Fitzgerald

Literary Analysis Terms – Definitions

1. Plot – the series of event in a story
2. Plot – Exposition

* the first action in the story
* must convey at least a hint of main character(s), conflict and setting
* in a short story - must occur in the first paragraph, maybe also the second
* in a novel – must occur in the in the first chapter

1. Plot - Rising Action

* the steps in action between the exposition and climax that each increase the reader’s understanding of the main character’s conflict that was introduced in the exposition
* in a short story – one step per paragraph or dialogue, sometimes two
* in a novel – one every chapter, maybe two

1. Plot – Climax

* the point in the story were the main character’s conflict that was introduced in the exposition ends
* a single sentence should be able to be identified
* in a short story – usually on the last page or next to last
* in a novel – usually at the end of the next to last chapter or beginning of the last chapter

1. Plot - Falling Action

* actions in the story that follow the climax
* contain no conflict
* tie up loose ends
* usually about three, can be between two and five

1. Plot – Resolution

* the last action in the story
* leaves a “freeze frame” image in the reader’s mind
* the image makes the reader think about the character moving on in life
* should support or at least not distract from the theme

1. Conflict –

* the main character’s problem
* introduced in the exposition
* ends in the climax
* drives the entire plot