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Yr 11 English Advanced

# Module B

Book 3: Different Types of Narratives

PROFECTUS

# Different Types of Stories

## Story Archetypes

Archetypes are universal characters and plots that are recurring; across different contexts and cultures. There are two types of archetypes that are present in narratives; character archetypes and story archetypes.

- Character archetypes are primordial characters who possess certain traits and undergo journeys that become templates of the kinds of people that drive the plot of stories. The most prominent and common archetype is The Hero. The Hero is usually a common everyday character who goes on an adventure that forces him/her to confront their darkest fear. They come out victorious at the end, simultaneously transforming themselves and learning valuable lessons. Other character archetypes include The Evil Stepmother, The Outlaw, The sage, The villain and the Innocent. What are some narratives with character archetypes? Can you think of any other character archetypes?
- Story archetypes are universal plots that follow a certain structure and sequence of events. The story archetypes are Overcoming the monster, Rags to Riches, The Quest, Tragedy and Voyage and Return

### **Overcoming the Monster**

Overcoming the Monster stories involve a hero who must destroy a monster (or villain) that is threatening the community. Usually the decisive fight occurs in the monster's lair, and usually the hero has some magic weapon at his disposal. Sometimes the monster is guarding a treasure or holding a Princess captive, which the hero escapes with in the end.

*Examples: Dracula, Avatar and Jack and the Beanstalk*

### **Rags to Riches**

This plot involves a hero who seems quite commonplace, poor, downtrodden, and miserable but has the potential for greatness. The story shows how he manages to fulfill his potential and become someone of wealth, importance, success and happiness.

*Examples: King Arthur, Cinderella, Aladdin.*

### **Tragedy**

Tragedy, along with Comedy, is usually defined by its ending, which makes these two unlike the other basic plots. A tragedy is a story in which the Story Goal is not achieved (outcome=failure) and the hero does not resolve his inner conflict happily (judgement=bad)

### **The Quest**



In a quest archetype, the main character must reach a certain location, attain a certain object, or fulfill a certain objective while conquering many obstacles along the way.

### **Voyage and Return**

The protagonist ventures forth into the unknown, and at first, the world of the unknown is fascinating and exciting. The protagonist faces challenges, but is able to overcome them.

Read the following narrative.

A new fighter (Ivan Drago) comes to the USA, bent on showing up all American fighters, thus proving himself and his country as the strongest. He kills Apollo Creed in the ring, and Rocky vows to avenge his friend's death. Rocky travels to the USSR to train for his boxing match. He starts to conduct intense workouts throughout the weeks. His preparations improve when his wife shows up, and her support makes him believe in himself. The boxing match begins. The crowd is hostile. Rocky is giving it all he has, and he's not making any headway. In fact, he's stunned to discover what little impact his efforts have on his opponent. He's taking a beating unlike any other before. Rocky has been knocked down and thrown around the ring. Nothing he tries has any effect. It looks as though he will suffer the same tragic fate as Apollo. Rocky lands a blow on Drago that causes him to bleed. There's not a person in the arena—including the two boxers, their staff, and the announcers—who isn't surprised by the turn of events. This minor victory spurs Rocky's determination. He continues to battle for ten more rounds, during which even the crowd begins to cheer for him. The combination of his determination, strength, and heart enable him to win by knocking out his opponent (even the government officials applaud Rocky). Drago is not only physically defeated in the ring, his spirit is, as well. He doesn't box in the US again. Meanwhile, Rocky's battle gives him a platform to make a political speech. He returns home a hero.

What story archetype does this narrative follow? Explain your answer using evidence from the extract.

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Metanarratives are also known as 'grand narratives' and are considered to be worldviews/lenses through which people perceive the world around them. Examples of metanarratives include Marxism, Freudianism and Free Market Capitalism. Religion is also considered a metanarrative e.g. Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and Christianity.

## **Macro-narratives**

Macro Narratives are stories that depict universal experiences, values and attitudes that are relevant to members of a particular religious, cultural or social group. They contain situations that are timeless across contexts and represent experiences that a large group of people can relate to. For Example, **Bend It Like Beckham** is a sports comedy film that represents the cultural roles and traditions of India. The film's emphasis on an Indian girl confronting the rules and challenging cultural stereotypes is an example of an experience that most people can relate to on a daily basis. As such, it is a macro narrative. Macro Narratives can be broken down into cultural stories, national stories, ethnicity stories and religious stories. What are some examples of macro narratives that you can think of?

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Why do you think macro narratives are important? What is the role of macro narratives in our everyday lives?

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## **FEMINISM**

Feminism is a range of socio-political movements and ideologies that aim to define and establish the political, economic, personal, and social equality of the sexes. Feminism incorporates the position that societies prioritize the male point of view, and that women are treated unjustly within those societies. Emma Watson's speech aims to address issues of gender inequality and persuade audiences to remove the barriers which encourage gender discrimination.

### **Emmat Watson's 'He for She' speech**

*I started questioning gender-based assumptions a long time ago. When I was 8, I was confused for being called bossy because I wanted to direct the plays that we would put on for our parents, but the boys were not. When at 14, I started to be sexualized by certain elements of the media. When at 15, my girlfriends started dropping out of sports teams because they didn't want to appear muscly. When at 18, my male friends were unable to express their feelings.*

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*Men, I would like to take this opportunity to extend your formal invitation. Gender equality is your issue, too. Because to date, I've seen my father's role as a parent being valued less by society, despite my need for his presence as a child, as much as my mother's. I've seen young men suffering from mental illness, unable to ask for help for fear it would make them less of a man. In fact, in the UK, suicide is the biggest killer of men between 20 to 49, eclipsing road accidents, cancer and coronary heart disease. I've seen men made fragile and insecure by a distorted sense of what constitutes male success. Men don't have the benefits of equality, either. We don't often talk about men being imprisoned by gender stereotypes, but I can see that they are, and that when they are free, things will change for women as a natural consequence. If men don't have to be aggressive in order to be accepted, women won't feel compelled to be submissive. If men don't have to control, women won't have to be controlled*

How does Emma Watson's employment of anecdotes enhance the meaning of her speech?

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Identify the persuasive techniques that Emma Watson uses in her speech and analyze the effect of these techniques.

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## Micro narratives

Micro Narratives are stories that reflect an author's highly personalized experience. They draw on a niche sequence of events and are stories of the self. For example, a person's recount of how they spend their afternoons is an experience that is unique to them and as such can be categorized as a micro narrative.

Read the following diary entries from The Diary of Anne Frank

**July 8th 1942:** *"At three o'clock (Hello had left but was supposed to come back later), the doorbell rang. I didn't hear it, since I was out on the balcony, lazily reading in the sun. A little while later Margot appeared in the kitchen doorway looking very agitated. "Father has received a call-up notice from the SS," she whispered. "Mother has gone to see Mr. van Daan" (Mr. van Daan is Father's business partner and a good friend.) I was stunned. A call-up: everyone knows what that means. Visions of concentration camps and lonely cells raced through my head. How could we let Father go to such a fate? "Of course he's not going," declared Margot as we waited for Mother in the living room. "Mother's gone to Mr. van Daan to ask whether we can move to our hiding place tomorrow. The van Daans are going with us. There will be seven of us altogether." Silence. We couldn't speak. The thought of Father off visiting someone in the Jewish Hospital and completely unaware of what was happening, the long wait for Mother, the heat, the suspense - all this reduced us to silence."*

**October 9th 1942:** *"Today I have nothing but dismal and depressing news to report. Our many Jewish friends and acquaintances are being taken away in droves. The Gestapo is treating them very roughly and transporting them in cattle cars to Westerbork, the big camp in Drenthe to which they're sending all the Jews. Miep told us about someone who'd managed to escape from there. It must be terrible in Westerbork. The people get almost nothing to eat, much less to drink, as water is available only one hour a day, and there's only one toilet and sink for several thousand people. Men and women sleep in the same room, and women and children often have their heads shaved. Escape is almost impossible; many people look Jewish, and they're branded by their shorn heads. If it's that bad in Holland, what must it be like in those faraway and uncivilised places where the Germans are sending them? We assume that most of them are being murdered. The English radio says they're being gassed. Perhaps that's the quickest way to die. I feel terrible. Miep's accounts of these horrors are so heartrending... Fine specimens of humanity, those Germans, and to think I'm actually one of them! No, that's not true, Hitler took away our nationality long ago. And besides, there are no greater enemies on earth than the Germans and Jews."*

**How does the extract establish a micro narrative? What are the experiences revealed in this extract?**





## Speculative Narratives

Speculative stories take place in reimagined worlds that exist beyond the realm of our existing world. Writers create these narratives to comment upon and reflect on our own contexts; demonstrate the possibilities of human experiences; challenge existing social structure and traditions. Speculative stories may take place in fantasy worlds or magic worlds that have wizards, unicorns, vampires etc. Margaret Atwood defines speculative fiction as literature that deals with possibilities in a society which have not yet been enacted but are latent. Changes what we know to be true and reality and then looks at the outcome.

### **Sub-genres of Speculative Fiction**

Most speculative fiction novels fall under at least one of the following genres. Some may fall into multiple genres depending on the story structure:

- Science fiction: stories with imagined technologies that don't exist in the real world, like time travel, aliens, and robots.
- Sci-fi fantasy fiction: sci-fi stories inspired by mythology, folklore, and fairy tales that combine imagined technologies with elements of magical realism.
- Supernatural fiction: sci-fi stories about secret knowledge or hidden abilities including witchcraft, spiritualism, and psychic abilities.
- Space opera fiction: a play on the term "soap opera," sci-fi stories that take place in outer space and center around conflict, romance, and adventure.
- Urban fantasy fiction: fantasy stories that take place in an urban setting in the real world but operate under magical rules.
- Utopian fiction: stories about civilizations the authors deem to be perfect, ideal societies.
- Dystopian fiction: stories about societies deemed problematic within the world of the novel, often satirizing government rules, poverty, and oppression. Examples of dystopian fiction include the Maze Runner, Divergent and The Hunger Games.
- Apocalyptic fiction: stories that take place before and during a huge disaster that wipes out a significant portion of the world's population. The stories center around characters doing everything they can to stay



alive—for example, running from zombies or trying to avoid a deadly plague.

- Post-apocalyptic fiction: stories that take place after an apocalyptic event and focus on the survivors figuring out how to navigate their new circumstances—for example, emerging after a global nuclear holocaust or surviving a total breakdown of society.
- Alternate history fiction: stories that focus on true historical events but are written as if they unfolded with different outcomes.
- Superhero fiction: stories about superheroes and how they use their abilities to fight supervillains.

Read the following excerpt from The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe

“But you are – forgive me – you are what they call a girl?” said the Faun.

“Of course I’m a girl,” said Lucy.

“You are in fact Human?”

“Of course I’m human,” said Lucy, still a little puzzled.

“To be sure, to be sure,” said the Faun. “How stupid of me! But I’ve never seen a Son of Adam or a Daughter of Eve before. I am delighted. That is to say -” and then it stopped as if it had been going to say something it had not intended but had remembered in time. “Delighted, delighted,” it went on. “Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Tumnus.”

“I am very pleased to meet you, Mr Tumnus,” said Lucy.

“And may I ask, O Lucy Daughter of Eve,” said Mr Tumnus, “how you have come into Narnia?”

“Narnia? What’s that?” said Lucy.

“This is the land of Narnia,” said the Faun

He told about the midnight dances and how the Nymphs who lived in the wells and the Dryads who lived in the trees came out to dance with the Fauns; about long hunting parties after the milk-white stag who could give you wishes if you caught him; about feasting and treasure-seeking with the wild Red Dwarfs in deep mines and caverns far beneath the forest floor; and then about summer when the woods were green and old Silenus on his fat donkey would come to visit them, and sometimes Bacchus himself, and then the streams would run

with wine instead of water and the whole forest would give itself up to jollification for weeks on end.

What makes the above narrative a speculative one? Use evidence from the excerpt to justify your answer.

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What effect do speculative stories like these have on readers? Why do you think speculative stories are important and what benefits do they have over stories that center around the real world?

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Create your own short speculative narrative that has a dystopian setting.

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