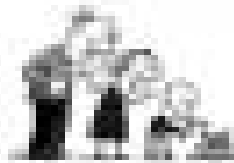


Name: _____
Date: _____

Ms. Melissa Pittman
English Department - Conflict



What is Conflict? What Does it Look Like in Literature?

In literature, **conflict** is the struggle between opposing characters, forces or emotions in which a story's action depends. Conflicts are essential elements of any story because it is what drives a story forward and makes it interesting. Think about it: a story wouldn't be nearly as good and interesting if you had all characters or characters reacting in predictable ways.

There are two main categories of conflict: **external conflict** and **internal conflict**.

External conflict is a character's struggle against some outside force, another character, society or a force of nature.

Three types of external conflict are:

- **Person vs. Person**
Example: A teenage boy argues at night with a boy bulling him.
- **Person vs. Society**
Example: A woman fights with a doctor in a court trial.
- **Person vs. Nature**
Example: A man battles a storm to get his ship through a storm.

Internal conflict occurs when a character struggles with opposing needs, feelings or emotions.

Internal conflict is also known as:

- **Person vs. Self**
Example: A young woman struggles with a decision made by her parents, but she has a different opinion on what she should do.

In many cases, a story's protagonist will face one external conflict which is at the heart of the story, along with several other minor conflicts that come up along the way.