



Conflict

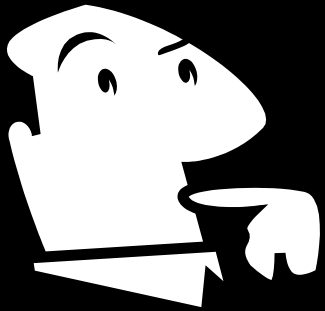




*By the end of this lesson, you
will be able to:*

- identify **conflict** as it appears in literature.
 - distinguish between **internal** and **external** conflict.
 - classify a conflict into one of four subcategories.
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Conflict is a clash or struggle between opposing forces.



In literature and in real life humans face internal and external conflicts.

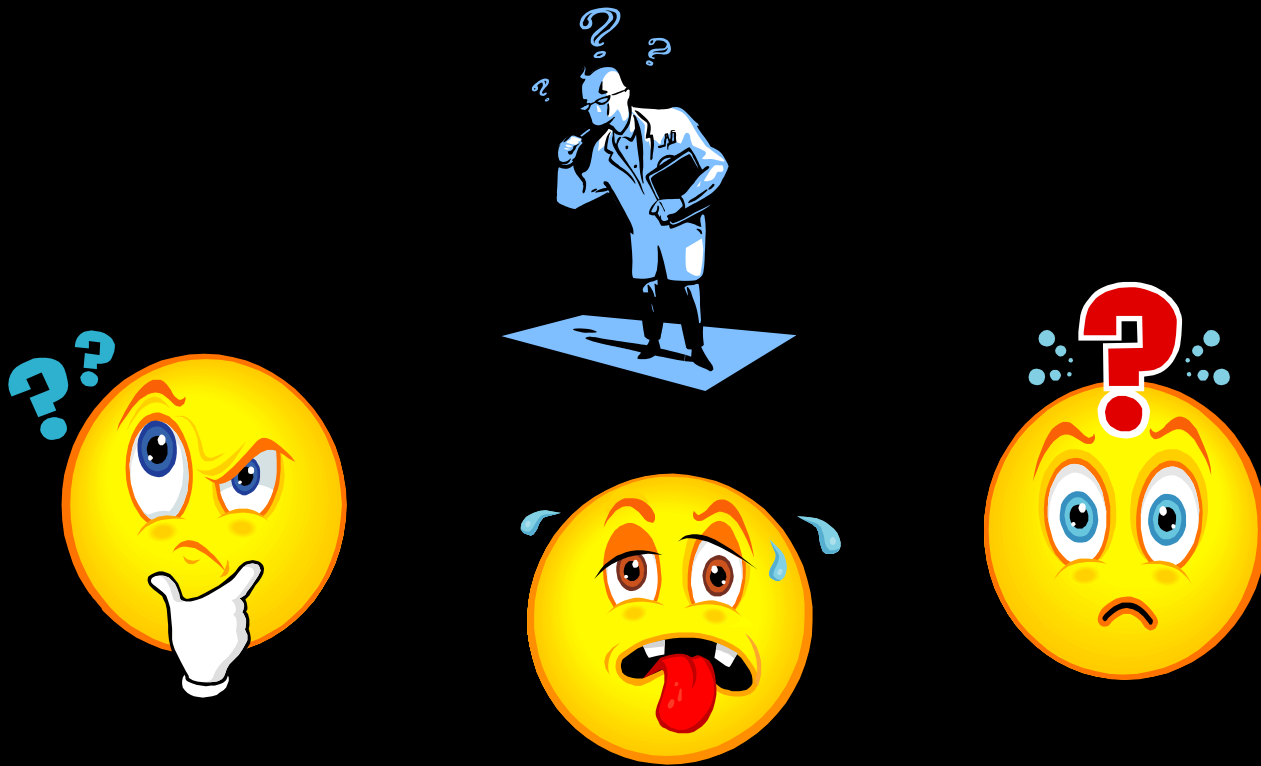
Internal Conflict

Man vs. self

A struggle that takes place in a character's mind is called **internal conflict**.



An **internal** struggle is **inside** one's head.



Examples of Internal Conflict

- A character may have a **dilemma**: wrestle with one's conscience, decide between right and wrong, make a choice in a lose-lose situation, or struggle with two solutions to a problem (Should I stick up for my best friend who is getting teased?)
- A character has **mixed emotions**, such as feeling relieved but disappointed at the same time (I'm disappointed the concert was cancelled, but relieved because I had stage-fright.)
- A character's **fear** prevents him/her from reaching a goal (I want to camp out with the club, but I am secretly terrified of the dark.)
- A character feels **guilt or shame** about a past wrongdoing (I can't believe I stole the radio...how can I redeem myself?)
- A character **struggles with self-image or conflicting identities** (I don't like the way I look, and I want to hide; I want to be American instead of Martian.)
- A character **struggles with breaking a bad habit** (I just can't stop lying.)
- Many other examples!

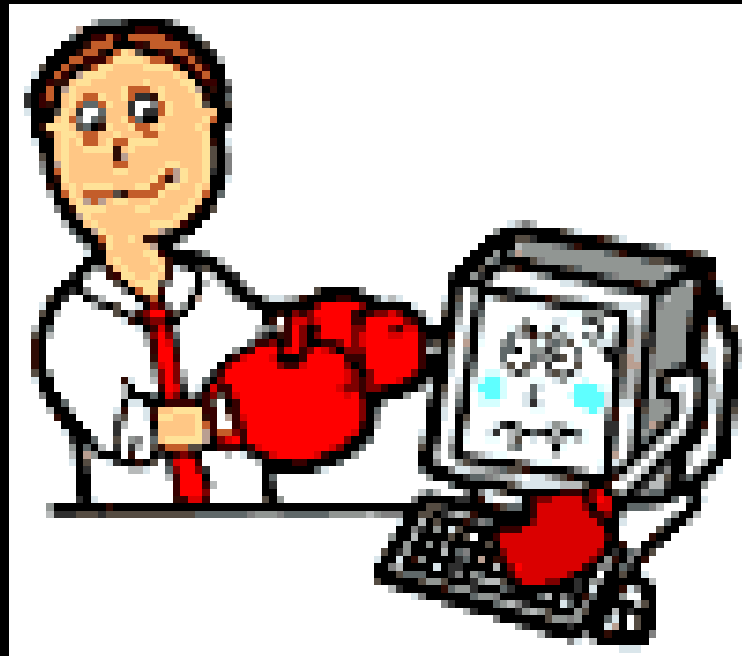
Man vs. Self Examples

- Jessica thinks the sweater Grandmother made for her is ugly. Grandmother is looking forward to seeing her wear it to her middle school graduation. Todd, the boy she likes, will be there. She doesn't want to hurt Grandmother's feelings, but she will feel embarrassed in front of Todd on the last day before summer.
- Martin's family just moved here from France. He values his culture, but wants to be "Americanized."

External Conflict

Definition:

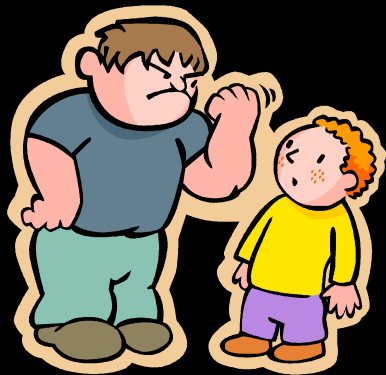
A struggle between a character and an outside force is an **external conflict**.



Characters may face several types of outside forces.

The outside force may be another character.

Man vs. man



The outside force may be forces of nature.

Man vs. nature




The outside force may be society.

Man vs. society






Man vs. Man

- This is mostly seen in the form of two characters against each other.
 - It can also be represented by a group of people.
 - It does not have to be a physical confrontation; it can be a battle between two ideas.
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Man vs. Man Examples

- Jill vs. the bully
 - Max vs. his parents
 - The Ravens vs. the Giants
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Man vs. Nature/Environment

- Environment is defined as anything surrounding a person.
- This can include weather, objects, activities.
- It is basically anything external EXCEPT people.




Man vs. Nature/Environment Examples

- The hiker vs. the slippery slope
 - The captain of the ship vs. a hurricane
 - Laura vs. the raging dog
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Man vs. Society

- Society is defined as the customs, beliefs, or actions of the community.
 - This can include a community unfairly treating a character based on his/her race, nationality, gender, language, religion, social status (rich/poor), disability, etc.
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Man vs. Society Examples

- Miss Jones vs. the inability to vote (1872)
 - Jesse, an African-American child, vs. segregation (1958)
 - The Rosens vs. the Nazi government (*Number the Stars*)
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