

Literature - Introduction to Fiction and Non-fiction

Fiction is content, primarily a narrative, that is made from imagination, in addition to, or rather than from, history or fact. According to Merriam-Webster.com, fiction is “something invented by the imagination or feigned, specifically an invented story; the action of feigning or of creating with the imagination. Writers sometimes use fictional creatures such as dragons and fairies. The term most commonly refers to the major narrative forms of literature, including the novel, novella, short story, and narrative poem or song, though fiction may also describe the works of other narrative presentational forms, such as comics, live performances (for example, theatre, opera, and ballet), electronic recordings (for example, many works of film, television, radio, and Internet), and games (for example, many video games and role-playing games). Works of fiction are primarily invented or imaginary. Short stories, novels and novellas of various subgenres – romance, science fiction, historical fiction, mystery – are considered fiction. Fiction usually contains elements of a story: plot, characters, settings and themes. Many works of fiction have facts in them; for example, historical fiction uses information about a particular time to create a meaningful and realistic setting for an invented story. Fiction is “literary” if it has a reputation of merit, usually due to superb style or characterization. Fiction constitutes an act of creative invention, so that faithfulness to reality is not typically expected; in other words, fiction is not assumed to present only characters who are actual people or descriptions that are factually true.

Subsets of genres, known as common genres, have developed from the archetypes of genres in written expression. The common genres included in recommended Literaturin verse or prose, usually for theatrical performance, where conflicts and emotion are expressed through dialogue and action

- Classic - fiction that has become part of an accepted literary canon, widely taught in schools
- Comic/Graphic Novel - scripted fiction told visually in artist drawn pictures, usually in panels and speech bubbles
- Crime/Detective - fiction about a committed crime, how the criminal gets caught, and the repercussions of the crime
- Fable - narration demonstrating a useful truth, especially in which animals speak as humans; legendary, supernatural tale
- Fairy tale - story about fairies or other magical creatures, usually for children

- Fan-fiction - fiction written by a fan of, and featuring characters from, a particular TV series, movie, etc.
- Fantasy - fiction with strange or otherworldly settings or characters; fiction which invites suspension of reality
- Fiction narrative - literary works whose content is produced by the imagination and is not necessarily based on fact
- Fiction in verse - full-length novels with plot, subplot(s), theme(s), major and minor characters, in which the narrative is presented in verse form (usually free verse)
- Folklore - the songs, stories, myths, and proverbs of a people or “folk” as handed down by word of mouth
- Historical fiction - story with fictional characters and events in a historical setting
- Horror - fiction in which events evoke a feeling of dread and sometimes fear in both the characters and the reader
- Humor - Usually a fiction full of fun, fancy, and excitement, meant to entertain and sometimes cause intended laughter; but can be contained in all genres
- Legend - story, sometimes of a national or folk hero, that has a basis in fact but also includes imaginative material
- Magical Realism magical or unreal elements play a natural part in an otherwise realistic environment
- Metafiction - also known as romantic irony in the context of Romantic works of literature, uses self-reference to draw attention to itself as a work of art, while exposing the “truth” of a story
- Mystery - this is fiction dealing with the solution of a crime or the unraveling of secrets
- Mythology - legend or traditional narrative, often based in part on historical events, that reveals human behavior and natural phenomena by its symbolism; often pertaining to the actions of the gods
- Realistic fiction - story that is true to life
- Science fiction - story based on impact of actual, imagined, or potential science, usually set in the future or on other planets
- Short story - fiction of such brevity that it supports no subplots
- Suspense/Thriller - fiction about harm about to befall a person or group and the attempts made to evade the harm
- Tall tale- humorous story with blatant exaggerations, swaggering heroes who do the impossible with nonchalance

- Western - set in the American Old West frontier and typically set in the late eighteenth to late nineteenth century

Non - Fiction Writings

Nonfiction is a content (often, in the form of a story) whose creator, in good faith, assumes responsibility for the truth or accuracy of the events, people, and/or information presented. A work whose creator dishonestly claims this same responsibility is a fraud; a story whose creator explicitly leaves open if and how the work refers to reality is usually classified as fiction. Merriam-Webster's definition of nonfiction is "literature or cinema that is not fictional." According to Allwords.com, nonfiction is "written works intended to give facts, or true accounts of real things and events." Works of nonfiction are meant to be factual. This means magazine articles, newspaper stories, encyclopedia entries, interviews and textbooks are all nonfiction. Many aisles in bookstores are full of nonfiction – the cooking, art, travel, science, religion, true crime, psychology and decorating sections all contain factual works. While there are no hard-and-fast rules about what makes a piece of nonfiction "literary," a good bet is that a piece of literary nonfiction will have a bit more of a story than, say, a recipe or a paragraph in a textbook. Biographies, autobiographies, essays and memoirs are among genres that may be considered creative or literary nonfiction.

- Biography/Autobiography - Narrative of a person's life. A true story about a real person.
- Essay - A short literary composition that reflects the author's outlook or point.
- Narrative nonfiction - Factual information presented in a format which tells a story.
- Speech - Public address or discourse.
- Textbook - Authoritative and detailed factual description of a topic.
- Reference book - Dictionary, thesaurus, encyclopedia, almanac, atlas, etc.