**PLOT**

Terms to know:

1. Protagonist – leading character of a story; sometimes called the “hero”
2. Antagonist - a person who is opposed to, struggles against,  or competes with another;  opponent; adversary.
3. Internal conflict – psychological  struggle  within  the  mind  of  a  literary  or  dramatic character,  the resolution of [which](http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/which) creates the plot's suspense
4. External conflict – struggle  between a literary or dramatic character  and an outside force  such  as nature or another character, which drives thedramatic action of the plot

Probably the **most revealing question** to ask about a work of literature is **what conflict does it highlight**?

Use the following questions to conduct an analysis of plot. **You must answer ALL of these questions before beginning the analysis questions below:**

* What is the main conflict? What are the minor conflicts?
* How are all the conflicts related?
* What causes the conflicts?
* Which conflicts are external and which internal?
* Who is the protagonist?
* What qualities or values does the author associate with each side of the conflict?
* At what point does the climax occur? Why?
* How is the main conflict resolved? Which conflicts go unresolved?

Strategies to perform plot analysis to answer “revealing” questions:

1. List the qualities of the **protagonist and antagonist(s)**. How and why do these qualities cause conflicts among the characters?
2. Fold a piece of paper in half vertically, and then list **external** conflicts of the work on the left side. On the right side, list **internal** conflicts. Draw a line to connect the external and internal conflicts that seem related. In **what ways are they related**? (i.e., does one cause another?)
3. Using your T-Chart from #2, list the ways in which the conflict has been resolved, if it has. Mark the conflicts that are left unresolved.
4. List the major **structural units** of the work (chapters, scenes, parts). Summarize what happens in each part. What relationship do the actions or conflicts have to the structure?
5. Are certain episodes narrated **out of chronological order**? What is the effect of the arrangements of “episodes”?
6. Are certain **situations repeated**? Is so, what do you make of the repetitions?