

Name: _____

The Elements of Science Fiction

1. Speculation.

There's a reason for the "science" in science fiction. That's because every science fiction story contains within it an understanding that there is such a thing as technological and scientific advancement, and that the human race is a part of it.

Why is this important? The speculative question "what if?" is the starting point for all science fiction. Science fiction asks readers to consider a world where technology has changed and asks the readers to consider how these changes impact humans.

2. Dissociation.

Dissociation is the state of being disconnected. Every science fiction story has some element that is profoundly alien to the reality of its intended audience. Sometimes it's a technological element (spaceships, time travel, sentient cell phones) and sometimes it's a fantastical element (aliens, the force, cursed cell phones).

The point is: there's something *other* in the story, something that is purposefully and fundamentally *different* from the audience's accepted reality.

Note that there isn't necessarily a dissociation with the *characters* in a science fiction story. The characters of "Harrison Bergeron" have no problem accepting the reality of handicaps, Corinne from "Lenses" was perfectly at home in outer space and Leonard Mead is the odd one out, not the zombies hypnotized by their televisions. But these worlds are profoundly different from what you and I, the readers, experience.

Speculation

If science fiction stories ask "what if...?" then what are the "what if...?" speculations made by the stories that we've read so far in class?

1. For the story "Lenses" complete a "what if...?" statement.

What if...

2. Write a theme statement for this story.

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3. For the story "Harrison Bergeron" complete a "what if...?" statement.

What if...

4. Write a theme statement for this story.

5. For the story "The Pedestrian" complete a "what if...?" statement.

What if...

6. Write a theme statement for this story.

Dissociation

7. What elements of "Lenses" make this science fiction story profoundly different from the world of the audience?

8. What elements of "Harrison Bergeron" makes this science fiction story profoundly different from the world of the audience?

9. What elements of "The Pedestrian" makes this science fiction story profoundly different from the world of the audience?

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Ripped from the Headlines

The news article you've selected about technology is the seed from which your narrative will grow. Complete the following questions to help.

1. Summarize your article.

2. Explain why you think your article is a good choice for you to use to create a narrative.

3. Speculate about the future using your article. Write 3 different "what if..." questions that could spark a possible science fiction story. Next, write three **theme statements** for a possible science fiction narrative using the "what if..." questions that you wrote above.

- a. What if...

Theme Statement

- b. What if...

Theme Statement

- c. What if...

Theme Statement

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4. Share your “what if...” questions with three classmates. They need to select the “what if...” question and a theme statement that they prefer and write a sentence explaining why they think it will make a good science fiction story. They also need to provide feedback about how your speculative question or your theme statement could be improved.

Classmate 1

Name _____ Which one did you prefer? _____

Why do you think it will make a good science fiction story?

How can it be improved?

Classmate 2

Name _____ Which one did you prefer? _____

Why do you think it will make a good science fiction story?

How can it be improved?

Classmate 3

Name _____ Which one did you prefer? _____

Why do you think it will make a good science fiction story?

How can it be improved?

5. Based on the feedback of your classmates and your own opinion, rewrite your speculative question and your theme statement.

Planning Your Science Fiction Narrative

Good writers often plan out their narratives with great care, creating background details that never actually make it into their work. This worksheet will help you to begin planning your narrative. Instead, these planned details become the skeleton that gives the story its shape.

You may complete the worksheet in point form but don't skip on the details. Follow the directions below and show your plan to Mr. R when you're finished.

Setting

In science fiction, the setting is especially important because the world needs to be dissociated from the world of the audience. Plan the world of your story with care and it will make for a more interesting and engaging narrative.

Where	When	Circumstance
Country	Time in history	Politics
City	Time of year/season	Social conventions that differ from those of the audience
Neighborhood	Time of Day	Weather
Building or Location of the action	Over what period of time does your story take place?	

Point of View

You need to decide on the point of view of the narrator. Will you tell the story from the point of view of the protagonist (1st person) or from the outside (3rd person)? If you choose 3rd person, does the narrator know the thoughts and feelings of all the characters (omniscient) or just the protagonist (limited omniscient) or none of the characters (objective)?

Explain your choice below:

Characters

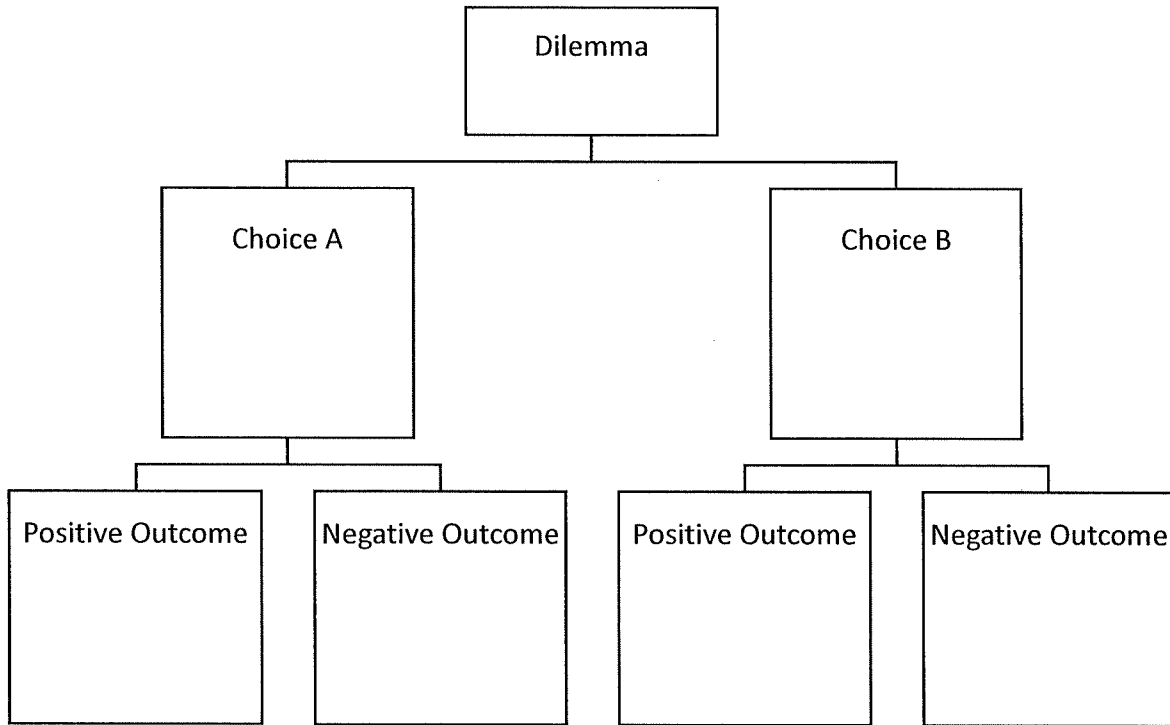
Character development is essential to well written narratives. The more detail you can add, the more the character comes to life for the audience. Consider the following qualities for your protagonist and antagonist (if you choose one) and describe or sketch your characters in the space below.

Characteristics to consider for your protagonist and antagonist: NAME, AGE, GENDER, SEX, SEXUALITY, APPEARANCE, HEIGHT, WEIGHT, HAIR COLOUR, ATTRACTIVENESS, CLOTHING, LIKES AND DISLIKES, HOBBIES, PROFESSION

Conflict

For this narrative, your conflict needs to be an internal dilemma for the protagonist. They need a decision to make where the potential outcomes are both problematic.

Use the diagram below to map out the dilemma your character will face and the potential outcomes of their decision.



Theme

Remember: A theme is a universal truth that the story reveals about how humans behave in the world of the reader.

You've already started to work on your theme. Use the theme from your "Ripped from the Headlines" worksheet. Make revisions if you need to.

Theme:

Developing Mood

Mood (sometimes called *atmosphere*) is the feeling that a piece of literature gives its readers. *Diction* is an important part of *mood*. *Diction* is word choice and careful word selection can change the way that readers feel while they read a story. Carefully selecting the correct words, means that a writer can control the mood of the story and the feelings of the audience.

Good writers often use *setting* to develop the mood of a narrative. By describing the *setting* with the right *diction*, writers develop *mood* and manipulate the feelings of the audience.

Instructions: Find descriptions of the setting from each of the stories that we've read: "Harrison Bergeron", "Lenses" and "The Pedestrian".

Example from the Story	Mood: What feeling does the writer invoke through the setting?	Diction: What words from this selection shape the mood?
Harrison Bergeron		
Lenses		
The Pedestrian		

Borrowing from the work of the writers that we've studied, write a description of the setting in your story that evokes a particular mood.

Mood: _____

Description

Diction: What words did you use to create your intended mood?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

tone = speaker's attitude

POSITIVE TONE WORDS

admiring	hilarious
adoring	hopeful
affectionate	humorous
appreciative	interested
approving	introspective
bemused	jovial
benevolent	joyful
blithe	laudatory
calm	light
casual	lively
celebratory	mirthful
cheerful	modest
comforting	nostalgic
comic	optimistic
compassionate	passionate
complimentary	placid
conciliatory	playful
confident	poignant
contented	proud
delightful	reassuring
earnest	reflective
ebullient	relaxed
ecstatic	respectful
effusive	reverent
elated	romantic
empathetic	sanguine
encouraging	scholarly
euphoric	self-assured
excited	sentimental
exhilarated	serene
expectant	silly
facetious	sprightly
fervent	straightforward
flippant	sympathetic
forthright	tender
friendly	tranquil
funny	whimsical
gleeful	wistful
gushy	worshipful
happy	zealous

NEUTRAL (+, -, or neutral)

commanding
direct
impartial
indirect
meditative
objective
questioning
speculative
unambiguous
unconcerned
understated

NEGATIVE TONE WORDS

abhorring	hostile
acerbic	impatient
ambiguous	incredulous
ambivalent	indifferent
angry	indignant
annoyed	inflammatory
antagonistic	insecure
anxious	insolent
apathetic	irreverent
apprehensive	lethargic
belligerent	melancholy
bewildered	mischievous
biting	miserable
bitter	mocking
blunt	mournful
bossy	nervous
cold	ominous
conceited	outraged
condescending	paranoid
confused	pathetic
contemptuous	patronizing
curt	pedantic
cynical	pensive
demanding	pessimistic
depressed	pretentious
derisive	psychotic
derogatory	resigned
desolate	reticent
despairing	sarcastic
desperate	sardonic
detached	scornful
diabolic	self-deprecating
disappointed	selfish
disliking	serious
disrespectful	severe
doubtful	sinister
embarrassed	skeptical
enraged	sly
evasive	solemn
fatalistic	somber
fearful	stern
forceful	stolid
foreboding	stressful
frantic	strident
frightened	suspicious
frustrated	tense
furious	threatening
gloomy	tragic
grave	uncertain
greedy	uneasy
grim	unfriendly
harsh	unsympathetic
haughty	upset
holier-than-thou	violent
hopeless	wry

mood = emotional effect that the text creates for the audience

POSITIVE MOOD WORDS

amused	jubilant
awed	liberating
bouncy	light-hearted
calm	loving
cheerful	mellow
chipper	nostalgic
confident	optimistic
contemplative	passionate
content	peaceful
determined	playful
dignified	pleased
dreamy	refreshed
ecstatic	rejuvenated
empowered	relaxed
energetic	relieved
enlightened	satiated
enthralled	satisfied
excited	sentimental
exhilarated	silly
flirty	surprised
giddy	sympathetic
grateful	thankful
harmonious	thoughtful
hopeful	touched
hyper	trustful
idyllic	vivacious
joyous	warm
	welcoming

NEGATIVE MOOD WORDS

aggravated	insidious
annoyed	intimidated
anxious	irate
apathetic	irritated
apprehensive	jealous
barren	lethargic
brooding	lonely
cold	melancholic
confining	merciless
confused	moody
cranky	morose
crushed	nauseated
cynical	nervous
depressed	nightmarish
desolate	numb
disappointed	overwhelmed
discontented	painful
distressed	pensive
drained	pessimistic
dreary	predatory
embarrassed	rejected
enraged	restless
envious	scared
exhausted	serious
fatalistic	sick
foreboding	somber
frustrated	stressed
futile	suspenseful
gloomy	tense
grumpy	terrifying
haunting	threatening
heartbroken	uncomfortable
hopeless	vengeful
hostile	violent
indifferent	worried
infuriated	

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Indirect Characterization

Use the three stories that we've read so far to complete the chart: "Harrison Bergeron", "Lenses" and "The Pedestrian".

You must include an example from each story.

	Quotation from the Story	What the quotation shows about the character	How you might borrow and apply this method of indirect characterization for your own narrative.
Speech: What does the character say? How does the character speak?			
Thoughts: What is revealed through the character's thoughts and feelings?			
Effect on Other Characters: How do other characters feel or behave in reaction to the character?			
Actions: What does the character do? How does the character behave?			
Looks: What does the character look like? How does the character dress?			

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Science Fiction Short Story Peer Editing Checklist

Before handing in the good copy of your short story on Friday, you need to get a classmate to edit your work. In order to help you with your editing, your partner will complete this checklist.

Make sure that your partner carefully reads your story before starting the checklist!!

Your story must include all of the features on this checklist. If your partner finds something that's missing, you need to add it to your good copy before handing it in on Friday.

Checklist

Who is editing your story? _____

Title of your Story: _____

The Elements of Science Fiction

Speculation

- Does this story ask a 'what if...' question? In your own words, write down the 'what if...' question that this story asks:

Dissociation

- Does this story create a world that is somehow different from our own? What are the differences between the world of the story the world of the audience?

Plot and Structure

- Does this story include all of the moves outlined in the structure introduced in class? If there is anything missing, list it below:

Name: _____

Conflict

- Does the protagonist have an internal conflict that they are facing? What is the *dilemma* that the protagonist faces?

Characterization

- Does this story use *indirect characterization*? Highlight two examples. What is the personality trait of the protagonist that this *indirect characterization* shows?

Example 1:

Trait this example shows? _____

Example 2:

Trait this example shows? _____

Mood

- What is the *mood* that this story creates? What are some of the *diction* choices that the author made to achieve this *mood*?

Mood: _____

Diction Choices:

Name: _____

Short Story Reading Assignment and Rubric

YOU'VE WORKED HARD ON YOUR SHORT STORY AND IT'S TIME TO SHARE SOME OF THAT HARD WORK.

On *Friday, November 3*, you'll be reading a portion of your story for the class. **You do not need to read the whole story.** Instead, the selection that you choose should make the class want to read the rest of your story. Think of this as a sales pitch or a movie preview. When deciding on your section, pick your best work. You should also choose a selection that can stand alone without any context.

Once you've picked the best part of your story, you need to prepare to read it to the class. This takes practice. Your reading should breathe life into your narrative. Read with confidence and passion. Make the reading as engaging as you can with your voice and your body language.

	6-5	4-3	2-1
Selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reading is the strongest selection from the story and highlights the strengths of the author and narrative.• Selection begins and ends at an ideal point in the story so that the reading is engaging and clear without context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reading is a strong selection from the story but doesn't highlight the strengths of the author or the narrative.• Selection begins and ends at a reasonable point in the story but is unclear or less engaging without context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reading is not the strongest selection from the story and doesn't highlight the strengths of the author or narrative.• Selection starts or ends at an odd point and does not stand alone without context.
Voice and Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Voice and body language are expressive, confident and appropriate to the content of the story.• Neither voice nor body language distract from the content of the reading.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reader attempts to have a voice that is expressive, confident and appropriate to the content of the story.• Voice or body language may distract from the content of the reading.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Voice and body language are not expressive, confident or appropriate to the content of the story.• Voice and body language distract from the content of the reading.

Which part of your story do you plan to read for the class? Why did you select this part of the story?
