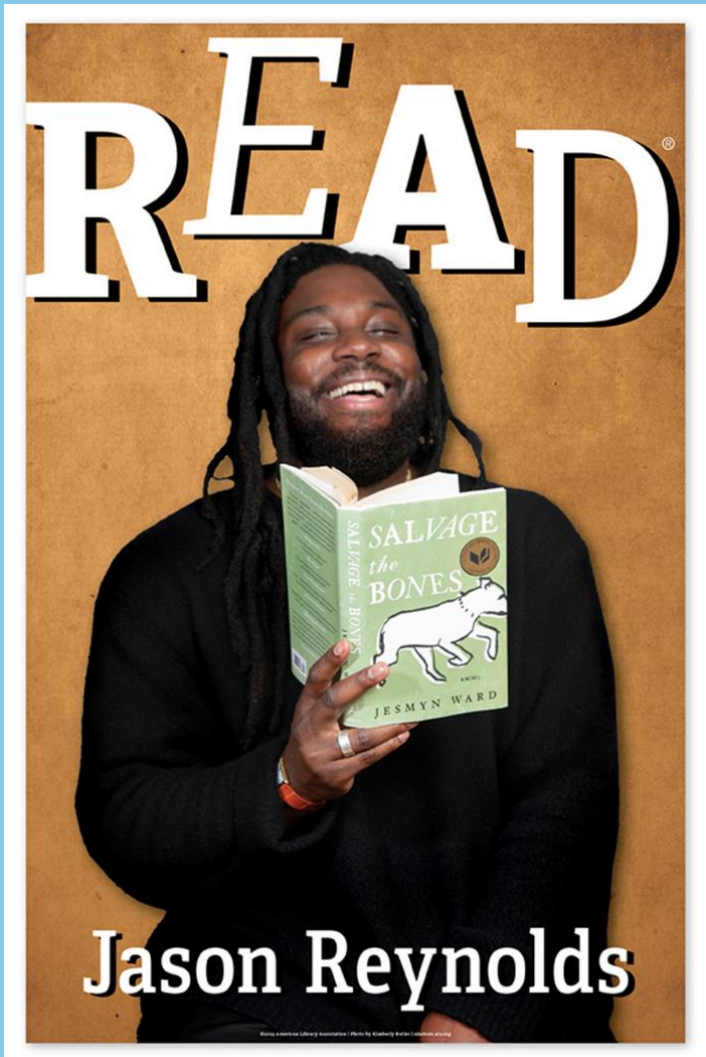
[The elements of a story | Reading | Khan Academy - YouTube](#)

Element 1: The **plot** is a thread of events that take place in the story. Most plot lines include an exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and a resolution.

Nonlinear storytelling deviates from the traditional chronological order of events. Instead of following a linear progression, a nonlinear narrative moves back and forth in time, using flashbacks, flash-forwards or other non-sequential techniques such as in medias res. Nonlinear narratives can be helpful to generate and maximize the



potential of themes, create suspense, curiosity and offer different perspectives on a story's events.



Pictured: Jason Reynolds, award-winning author of *Ghost* and *Long Way Down*.

Element 2: **Characters** are people and/or things who are involved in the story. The elements of the plot affect (influence) the characters and might determine what they do and/or think. Generally, there is one principal protagonist (good person) and at least one antagonist (villain) of the story. Characters are often characterized as round (complex, multifaceted) or flat. How they evolve throughout the story determines if they are dynamic (undergoes major inner change over the course of a story. This evolution is typically reflected in their personality, behavior, perspective, or understanding of life) or static.

Direct vs Indirect Characterization (Using STEAL)

Element 3: **Setting** is the location and time when the story takes place.

Throughout the story, the setting might change. The setting can influence aspects of the story such as the characters and conflict.

(Oregon State University) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=omsbv-hbXiM>

Element 4: **Conflict** is the problem in the story. There are usually two kinds of conflict in a story: external and internal. An external conflict involves tension among characters; between characters and nature; or between characters and characters and society. The plot unfolds as the characters try to overcome the problem. An internal conflict occurs within a character's mind, focusing on their internal struggles rather than external events or other characters.

Common Examples:

- Moral Dilemmas: A character grappling with a difficult ethical choice or decision.
- Emotional Struggles: A character battling with feelings like guilt, fear, anger, or despair.

- Identity Crisis: A character questioning their place in the world or their own beliefs.
- Desire vs. Duty: A character torn between what they want and what they believe they should do.
- Fear vs. Courage: A character struggling to overcome their fears and act bravely.
- Examples in Literature:
 - The Catcher in the Rye: Holden Caulfield's struggle with his own identity and place in the world.
 - The Hunger Games: Katniss Everdeen's internal conflict between her beliefs and the actions she must take to survive.
 - Toy Story: Buzz Lightyear's internal conflict as a toy who believes he is a space ranger.
- Why it's important:

Internal conflict can create compelling and relatable characters, allowing readers to connect with their struggles and emotions.



Pictured: Award-winning playwright, August Wilson (1945 – 2005)

Element 5: **Theme** is the overarching message, purpose, or driving force behind the story. The author is trying to get you to believe or understand something that he/she feels is important. It should have universal appeal because it is relatable to reality and human nature.

(Khan Academy) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D2FFijvA00I>

Session IV

Activity A: In groups of three, students will read aloud an assigned children's book. Group members must teach their peers about the five central elements of the story (plot, characters, conflict, setting, and theme); share at least one example of figurative language; and explain the author's tone based on word choice and sentence structure.



"That's the thing about books.
They let you travel without
moving your feet." – Jhumpa
Lahiri, author of *The
Namesake*

Session V

Other Important Elements of
Narrative Text

Point of View (POV)

Who is the narrator of the story?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iFaaNuA9LKA>

(Khan Academy) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GGs3NcmAZnw>

How POV affects characters: (Khan Academy)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XIfYK4tpl2Y>

(Oregon State University) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=acURL_KBiRI

Tone

(Tolentino Teaching) [How to Determine a Writer's Tone - YouTube](#)

(Khan Academy) [Analyzing tone through word choice | Reading | Khan Academy](#)

Tone vs Mood

In stories, "tone" refers to the author's attitude or emotional approach toward the subject matter, conveyed through word choice, sentence structure, and other literary devices, influencing the reader's perception and engagement.

Tone vs Mood (Oregon State University) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hkc-EyHD-M0>

How it's conveyed:



Pictured: Nobel Prize-winning author, Toni Morrison (1931 – 2019)

Word choice: Specific words and phrases can create a particular tone, whether it's formal or informal, serious or humorous, etc.

Sentence structure: Short, choppy sentences can create a sense of urgency or excitement, while longer, more complex sentences can convey a more formal or reflective

tone.

Imagery and figurative language: Descriptive language and metaphors can help create a specific mood or tone.

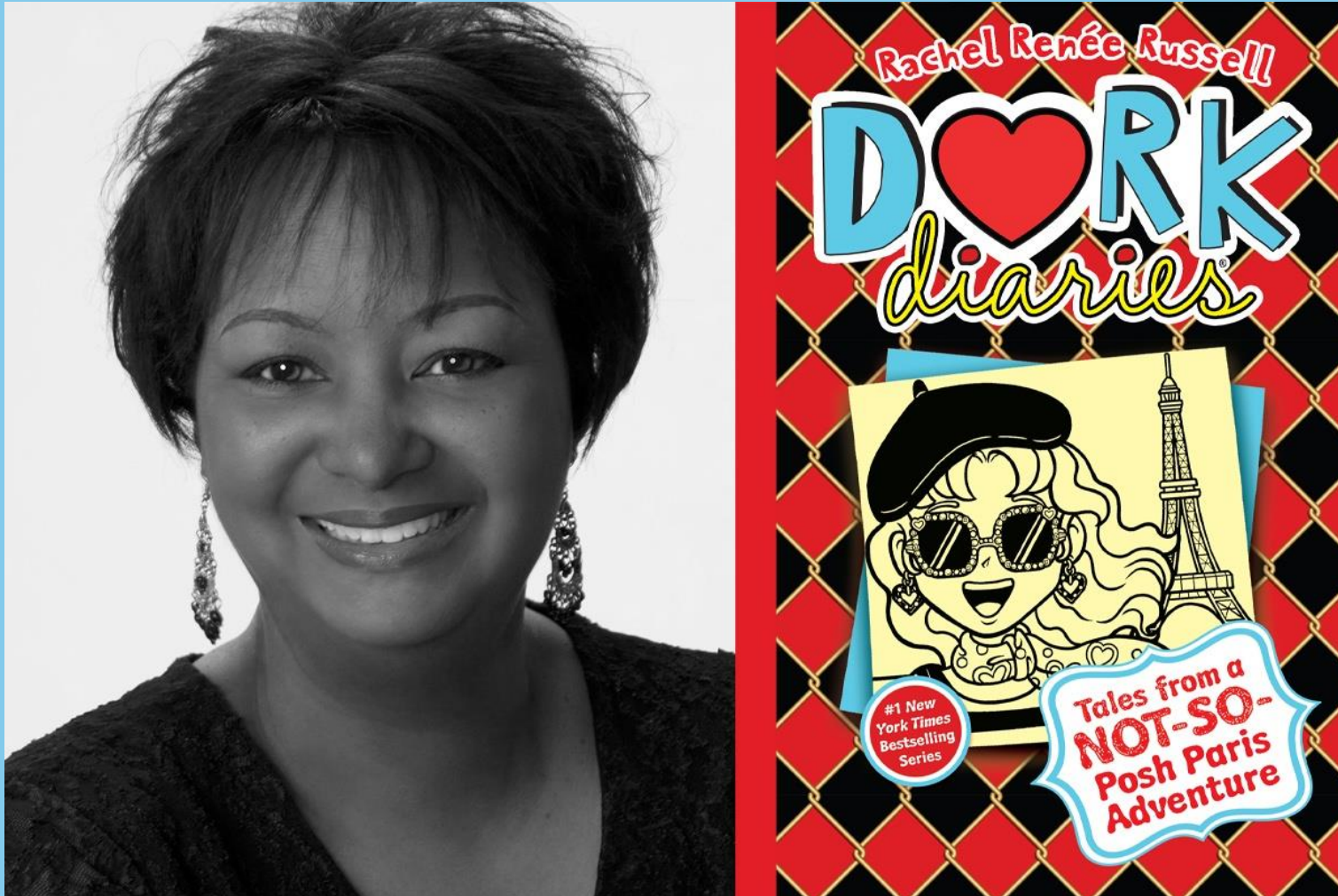
Dialogue: The way characters speak and the language they use can also contribute to the overall tone of the story.

[How To Write Dialogue - YouTube](#)

Examples of different tones:

- Humorous: A lighthearted, funny, and playful approach.
- Serious: A grave, thoughtful, and somber approach.
- Informative: A factual and objective approach.
- Optimistic: A hopeful and positive approach.
- Pessimistic: A negative and gloomy approach.
- Sarcastic: A cynical and mocking approach.
- Accusatory: A critical and blaming approach.
- Appreciative: A grateful and admiring approach.
- Importance of tone:
 - Creates mood: Tone sets the emotional atmosphere of a story, influencing how the reader feels while reading.
 - Influences reader perception: Tone helps the reader understand the author's perspective and how they want the reader to interpret the story.

- Engages the reader: A well-chosen tone can keep the reader interested and invested in the story.



FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

Simile

A simile is a type of figurative language which is used to compare one thing against another. Similes compare the likeness of two things and often feature the words 'like' or 'as': "As strong as an ox/ As brave as a lion."

Metaphor

A metaphor is a phrase describing something as something it is not in reality. It is used to compare two things symbolically. A metaphor literally describes something as something it is not. "Love is a battlefield"

Oxymoron

An oxymoron is a term which features two words which appear to contradict each other but make sense of the situation overall.

- For example: That woman is pretty ugly.

Hyperbole

A hyperbole is a figure of speech which exaggerates the meaning of a sentence.

- For example: My granddad is as old as time.

Idiom

An idiom is a phrase which bears no literal meaning to the situation it is describing but it implies the facts or story behind it.

- For example: There is a silver lining in every cloud.

Personification

Personification is a type of figurative language. It is used to give an inanimate object or item a sense of being alive. The speaker would talk to the object as if it could understand and was intelligent.

- For example: Why are you so heavy, suitcase?

Symbolism

Symbolism is another form of figurative language which is used to express an abstract idea using an item or words.

- For example: We had to put out a red alert.

Alliteration

Alliteration is a type of figurative speech in which the repetition of letters or sounds is used within one sentence.

- For example: Eagles end up eating entrails.

Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeia is a form of figurative language in which words which are used to describe a sound actually resemble the sound they are referring to.

- For example: The ghost said boo.

Puns

Puns are a form of figurative language which create a play on words. They add an extra meaning to a subject and are often seen as a form of joke or to be humorous.

- For example: A horse is a very stable animal.

Irony

A form of figurative speech is irony. This is when a statement made is directly contradictory to the reality. It is also used to convey a style of sarcasm.

For example:

- I posted on Facebook about how bad Facebook is.
- I won the lottery on my retirement day.

Session VI Figurative Language

More Important Terms

Allusion

Dialogue

Motif

Streams of consciousness

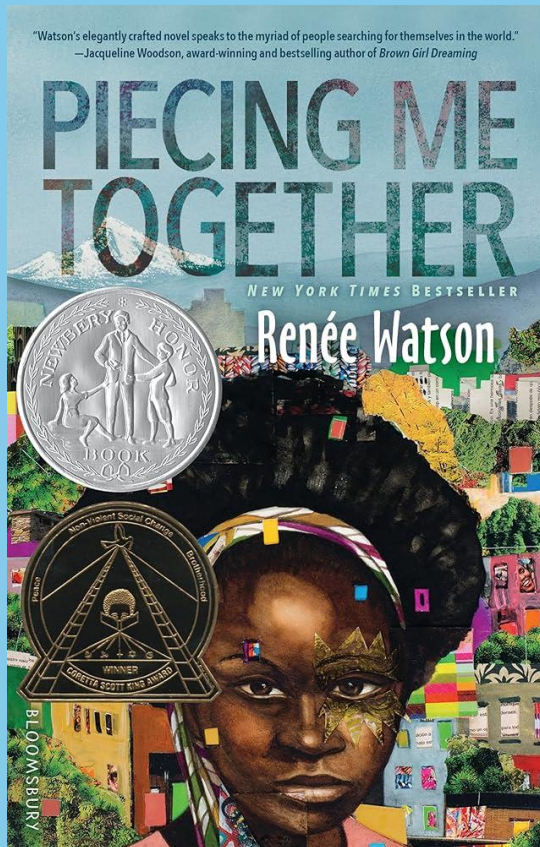
Cliffhanger

Foil

Unreliable narrator

Let's Get Some Practice!

Directions: Write a three-page personal narrative about one of the topic below. Use this checklist from the Georgia DOE to guide your writing: [checklist_AmLit](#)



Choice A: The Greatest Gift I Ever Received

Choice B: When I Met My Best Friend

Choice C: A Life Lesson I Value

Choice D: The Lie That Destroyed A Life

Choice E: My Loving Grandmother

Choice F: The Scariest Moment of My Life

Choice G: The Happiest Day of My Life

Choice H: The Most Embarrassing Day of My Life

Choice I: The Best School Year Ever

Choice J: When I Turned My Pain Into Power

Choice K: The Most Beautiful Thing I Ever Saw

Choice L: The Most Interesting Person I Have Ever Met

Choice M: The Class In Which I Learned the Most

Choice N: The Time I Did Something No One Thought I Could

Session VII Drama

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=imlwmNO9xLY>

Parts of a Play: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ym56mYdZ6k>

