

Literary Forms

Fiction includes types of literature that the author makes up from his/her imagination. Fictional literature is usually written to entertain the reader. Within the category of fiction, there are many different literary forms. Here are some of them:

Type of Fiction	Characteristics
Novel	A long narrative that has a plot, characters, and setting. Often has subplots and chapters
Short story	A short narrative that has one main plot
Fairy tale	A story that contains magical creatures and is often written for children
Myth	A traditional narrative that often teaches how things came to be. May involve supernatural beings
Fable	A story that teaches a lesson. Often, the characters in these stories are animals.
Tall tale	Humorous story that exaggerates the deeds of a hero
Realistic fiction	Narrative in which ordinary characters that do ordinary, everyday things. Makes the reader feel like the story could be something that might have happened
Historical fiction	A made-up narrative that takes place in a real historical setting
Science fiction	Story based on the impact of science or technology. Often set in the future or on other planets
Fantasy	A narrative that takes place in another world with its own rules of nature. Includes imaginative creatures and characters with supernatural powers
Mystery	A narrative based on solving a crime or puzzle

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Nonfiction includes types of literature that are true and contain facts that can be proven. Nonfiction can be written for many purposes: to inform, to persuade, and/or to entertain.

Type of Nonfiction	Characteristics
Biography	Narrative about the true events of a real person's life
Autobiography/memoir	First-person narrative that one writes about the true events of his/her own life
Narrative nonfiction	Factual information that is told as a story
Article	Text designed to give factual information to the reader
Textbook	Text designed to teach facts about a subject to a student
Editorials/Opinion pieces	Newspaper articles that present an opinion and back it up with facts in order to persuade the reader

Two more literary forms you might encounter are **poetry** and **drama**.

Other Literary Forms	Characteristics
Poetry	Writing in verse that uses imagery to express an idea or emotion. Often contains rhythmic lines, stanzas, and rhymes
Drama	A play. Writing that is designed to be performed on stage by actors, who convey the plot through dialogue