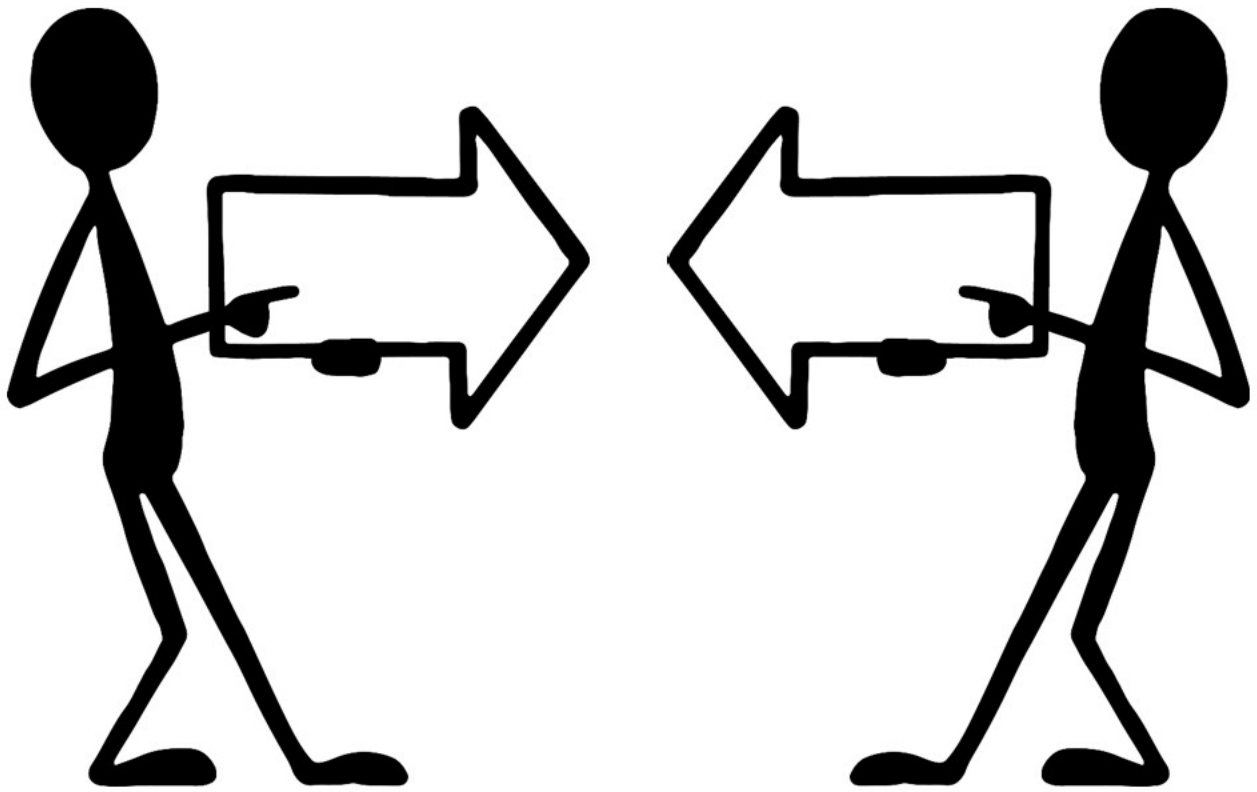


Understanding Conflict



Name _____

Class _____

Have you ever experienced conflict? If you are human, you have! Conflict is any kind of disagreement or clash with someone or something. In real life, conflict can be distressing.

In literature, however, conflict helps make the story more interesting. When characters experience conflict they change, grow, and learn about the world and themselves. Literature *needs* conflict in order for a story to move forward.

Conflict can be **external** or **internal**.

Internal conflict involves something characters experience *inside their minds*. This type of conflict is also referred to as **Character vs. Self**.

External conflict involves experiences *outside of a character*. There are several types.

Types of External Conflict

- ✓ **Character vs. Character** – conflict between two people. For example, classmates that can never get along.
- ✓ **Character vs. Society** – conflict between a person and society. For example, one person fighting for justice or freedom. Often dystopian literature includes this conflict.
- ✓ **Character vs. Technology** – conflict between a character and a machine. Movies like *Wall-E* or *The Matrix* include this type of conflict.
- ✓ **Character vs. Nature** – conflict with the natural world. If you've read *Hatchet*, you're familiar with this conflict.
- ✓ **Character vs. Supernatural** – conflict between a character and a supernatural being. If you've read *Harry Potter* or seen the movie *Thor*, you know this type of conflict.

NOTE: Literature can contain more than one type of conflict.

What does it look like?

Practice Identifying Conflict

Directions: Identify the type of conflict you see in the following scenarios. Explain your answer. An example has been done for you.

Example: Cal wants to play video games with friends but has a big project due tomorrow.

One type of conflict: Internal

How do you know? Cal is struggling to decide what to do. The conflict is within himself. He isn't feeling any external pressure about his decision.

Types of Conflict

Character vs. Self

Character vs. Character

Character vs. Society

Character vs. Technology

Character vs. Nature

Character vs. Supernatural

1. Mo and Sylvia argue every day about who will do the dishes.

One type of conflict: Character vs. Character

How do you know? _____

2. Kiara loves to garden, but the rabbits are eating all her vegetables. She is planning to build a fence to keep them out.

One type of conflict: _____

How do you know? _____

3. Mateo's house is haunted. He has met a cranky ghost in the attic that refuses to leave.

One type of conflict: _____

How do you know? _____

4. No one in town will support Charmaine's proposal to build a skating rink in the center of town.

One type of conflict: _____

How do you know? _____

5. Ziggy purchased a new printer, but cannot figure out how to use it.

One type of conflict: _____

How do you know? _____

Imagine watching a sporting event or movie and not seeing the ending. Why might that be frustrating?

Whether it's not knowing the final score of a game or what happened to the hero, you want to know how it ends. You want a resolution.

The same is true in literature. Conflict is the spark that makes events interesting and exciting, but the conflict needs to be resolved in order for the story to have a conclusion.

Generally, the protagonist (main character) resolves the conflict. How it is resolved depends on the antagonist (opposing character), other characters, the type of conflict, and the plot of the story. As a result of the conflict, protagonist usually grows in understanding.

For example: A superhero (protagonist) is battling (conflict) a mutant ant (antagonist) that is trying to take over the world. (conflict)

What is the conflict: *The superhero is trying to stop the ant (character vs character)*

What is a reasonable resolution: *The superhero convinces the ant to live on a different planet.*

What might the protagonist learn or understand as a result of this:

All creatures want a safe place to live.

Directions: Identify the conflict in the scenarios below. Then, write a reasonable resolution to the conflict.

1. Mo and Sylvia argue every day about who will do the dishes.

What is the conflict: _____

What is a reasonable resolution: _____

What might they learn or understand as a result of this:

2. Kiara loves to garden, but the rabbits are eating all her vegetables.

What is the conflict: _____

What is a reasonable resolution: _____

What might they learn or understand as a result of this:

3. Mateo's house is haunted. He has met a cranky ghost in the attic that refuses to leave.

What is the conflict: _____

What is a reasonable resolution: _____

What might they learn or understand as a result of this:

Analyze Conflict

Analysis #1 Graphic Organizer

Use this graphic organizer to identify conflict as you watch a short video.

There may be more than one type of conflict. Look over the notes on conflict if you need help.

Name of the video you are analyzing: _____

What is one type of conflict you notice?	
What evidence supports that?	
Describe one scene or action that supports your thinking.	
What other type of conflict do you notice?	
What evidence supports that?	
Describe one scene or action that supports your thinking.	
How is one or more conflict resolved?	

Your Thoughts

Analysis #1 – Reflection Outline Part 1

Review your Graphic Organizer #1.
Based on what you observe, write an analysis of the conflict.
The steps below will help you get started.

Step 1: Identify what you'll be writing about.

For example: *I am analyzing the conflict in the short film "Mike's New Car."*

I am analyzing the conflict in:

Step 2: What kind of conflict will you analyze? Check the student notes for help.

For example: *I am looking at the conflict between character and technology.*

I am considering this conflict:

Step 3: What position will you be taking? What points will you be arguing or sharing with your reader?

For example: *I'm taking the position that Mike experiences conflict with technology because he doesn't understand it. He is impressed by the car, but isn't able to use it.*

I am taking the position that:

Step 4: Combine Steps 1 – 3 into a thesis (or "big idea") statement.

Remove "I" or any first person pronouns.

Think about the main ideas you want to share as you write the sentence.

For example: *The conflict in the short film "Mike's New Car" centers on Mike's inability to understand how his very complex sports car works.*

Your thesis or "big idea" statement:

Continue on the next page

Analyze Conflict

Analysis #2 Graphic Organizer

Use this graphic organizer to identify conflict as you watch a short video.

There may be more than one type of conflict. Look over the notes on conflict if you need help.

Name of the video or text you are analyzing: _____

What is one type of conflict you notice?	
What evidence supports that?	
Describe one scene or action that supports your thinking.	
What other type of conflict do you notice?	
What evidence supports that?	
Describe one scene or action that supports your thinking.	
How is one or more conflict resolved?	

Your Thoughts

Analysis #2 – Reflection Outline Part 1

Review your Graphic Organizer #2.

Based on what you observe, write an analysis of the conflict.

The steps below will help you get started.

Step 1: Identify what you'll be writing about.

For example: *I am analyzing the conflict in the short film "Mike's New Car."*

I am analyzing the conflict in:

Step 2: What kind of conflict will you analyze? Check the student notes for help.

For example: *I am looking at the conflict between character and technology.*

I am considering this conflict:

Step 3: What position will you be taking? What points will you be arguing or sharing with your reader?

For example: *I'm taking the position that Mike experiences conflict with technology because he doesn't understand it. He is impressed by the car, but isn't able to use it.*

I am taking the position that:

Step 4: Combine Steps 1 – 3 into a thesis (or "big idea") statement.

Remove "I" or any first person pronouns.

Think about the main ideas you want to share as you write the sentence.

For example: *The conflict in the short film "Mike's New Car" centers on Mike's inability to understand how his very complex sports car works.*

Your thesis or "big idea" statement:

Continue on the next page

Analyze Conflict

Analysis #3 Graphic Organizer

Use this graphic organizer to identify conflict.

There may be more than one type of conflict. Look over the notes on conflict if you need help.

Name of the video or text you are analyzing: _____

What is one type of conflict you notice?	
What evidence supports that?	
Describe one scene or action that supports your thinking.	
What other type of conflict do you notice?	
What evidence supports that?	
Describe one scene or action that supports your thinking.	
How is one or more conflict resolved?	

Your Thoughts

Analysis #3 – Reflection Outline Part 1

Review your Graphic Organizer #3.
Based on what you observe, write an analysis of the conflict.
The steps below will help you get started.

Step 1: Identify what you'll be writing about and the text.

I am analyzing the conflict in:

Step 2: What kind of conflict will you analyze? Check the student notes for help.

I am considering this conflict:

Step 3: What position will you be taking? What points will you be arguing or sharing with your reader?

I am taking the position that:

Step 4: Combine Steps 1 – 3 into a thesis (or “big idea”) statement.
Remove “I” or any first person pronouns.

Think about the main ideas you want to share as you write the sentence.

Your thesis or “big idea” statement:

Continue on the next page

Analyze Conflict

Analysis #4 Graphic Organizer

Use this graphic organizer to identify conflict.

There may be more than one type of conflict. Look over the notes on conflict if you need help.

Name of what are analyzing: _____

What is one type of conflict you notice?	
What evidence supports that?	
Describe one scene or action that supports your thinking.	
What other type of conflict do you notice?	
What evidence supports that?	
Describe one scene or action that supports your thinking.	
How is one or more conflict resolved?	

Your Thoughts

Analysis #4 - Reflection Outline Part 1

Review your Graphic Organizer #4.
Based on what you observe, write an analysis of the conflict.
The steps below will help you get started.

Step 1: Identify what you'll be writing about and the text.

I am analyzing the conflict in:

Step 2: What kind of conflict will you analyze? Check the student notes for help.

I am considering this conflict:

Step 3: What position will you be taking? What points will you be arguing or sharing with your reader?

I am taking the position that:

Step 4: Combine Steps 1 - 3 into a thesis (or "big idea") statement.
Remove "I" or any first person pronouns.

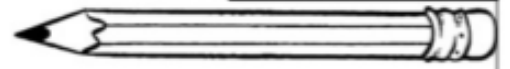
Think about the main ideas you want to share as you write the sentence.

Your thesis or "big idea" statement:

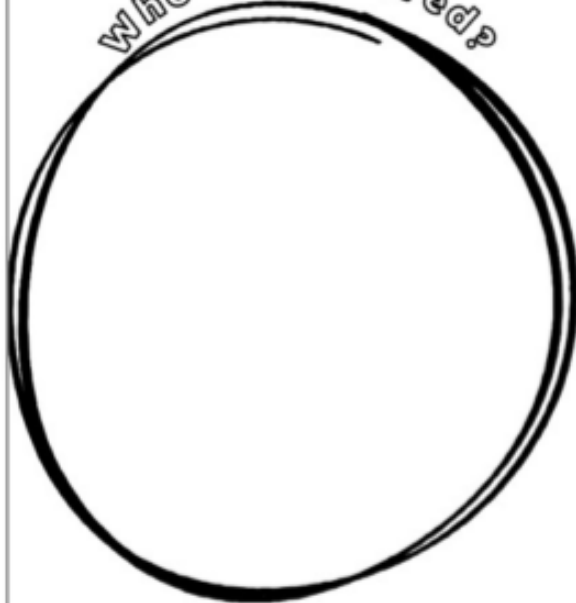
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What does the conflict look like?
Use this page to create a quick illustrated sketch.

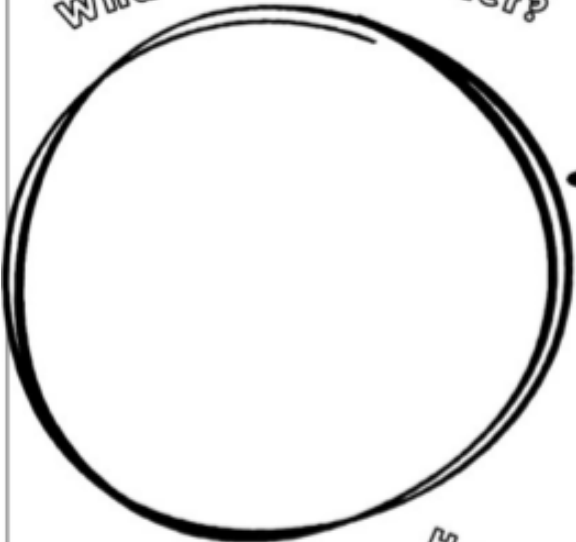
Sketch
Notes



Who is involved?



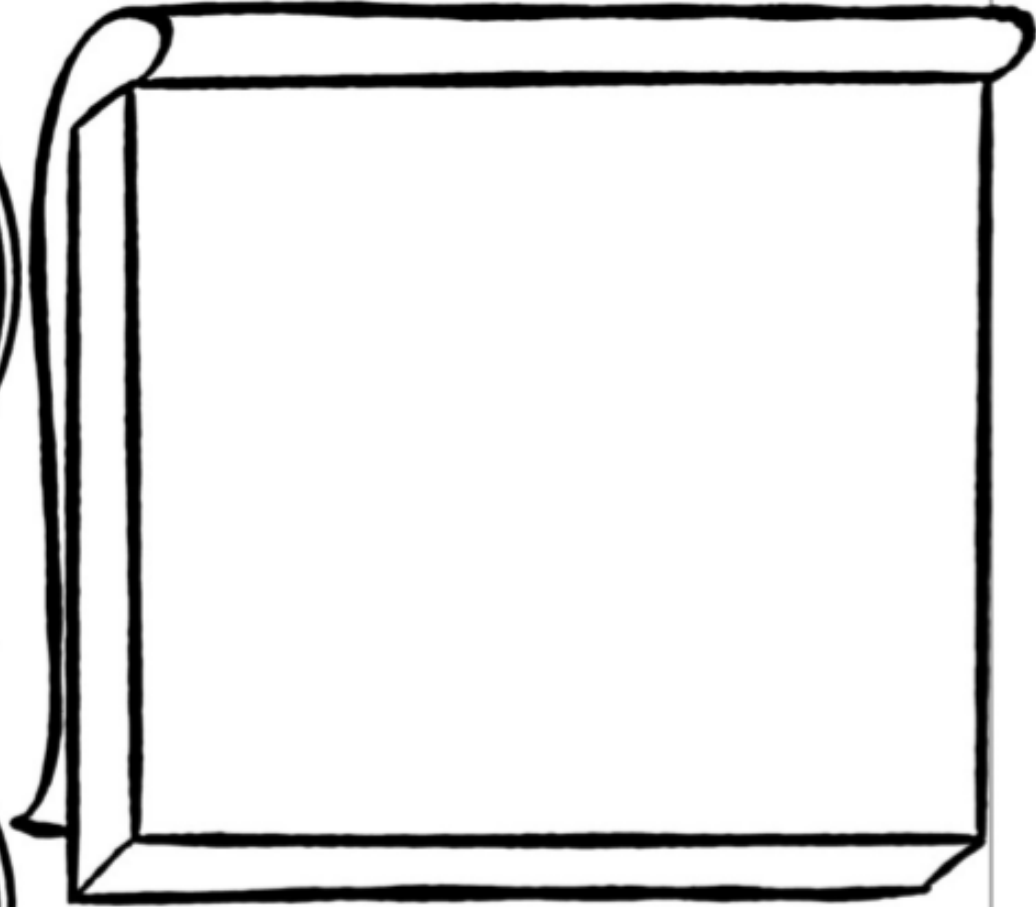
What's the conflict?



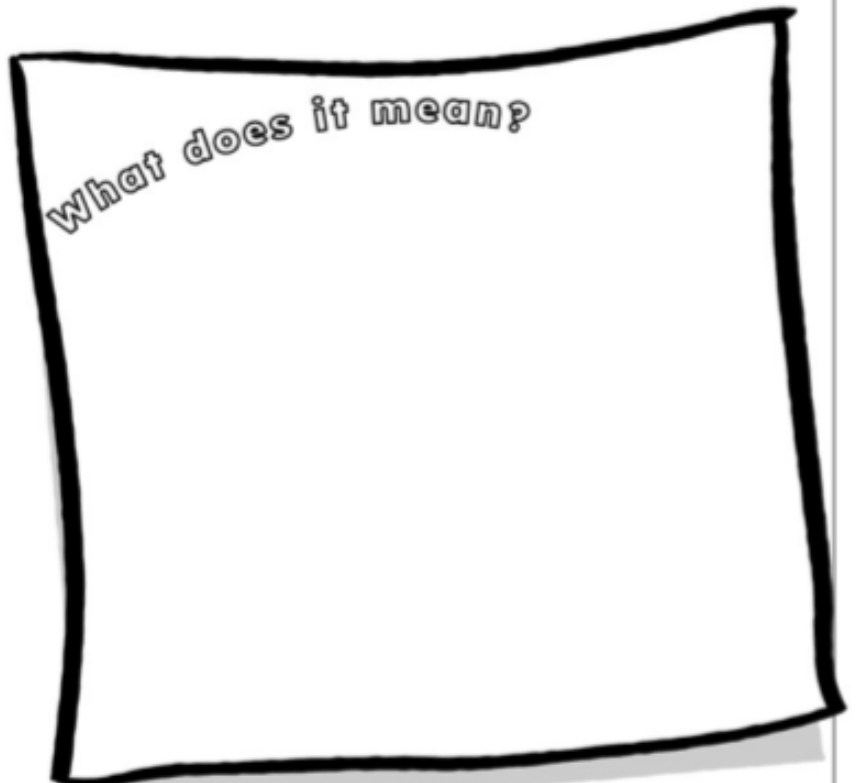
How is it resolved?



What it looks like...



What does it mean?



What do you think?

Look over the conflict analysis activities you've completed. Respond to the following questions.

1. What part of analyzing conflict is the easiest for you? Why?

2. What part of analyzing conflict is the most difficult for you? Why?

3. What new insight did you gain about how conflict helps a story?

4. Did analyzing conflict in a short film help you better understand it?

5. How can considering types of conflict help you understand the text better?

Circle one. I would rate my conflict analysis abilities as:

