



THE STORY AS A GENRE OF LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT

This article focuses on the rise of the short story genre in literature, its different stages of development, and the works of writers who contributed to this genre. It also examines the roles of famous writers in the development of the short story genre. The article includes various descriptions provided by scholars.

Literature relies heavily on the narrative genre, which has been cherished by readers for centuries. When it comes to defining the short story genre, there are several interpretations provided by great writers. According to literary research, Webster's New World College Dictionary defines a short story as "a story shorter than a novella, limited to a small number of characters, and characterised by a single definite theme."

"The American Heritage Dictionary" defines prose as "a short piece of literature that has several characters and aims to achieve several goals."

Other definitions found on the Internet are as follows:

- "A short story is a short literary work, usually written in prose."

- "The short story is a newly discovered prose genre shorter than the novella, which includes several characters and focuses on creating a mood over the content."

- "A short story is a short literary-prose work smaller than a novella, usually limited to only a few characters." A short story is a brief literary prose story that is too short to be published as a separate book. Typically, it revolves around a single event involving one or two characters and draws from social sources. It's worth noting that ancient literary types similar to short stories existed, such as fairy tales, legends, folklore, religious teachings (parables), and fabliaux (fairy tales dating back to Northern France in the 12th-13th centuries). However, the short story genre saw significant development in magazines during the 19th and early 20th centuries, particularly in the United States, where it had a strong tradition. Therefore, the definition stated in "The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms" is considered comprehensive and clear.

The main characteristics of the short story genre are as follows:

- Length: The length of a short story is a somewhat controversial feature, but it is generally agreed that it should be between 1,600 and 20,000 words. However, there are shorter and longer stories that still fall within this genre.



- Title and Theme: The theme of a short story can vary widely, ranging from stories written on a whim to those based on specific prompts or themes. The theme helps to establish the meaning of the story, and when reading a story, different interpretations and themes can emerge based on the reader's perspective. It's important to note that the title of the story does not necessarily encompass the entire story and may have a hidden meaning. Authors often derive the title from the inspiration that led to the creation of their characters, who then take on a life of their own within the story, sometimes leading the narrative in unexpected directions.

A short story typically follows a specific structure, often starting with a dramatic event without providing background information. The events unfold quickly and are interconnected. The story progresses through a series of events leading to one another. There are various ways to move the story from beginning to end. In a common narrative structure, events evolve from the exposition to the climax, followed by the development of action, and conclude with a resolution.

In the exposition, the main character or protagonist is introduced, and a problem or conflict arises, driving the story forward. The conflict can be external, involving the hero and a family member or nature, while the problem can be internal, involving the hero's feelings about duty and responsibility, possibly desiring freedom from such obligations. In complex stories, both external and internal conflicts often intertwine, leading to the climax.

Not all stories adhere to this sequence. Some stories begin at the most interesting or high point, filled with dialogue and other descriptive elements. Alternatively, the story may commence by revealing its ending, drawing attention to the reasons and motives behind the events. Regardless of the structure, the story will feature a hero facing a problem or conflict.

When using a limited number of characters, it's challenging to fully develop a sub-story due to the limited time to unfold it. A story may contain fewer than twenty or more characters, including the protagonist's relatives and friends. The main task of the author is to create believable characters within the story, a process known as characterization. The author can convey the hero's actions, speech style, thoughts, feelings, and interactions with others without providing a detailed description of the hero's character. Depending on the story type, the character may be fictional, based on a real person, or depicted as a representative narrator. It's important to establish whether the character is the main or a secondary character. Events in the story are narrated in three ways: through first person, third person limited, and third person omniscient perspectives. In the first person perspective, the writer speaks as "I" and shares their personal story. With the third person limited perspective, a character in the story observes, hears, and knows what is happening, possessing only partial information about the events and other characters. The third person omniscient perspective can see everything and express opinions on every aspect of the story because they are not the hero of the story and do not participate in it.

The setting of a story, including its construction and structure, is when and where the story takes place. This is important because the environment has a significant impact on the events, character relationships, speech, and behavior in the story.



The short story as a genre has garnered attention from literary critics. Norwegian literary critic Juan Rulfo once stated, "In my opinion, the story is a more difficult and responsible genre than the novel. Because in the story, it is necessary to describe very big events in a concise way, limit yourself and strive for brevity." Rulfo emphasized the skill required to convey a clear purpose and transmit a significant idea within the constraints of a short story.

Writing a story is a demanding task due to its limited volume compared to other genres. The writer needs to express the event, the protagonist's inner experiences, the challenges leading to the desired goal, and an important concept that captures the reader's attention. Despite these challenges, the unique features of the genre quickly attract the reader's attention and provide satisfaction.

In the history of literature, many writers have contributed to the development of the story genre. For example, the Italian writer Boccaccio made a significant contribution with his work "Decameron," which contains 100 stories told by 7 girls and 3 boys over 10 days. Other influential writers in the story genre include Guy de Maupassant (French), O. Henry (American), A.P. Chekhov (Russian), A. Kadiri, and Cholpon (Uzbek).

In European literature, the story is also known as a novella, which means "novelty" in Italian. Writers such as J. London, S. Zweig, P. Merime, H. Hesse, O. Henry, and Maupassant were more famous for their stories than for their longer works.

Famous storywriters in world literature include A.P. Chekhov, S. Maugham, J. London, H. Hesse, O. Henry, L. N. Tolstoy, U. Faulkner, and M. Sholokhov. Some writers, like Tolstoy, Faulkner, and Sholokhov, left unique examples of art through one or two stories, such as Tolstoy's "St. Sergey," Faulkner's "Black Music," and Sholokhov's "Hol."

The story is considered a sub-genre of the epic type, and it is a prose work that describes important and selected events in life in a short form. It became an independent genre in written literature. In a story, the most desirable and typical view of human life is revealed in a short and episodic way. Unlike short stories and novels, the story does not provide information about what happened, how it happened, or with whom the heroes of the work interacted. This information can only be hinted at through some details. In a story, only a certain episode in the life of the hero, chosen by the creator, is described. The story is distinguished by its plot, compositional construction, the relative simplicity of the scale of the image, and the fact that the narration is usually carried out by one person.

This scientific work discusses the narrative genre in three literatures: Uzbek, Russian, and English literature. The aim is to reflect on its value and draw important scientific conclusions and insights.

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