

# Novel

A novel is a long fictional prose text. It often has a large number of characters, different settings and a complex plot.

*(Password to Skyline, Klett)*

A novel is a long and complex fictional narrative, written in prose.

The text form novel is one possible realization of the text type narration. Narrative texts, or simply narratives, tell a story. They relate actions and events in some kind of time order or temporal order. The simplest kind of temporal order is used when actions and events are told in the order in which they occur or occurred. This is known as chronological order. The temporal order of a text is established by the use of tenses, adverbials and adverbial clauses of time. .. tenses and other time markers ... are typical of narration.

The author of a narrative text must decide on a story-teller, or narrator, through whose eyes the material is to be presented. We call this perspective the point of view of the narration.

If the narrator is a character in the narrative, he will usually tell the story in the first person (= "first person narrative"). His perspective can only be limited.

The narrator may, on the other hand, not himself be a character in the story, in which case he will tell the story in the third person (= "third person narrative"). If he knows everything about the characters and the development of the action, his point of view is unlimited. Such a narrator is "all-knowing" or omniscient.

*(Eleven Plus, CVK)*

A novel is a major literary form of prose. It is a prose narrative about fictitious persons and a number of fictitious events. It is a prose narrative of considerable length. It is a work of fiction.

A novel is written by an author / a writer / a novelist.

A novelist uses narrative techniques.

A novel has passages of summary presentation (*raffende Darstellung*) or of scenic presentation (with emphasis on dialogue), or it has descriptive passages.

It has episodes, themes, motifs, levels of action. It has a setting / locale.

The setting may be historical or contemporary, realistic or fantastic.

The atmosphere of a novel is created by description, dialogue, and style.

The language of a novel creates an atmosphere, a tone.

A novel is composed of several chapters / parts.

Chief elements of the novel are character, plot, setting, language.

It is told from a particular point of view.

A novelist creates characters. He often presents them in dialogue.

A character is (or is not) the centre of a novel. A novel presents / portrays many characters.

The narrator has (or has not) access to a character's inner life.

A character undergoes a succession of adventures or events or incidents.

A chapter introduces a character / new figures. The author sets characters in a background.

A hero / character / figure may develop or remain the same. A novel has round characters or flat characters (types).

*(Auszug aus: Egon Werlich, Wörterbuch der Textinterpretation, Englisch. Lensing)*

## A Chapter in a Novel

When you analyse a single chapter in a novel and present your findings to the class, please consider the following points:

- | setting
  - where is this chapter set? more than one locale?
  - time? how much time has passed since the chapter before?
- | characters
  - which characters turn up here?
  - is a new figure introduced?
  - does a character re-enter that you have not read about for a while?
- | formal aspects of presentation
  - is there a lot of action? of dialogue? of reflection? of description?
- | evaluation of its importance
  - is there a crisis? a climax? a turning point? a key scene? an unexpected event? a new aspect?
  - is it about a key theme?
  - (to find this out ask yourself what the novel would be like if this chapter were missing: would you still understand the text as a whole? would you miss essential points?)
- | evaluation of style
  - is it easy to read? difficult to understand? are there many hard words?
- | contents
  - what is the theme of this chapter? what is it about?
  - sum up its contents in no more than six or seven sentences