

STORY ANALYSIS

In every fiction story there is, as you know, one main character, usually called the hero or heroine (in literature called the protagonist). Unless the main character has a problem in life to solve, there is no story. Unless he has to overcome obstacles to solve his problem, there is no story. The hero must also have certain character traits and a certain kind of background to solve his problem.

You usually learn the problem early in the story. Then comes an obstacle, then another; each obstacle is harder than the last one. Finally, the hero's character traits and background come to his aid and he solves his problem by overcoming the biggest obstacle yet.

This is the way a story goes: Hero + problem + obstacles; he puts traits and background to work on problem + obstacle = solution to problem.

SAMPLE ANALYSIS: Hero's problem is to get a new suit for graduation because everyone else will have one. OBSTACLE #1: His father is a drunkard, out of work, and has no money. OBSTACLE #2: The boy can't get part-time work because people won't trust a drunkard's son. Hero's CHARACTER TRAITS are determination and a good personality. Hero's BACKGROUND: He's always tinkered with machines. After he tries to get money from his father (Obstacle #1), Hero persuades a garage owner to give him a job (Obstacle #2) (persuasion = personality). He works late every night despite his tiredness (determination) and earns just enough to buy a suit the very day of graduation. Problem solved!