

Name _____

Date _____

English Literature

Definitions and Genres of Literature

Merriam Webster Dictionary defines **literature** as writings in prose or verse *especially* writings having excellence of form or expression and expressing ideas of permanent or universal interest.

Here are the main genres of English Literature.

1. Fiction Prose
2. Non-fiction Prose
3. Poetry
4. Drama

1. **Fiction Prose** – this genre includes imaginative stories that are told in common and natural language. It is further divided into the following categories:

- a. **Myth** – a traditional story that mostly includes supernatural and imaginary plots and characters. A myth may or may not be true. E.g., Aladdin and Forty Thieves
- b. **Parable** – a simple story that has moral and spiritual lessons as told by Jesus in the Gospels.
- c. **Romance** – an exciting and mysterious story having the idea of love.
- d. **Novel** – a long story that is usually written in a narrative style and is the product of the writer's imaginations.
- e. **Short Story** – a story with a fine theme and is similar to the novel but is shorter than a novel. A short story may only have one conflict.

2. **Non -Fiction Prose** – this genre of literature tells about real people, places and events (to name a few). It is further divided into the following categories:

- a. News Reports
- b. Feature Articles
- c. Essays
- d. Editorials
- e. Textbooks
- f. Historical Works
- g. Biographical Works

3. **Poetry** – a genre of English Literature where a poet expresses ideas with the intense use of rhythm, images and style. Poetry is imaginative and it comes from an Ancient Greek word meaning ‘to create’. Poetry also consists of imagery, figurative language and sound. It is divided into two forms:

- a. **Open Form** – known as “free verse” poetry. This form has no rhyme or meter and does not follow any rules. It has a random number of lines and stanzas. E.g. Ghazal
- b. **Closed Form** – is one that follows a set of rules like rhythm and meter (to name a few). It has a specific number of lines and stanzas. E.g. Sonnet.

Some forms of Poetry are:

- a. Sonnet
- b. Ballad
- c. Lyric
- d. Ode
- e. Elegy
- f. Dramatic Monologue

4. **Drama** – a genre of English Literature that is made up of dialogues and a set of directions. Drama is designed to be performed. It includes the actual words of the characters. Drama comes from a Greek word meaning action. Some types of drama are:

- a. **Tragedy** – the characters are involved in desperate circumstances or led overwhelming passions. The movement is always stately, but grows more rapid, as it approaches the climax. The end always results in death or dire misfortune to the principal characters.
- b. **Comedy** – the characters are placed in humorous situations. The movement is light and mirthful. The play ends in general goodwill and happens. E.g. A Mid-Summer Night’s Dream by William Shakespeare

Notes adapted from <https://englishsummary.com/genres-english/>

A. MATCHING: Write the letter from column B that matches the correct definition in column A on the lines below. (1 pt each)

Column A	Column B
_____ 1. A long story written in a narrative form	A. Biographical Work
_____ 2. A type of drama that always ends in death or great misfortune.	B. Closed Form
_____ 3. A genre that tells about real people, places and events.	C. Drama
_____ 4. A story that may only have one conflict	D. Fiction Prose
_____ 5. Also known as free verse poetry	E. Literature
_____ 6. A genre that contains imaginative stories told in common or natural language.	F. Non-Fiction Prose
_____ 7. A type of Non-Fiction prose	G. Novel
_____ 8. A genre of literature involving rhythm, images, and style.	H. Open Form
_____ 9. Writings in prose or verse that express ideas of permanent or universal interest.	I. Poetry
_____ 10. A genre that contains dialogue and directions	J. Short Story
	K. Tragedy

B. SHORT ANSWERS: Read each question or statement. Then Write your answers in sentences on the lines below.

11. List FOUR examples of Non-Fiction Prose (4 points).

12. What is the difference between Fiction Prose and Non-Fiction Prose? (2 points)

13. What is the difference between a novel and a short story? (2 points)

14. A dialogue between two brothers was viewed on a stage in a church. One of the brothers, Cain, decided to kill his brother Able in this stage play. To which genre of literature would you classify this as? Why? (2 points)

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