

# Comparing Literary Genres

Rather than analyzing stories, poems, and dramas in separate lessons, introduce a new facet each day and compare its application within all three genres.

	SHORT STORY	POEM	DRAMA   PLAY
Purpose & Physical Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written to entertain/engage the reader.</li> <li>• Told by one author.</li> <li>• Presented in written form.</li> <li>• Usually read silently/individually.</li> <li>• Written in complete sentences and paragraphs.</li> <li>• May include chapters.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written to entertain/engage the reader.</li> <li>• Told by one author.</li> <li>• Presented in written form.</li> <li>• Meant to be read aloud.</li> <li>• Words and phrases strung together in short lines and grouped into stanzas.</li> <li>• Broken into stanzas.</li> <li>• Presented in various shapes and forms.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written/Presented to entertain/engage the reader.</li> <li>• Told by many people (i.e., actors).</li> <li>• Dialogue presented in a written script.</li> <li>• Performed on a stage before a live audience.</li> <li>• Broken into acts and scenes.</li> </ul>
Content, Ingredients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meant to be read in one sitting (versus a longer novel).</li> <li>• Always fiction.</li> <li>• Always tells a story with characters, plot, setting, and theme.</li> <li>• Typically includes description and figurative language.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meant to be read in one sitting (exception: epic poem).</li> <li>• May be fiction or nonfiction.</li> <li>• May tell a story (e.g., narrative poem) but doesn't have to.</li> <li>• Often on a single topic or focus.</li> <li>• Conveys a theme or message through emotion and observation.</li> <li>• Utilizes imagery, description, and figurative language.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meant to be viewed in one sitting.</li> <li>• May be fiction or nonfiction.</li> <li>• Always tells a story with characters, plot, setting, and theme.</li> <li>• Includes a cast of characters and their roles.</li> <li>• Includes stage directions/instructions to the actors (e.g., stage position, body posture, personal reactions).</li> <li>• Includes directions for costuming, props, and scenery.</li> </ul>
Uniquenesses, Perks, Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The author can ensure the reader knows all essential information by including it in the narration (e.g., adds interpretation to character dialogue, clarifies the effect of events on the characters, describes settings and moods in depth, etc.).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Author can skip over details to focus on other facets; he is not married to the linear story structure.</li> <li>• The author creates the effect of sound with rhythm, beat, rhyme, meter, word patterns, onomatopoeia, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The reader experiences the setting with actual sound, music, volume, inflection, lighting, movement, etc.</li> <li>• The reader/viewer sees multiple characters, setting, and plot lines simultaneously.</li> </ul>
Limitations, Cautions, Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The reader can only see one facet of the story at a time— whichever one the author is describing at that time.</li> <li>• The quality of author craft determines the reader's experience.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The author is challenged to say a lot in a few words using efficient language.</li> <li>• The author's ability to convey complex messages and abstract ideas in creative and imaginative ways determines the reader's experience.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The reader relies on the actors to convey the story; the strength of the scripted dialogue and the abilities of the actors determines the reader's experience.</li> </ul>