Story Structure

Characterization
Character traits are revealed indirectly by:
- how a character looks
- what a character does
- what a character says (and how s/he says it)
- what a character thinks
- what other characters say and think about him/her

Using Conflict:
Conflict, the crash of opposing forces, is a vital part of most plots. Authors often include several conflicts in an interesting story. Five types of conflict are defined below:
- **character vs. character:** a character faces a problem with other characters
- **character vs. self:** a character faces a physical or emotional problem or struggle
- **character vs. society:** a character faces a problem with a group or part of society (government, law tradition, etc.)
- **character vs. nature:** a character faces a problem with some force of nature (cold, storm, wildlife)
- **character vs. fate**: a character faces a problem with a force such as fate, God, or luck

Plot Development:
The plot of a story is usually made up of a number of episodes or separate incidents. These incidents are connected in some way so that the plot flows without any breaks. Most plots can be broken down into a traditional five-part plot structure. These parts are as follows:
- **exposition:** an introduction to the main characters, settings, and rising situations of the plot
- **rising action:** the events and complications that lead to an important and dramatic point in the plot
- **climax**: the point of greatest interest and emotional involvement in the plot
- **falling action:** the events that develop from the climax and lead to the conclusion
- **resolution or denouement**: the final outcome which ties up any loose ends left in the story

Setting:
The location of the story is important and must be developed by the author. One can create a feeling for the setting by using lots of description. If it is well-written, one can imagine the surroundings. Stories can be set in the past, present, future, in big cities, small towns, neighbourhoods, in nature, etc.

Theme:
A theme is a central idea that runs through a story. It can usually be summed up in one key word or phrase. A story can have more than one theme (major/minor). Examples include "love"; "survival"; "jealousy"; "friendship"; etc.

Genre:
Stories are written and then classified into a particular genre such as Horror, Biography; Science Fiction; Human Interest; Adventure; Humour; Fantasy; Mystery; etc.