

**University of Anbar / College of Arts / Department of English**

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**Subject: Introduction to Literature / First class**

## **Prose**

It is the ordinary language of men in speaking or writing. It is also a literary form that is not in verse as it has greater irregularity, variety of rhythm and aims at clarity of expression.

### **Types of prose:**

Prose can be divided into two essential kinds: fiction and non-fiction.

Fiction is that kind of writing which is invented or imagined not factual. Nowadays fiction is used to describe imaginative literature such as novels and short stories. The language of this kind of writing is usually connotative i.e. the words used have secondary meanings, they suggest and imply rather than mean something.

Fictional prose has many types:

- 1- Narrative: This kind of prose tells a story true or invented such as novels. Example:  
Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*
- 2- Dramatic: This is the kind of prose which is found in drama. Example: Arthur Miller's  
Death of a salesman.
- 3- Satirical: Prose in this instance tries to ridicule vice and folly, it usually has moral  
purpose. Example: Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels.

No-fiction, on the other hand, is the kind of writing which aims at meaning exactly what is said. The language of this kind of writing is usually denotative or referential because it states and expresses what it says. It is the language of simple, exact and neutral description, such as that which is used in books of history or biography.

Non-fictional prose has many types:

- 1- Informative: Sometimes prose is used to give information, such as in school textbooks.
- 2- Critical: This kind of prose that is used to evaluate or explain literary works.
- 3- Argumentative: Prose here is to persuade the reader to believe something or it may be a discussion of a problem making us think about it intelligently.
- 4- Reflective or Contemplative: This is an exercise in contemplation on any given subject. It shows the ability of the writer to think and describe.

### **The Essay**

The essay nowadays has come to mean a moderately short prose composition or discussion on any subject which tries to please or persuade the reader to adopt a particular attitude towards that subject.

The essay is divided into two types:

- 1- The informal or personal essay: Here the personality of the author plays the larger role to express his own attitude.
- 2- The formal essay: The writer here is more interested in the needs of his purpose, his subject. His focus is on the subject rather than his own personality.

### **The short story**

The short story is a narrative prose that usually ranges between a thousand to twelve thousand words. It should be capable of being read at one sitting.

The elements of the short story are:

- 1- Theme
- 2- Plot
- 3- Character
- 4- Style

**Differences between the novel and shot story:**

- 1- The novel is longer, it has great deal of details that the short story must ignore
- 2- In the novel there are subplots which is usually part of the main plot, while the short story deals with one main incident.
- 3- The novel permits development of characters, while there is usually no change in the character of a short story because it concentrates on one incident.
- 4- The novel permits description of setting, while the short story does not give long description and sometimes there is no description at all.
- 5- The novel's narrative task is elaboration, whereas the short story's is limitation and compression.
- 6- The novel may make a multitude of impressions upon the reader. The short story, on the other hand, makes a single impression on the reader.

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