

Short Story Writing

Overview & Unit Goal

You will write an original short story that demonstrates our understanding of short-story craft. By the end of this unit, you will be able to analyze and apply story elements to create meaning in your own writing.

The Assignment

You will write an engaging short story (500–1,000 words) that uses the story elements we have studied. Your story should show purposeful choices in character, setting, plot, conflict, and theme while developing a strong storyline.

Pre-Writing Tasks

- ☐ Complete a Plot Diagram
- ☐ Setting Organizer (optional)
- ☐ Character Organizer (optional)

Writing

- ☐ Length of story: 500–1,000 words
- ☐ Font size: 11 or 12
- ☐ Line spacing: 1.15 or 1.5
- ☐ Font style: your choice!
- ☐ Spelling & Grammar check

Post-Writing Tasks

- ☐ Have a classmate read your story and complete a Peer Evaluation Form
- ☐ Make edits/revisions based on the feedback you receive
- ☐ Final Spelling & Grammar check
- ☐ Ensure your final story is “Ready to Publish”

Quick Writing Tips

- Start in the middle of something (action or thought) to hook readers
- *Show, don't tell* — use small, concrete actions and sensory details
- Let conflict reveal character through choices and consequences
- Keep point of view consistent and purposeful
- Read your story aloud to check pacing and flow
- Edit last for grammar and spelling — clarity matters

Success Criteria

Ideas & Content

- Clear, focused theme or conflict that drives the story
- Relevant, specific details that make scenes believable

Organization

- A strong narrative arc
- A memorable lead (hook) and a purposeful or suspenseful ending

Style & Voice

- Indirect characterization (actions, speech, thoughts, appearance, others' reactions)
- Image-rich sensory details and varied sentence structure

Conventions

- Clear, varied sentences with correct grammar and spelling
- Consistent and purposeful point of view

Task & Audience

- Engages the intended reader and fits the word-limit and submission requirements