I'm not a robot



Throughout history, novels have evolved in style and structure, reflecting societal values and inspiring change. Before we dive into this, let’s take a look at the novel definition.A novel is a lengthy, fictional narrative written in prose, typically focusing on the development of characters, an engaging plot structure, and a coherent theme. As a literary work, it provides readers with a window into the human experience, often exploring the complexities of emotions, relationships, and societal issues. Novels come in various genres and forms, offering diverse perspectives and storytelling techniques that captivate audiences and contribute to the rich tapestry of literature.Long-form prose narrativeWell-developed charactersEngaging plot structureLiterary themes and messagesThe novel's origins can be traced back to ancient literary works, such as the Greek romance Callirhoe by Chariton and the Latin novel The Golden Ass by Apuleius. However, it was during the 18th century that the modern novel began to take shape, with the rise of prose narratives in Europe. Early examples include Miguel de Cervantes' Don Quixote (1605) and Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe (1719), which laid the foundation for the novel as a distinct literary form. Don Quixote, often hailed as the first modern novel, holds significant importance as it revolutionized literature with its profound exploration of human nature and reality, setting a precedent for character development and narrative style in subsequent works.Throughout history, numerous novels have left indelible marks on literature and society. Some of these influential works include:Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice (1813): A seminal work of romantic fiction that offers keen insights into social norms and human relationships.Charles Dickens' Great Expectations (1860-1861): A bildungsroman exploring themes of personal growth, class, and social justice.Fyodor Dostoevsky's Crime and Punishment (1866): A psychological thriller delving into morality, guilt, and redemption.James Joyce's Ulysses (1922): A groundbreaking modernist novel using stream-of-consciousness technique and innovative narrative structures.The novel has undergone significant transformations since its inception, reflecting changes in society, culture, and literary techniques. The 19th century saw the rise of the serialized novel, with authors like Dickens and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle captivating readers through episodic storytelling. The 20th century brought experimental and modernist approaches, as seen in works by Virginia Woolf and William Faulkner, pushing the boundaries of narrative structure and style.In recent decades, the novel has continued to evolve, embracing diverse voices, perspectives, and genres. The rise of digital platforms and self-publishing has further expanded the landscape of novel writing, providing opportunities for new stories and innovative storytelling techniques to flourish.What is a Novel Defined By?Characteristics of a NovelNovels possess distinct features that set them apart from other literary forms, providing readers with immersive and thought-provoking experiences. Let's delve into the key characteristics that define a novel:Long-form prose narrativeOne of the most distinguishing features of a novel is its length. Composed of an extended, continuous text, novels allow for in-depth exploration of characters, plotlines, and themes. This long-form prose narrative sets novels apart from shorter forms like short stories and novellas, offering readers a more comprehensive and immersive reading experience.Well-developed charactersAt the heart of every novel are its characters. Novels typically feature complex, multi-dimensional characters who undergo growth or change throughout the story. These well-developed characters drive the plot, engage readers emotionally, and often serve as vehicles for exploring various aspects of the human experience.For example, in Albert Camus' The Stranger, the protagonist Meursault is a well-developed character whose existentialist perspective, emotional detachment, and indifference towards societal norms offer a profound exploration of absurdism and the human condition.The events of a novel are arranged in a coherent and purposeful manner, creating an engaging narrative arc. Most novels incorporate elements such as exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution, which work together to keep readers invested in the story. The plot structure not only entertains but also helps convey the novel's themes and messages effectively.Literary themes and messagesNovels often explore underlying themes and messages that provide insight into emotions, relationships, society, and the world at large. These themes can range from love and friendship to social issues and moral dilemmas, allowing authors to express their perspectives and engage readers in thought-provoking discussions. Through skillful storytelling, novels have the power to illuminate the complexities of the human experience and leave lasting impressions on readers.Novels come in a wide array of genres and forms, offering readers diverse storytelling experiences that cater to different tastes and interests. In this section, we will explore types of novels in literature, some of the most popular literary genres, as well as various forms and structures that novels can take.Literary genresLiterary genres are categories that classify literature based on shared themes, styles, and narrative elements. Literary genres not only provide a framework for authors to express their creativity but also help readers navigate the vast landscape of literature to find stories that resonate with them. Let’s explore literary genres.Romance: This genre focuses on the development of romantic relationships between characters, often exploring themes of love, passion, and commitment. Examples include Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice and Nicholas Sparks' The Notebook.Mystery: Mystery novels revolve around the solving of a puzzle or crime, typically involving a detective or amateur sleuth who uncovers hidden clues and motives. Famous examples include Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes series and Agatha Christie's Hercule Poirot stories.Historical Fiction: This genre transports readers to the past, blending fictional characters and events with real historical settings and figures. Examples include Hilary Mantel's Wolf Hall and Ken Follett's The Pillars of the Earth.Fantasy: Fantasy novels create imaginative worlds filled with magic, mythical creatures, and fantastical elements. Well-known works include J.R.R. Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings and George R.R. Martin's A Song of Ice and Fire series.Forms and structuresForms and structures in literature refer to the distinct narrative techniques and styles used to tell a story. These elements shape the way readers experience a narrative, offering innovative approaches to storytelling and adding depth to characters, plots, and themes.Epistolary: Epistolary novels are written in the form of letters, diary entries, or other documents, allowing readers to experience the story through the characters' personal perspectives. Examples include Samuel Richardson's Pamela and Bram Stoker's Dracula.Bildungsroman: This form, also known as a coming-of-age novel, follows the emotional and psychological development of a young protagonist as they navigate the challenges of life. Classic examples include Charles Dickens' Great Expectations and J.D. Salinger's The Catcher in the Rye.Picaresque: Picaresque novels center around a roguish, lower-class protagonist who embarks on a series of episodic adventures, often satirizing social norms and institutions. Notable works include Miguel de Cervantes' Don Quixote and Mark Twain's The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.Stream of consciousness: This narrative technique captures the continuous flow of a character's thoughts and feelings, often eschewing conventional grammar and punctuation. Prominent examples include James Joyce's Ulysses and Virginia Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway.Novels have played a significant role in shaping society and culture throughout history, influencing public opinion, challenging norms, and inspiring change. In this section, we will explore the various ways novels have impacted our world:Promoting empathy and understandingBy presenting readers with diverse perspectives and experiences, novels foster empathy and understanding for people from different walks of life. Through well-developed characters and immersive storytelling, novels allow readers to step into the shoes of others, breaking down barriers and promoting compassion.Many novels have stirred controversy by addressing taboo subjects or questioning societal norms. Works such as Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin and George Orwell's 1984 have challenged prevailing beliefs and sparked important conversations, ultimately contributing to social and political change.Inspiring creativity and innovationFrom science fiction's imaginative technologies to fantasy's magical realms, novels have inspired countless innovations and creative endeavors. By pushing the boundaries of imagination, novels encourage readers to think beyond the confines of reality and envision new possibilities.Preserving and reflecting cultural identityNovels often capture the essence of a particular time and place, preserving the cultural identity of a society for future generations. From regional dialects to historical events, novels serve as windows into the past, offering valuable insights into the lives and customs of different cultures.Influencing language and communicationThe language used in novels can shape and enrich our vocabulary, introducing new words and phrases that become part of everyday conversation. Additionally, literary techniques and styles pioneered by novelists often influence other forms of communication, such as television, journalism, and film adaptations. This video by Now You See It analyzes the relationship between novels and film and the differences between the two. Novels hold immense power in their ability to shape society, culture, and our understanding of the world. By offering diverse perspectives and challenging norms, they promote empathy, spark debate, and inspire creativity. As windows into different cultures and eras, novels preserve and reflect cultural identity while also enriching language and communication. Ultimately, the impact of novels on our lives is both profound and far-reaching, highlighting the enduring importance of literature in human experience.What Are Novels Today?The Modern NovelAs literature continues to evolve, the modern novel has emerged with distinct features that set it apart from its predecessors. In this section, we will discuss the innovations in storytelling and style, the increasing diversity in voices and perspectives, and the role of technology and digital platforms in shaping the contemporary literary landscape.Innovations in storytelling and styleThe modern novel has witnessed a surge in experimental narrative techniques and unconventional styles. Authors are pushing the boundaries of traditional storytelling by utilizing nonlinear timelines, multiple narrators, and innovative formats such as epistolary or mixed media. These creative approaches offer readers fresh and engaging experiences, redefining our understanding of what a novel can be.Diversity in voices and perspectivesIn recent years, there has been a growing emphasis on amplifying diverse voices and perspectives within the literary world. The modern novel showcases stories from underrepresented communities, addressing themes related to race, gender, sexuality, and socio-economic backgrounds. This shift towards inclusivity enriches our collective understanding of the human experience and fosters empathy for those whose stories have been historically marginalized.The role of technology and digital platformsTechnology and digital platforms have had a significant impact on the modern novel, revolutionizing the way we consume and share literature. E-books, audiobooks, and online publishing platforms have made novels more accessible, while social media and book clubs have created vibrant literary communities that connect readers and authors across the globe. The enduring appeal of novels lies in their ability to adapt and evolve with the changing times, reflecting the diverse nature of human experiences. From classic literary masterpieces to innovative modern narratives, novels continue to captivate readers by pushing the boundaries of storytelling, embracing diverse voices, and harnessing the power of technology. As we delve deeper into the characteristics and unique aspects of this beloved literary form, we gain a greater appreciation for the profound impact novels have on our lives, culture, and society, enriching our understanding of the world around us.Now that we have explored the world of novels and their impact on society, it's time to delve deeper into the fundamental building block of these literary works: prose. In the following article, we will examine the characteristics and various forms of this essential writing style.Up Next: What is Prose? → Literary NovelsLiterary novels are a broad category of books often regarded as having more intellectual merit than genre fiction. These novels are not as bound to formula, and authors feel greater freedom to experiment with style; examine the psychology and motivations of their characters; and make commentary on larger social conditions or issues. Literary novels possess a certain amount of intellectualism and depth. Their language is rich, their descriptions detailed, and their characters unique and memorable. Examples of popular literary novels include The Goldfinch by Donna Tartt, Life After Life by Kate Atkinson, The Corrections by Jonathan Franzen, and A Little Life by Hanya Yanagihara.Genre NovelsIn contrast to literary fiction, authors of genre novels tend to follow more of a basic plot formula, and they paint their characters with broader strokes and less nuance and complexity. Stories in this vein accentuate plot over character. The accepted norms of genre fiction allow a reader to pick up a certain kind of novel and, in general, know what to expect from it. However, the boundaries of genre fiction are considerably malleable, and you could just as easily classify many genre works as lofty as any literary novel. Also, many genre novels fall under more than one genre. Below are several major genres/subgenres of the contemporary novel.Bildungsroman/Coming of AgeA bildungsroman is a coming-of-age novel that highlights a period of profound emotional, psychological, and/or spiritual growth for a young protagonist. Depending on the nature and depth of the story and the author’s goals, a bildungsroman can skew toward a young readership or an adult one. To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee and The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain are two notable bildungsroman novels.Children and Young AdultMore of a catchall term than a genre, children and young adult novels center on young protagonists having formative experiences. Plots deal with issues and challenges of special interest to young readers, such as friendship, bullying, prejudice, school and academic life, gender roles and norms, changing bodies, and sexuality.Classic children and young adult novels include Charlotte’s Web by E.B. White and The Wonderful Wizard of Oz by L. Frank Baum. More recently, some young people’s literature has had a crossover appeal to adult audiences, with the Harry Potter series by J.K. Rowling and The Hunger Games series by Suzanne Collins garnering legions of fans both young and old.GothicDeath and romance are major plot points in gothic novels. The supernatural, family curses, stock characters like Byronic heroes and innocent maidens, and moody settings like castles or monasteries usually figure prominently in the storylines. Wuthering Heights by Emily Brontë and The Phantom of the Opera by Gaston Leroux are two beloved gothic novels.HistoricalHistorical novels take place in the past, where plots typically involve a specific historical event or era. The novel may or may not include fictionalized versions of real people. Authors of historical fiction often conduct in-depth research of the times about which they write to provide readers with a vivid reimagining of what life was like. Popular historical novels include The Pillars of the Earth by Ken Follett, The Other Boleyn Girl by Philippa Gregory, and Roots by Alex Haley.HorrorAuthors of horror novels write plots and characters intended to scare or disgust the reader. The stories frequently incorporate elements of the supernatural and/or psychological components designed to startle the reader and get them to question what they know about the characters. The Shining by Stephen King, The Haunting of Hill House by Shirley Jackson, and Dracula by Bram Stoker are perennial favorites of this genre.MysteryMysteries tell stories of crimes and the attempts to solve them. There are multiple types of mystery novels, such as noir, police procedurals, professional and amateur detective fiction, legal thrillers, and cozy mysteries. Examples include Gone Girl by Gillian Flynn, The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo by Stieg Larsson, and Murder on the Orient Express by Agatha Christie.PicaresquePicaresque novels feature the adventures of impish, lowborn but likeable heroes who barrel through a variety of different encounters, living by their wits in corrupt or oppressive societies. Picaresque novels reached their peak of popularity in Europe from the 16th to 19th centuries, but authors still occasionally write them today. The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling, by Henry Fielding is a classic picaresque, while A Confederacy of Dunces by John Kennedy Toole is a more recent one.Roman à ClefA roman à clef is an autobiographical novel, which fictionalizes real people and events. An author of a roman à clef has the freedom to write about controversial or deeply personal, secretive topics without technically exposing anyone or anything—or exposing themselves to charges of libel. They can also imagine different scenarios and resolutions for real-life situations. The Bell Jar by Sylvia Plath and The Devil Wear Prada by Lauren Weisberger are both roman à clefs.RomanceRomance novels are love stories. The main plot usually features the dramatic courtship of two characters as they discover their feelings and attempt to be together. An antagonist frustrates these attempts but rarely wins, which means romance novels almost always end in a happily-ever-after.Contemporary romance, historical romance, inspirational romance, and LGBTQ romance are just a few of the subgenres on the market. Examples of romance novels include A Knight in Shining Armor by Jude Deveraux, Outlander by Diana Gabaldon, and The Notebook by Nicholas Sparks.SatiresA satirical novel humorously criticizes someone or something. The author will typically employ exaggerated plots and characters to underscore a specific fallibility or corruption. Common targets include public figures, laws and government policies, and social norms. Satires can possess considerable power by using humor to comment on societal or human flaws. Animal Farm by George Orwell and Catch-22 by Joseph Heller are masterworks of the genre.Science Fiction and FantasyScience fiction novels deal with emerging or new technologies, space exploration, futurism, and other speculative elements. Similarly, fantasy novels integrate elements that defy known scientific laws, with magic and folklore often playing a major role in the worlds and characters created by the author. Science fantasy novels are a subgenre that combine these two forms. The Left Hand of Darkness by Ursula K. Le Guin and The War of the Worlds are prime examples of science fiction, while The Lord of the Rings by J.R.R. Tolkien and A Game of Thrones by George R.R. Martin are enduring fantasy classics.The Great American NovelA uniquely American phenomenon is what novelist John William DeForest called the “Great American Novel.” The definition of this term is open to some interpretation, but, in general, it refers to a novel that captures the spirit and experience of life in the United States and the essence of the national character. Since DeForest coined the term in 1868, many novels have claimed this title, though there’s no single organization or institution that bestows such a designation. Books cited as a Great American Novel include Moby-Dick by Herman Melville, To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee, and The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald. A Novel is a long narrative work of fiction with some realism. It is often in prose form and is published as a single book. The word ‘novel’ has been derived from the Italian word ‘novella’ which means “new”. Similar to a short story, a novel has some features like a representation of characters, dialogues, setting, plot, climax, conflict, and resolution. However, it does not require all the elements to be a good novel.Types of NovelThere are many types of novels. They include mysteries, thrillers, suspense, detective, science fiction, romantic, historical, realist or even postmodern.Examples of Novels from LiteratureAnimal Farm by George OrwellAnimal Farm by George Orwell was written in 1945 and published in England. It allegorizes the story of the Communist Revolution in Russia through the characters of pigs and satirizes its degradation into the same totalitarian regime. The story revolves around animals where pigs are the cleverer than others. They bring a revolution, expelling their old master, Mr. Jones. However, after a couple of years, the pig leaders Snowball and Napoleon develop friction. Snowball flees to save his life, and the situation turns a full circle where Napoleon and his cohorts again take a dictatorial turn to run the administration of the farm through propaganda and other strategies. This is a short form of a novel with animals as its characters.Example #2The Old Man and the Sea by Ernest HemingwayThe Old Man and the Sea is a tour de force of Hemingway which won Noble Prize for Literature for him. A model of the realistic novel, the Old Man and the Sea presents the story of an old man who is too fragile to fish alone in the Gulf Stream near the Cuban capital of Havana. However, he hooks a truly huge marlin which tests his mettle for almost three days. Although he kills the marlin by the end, he loses it to sharks. His extreme fight and endurance win him accolades from the readers.Example #3Great Expectations by Charles DickensThis is one of the best comings of the age novels, which takes the reader on a journey to see the life of a poor young boy, Pip. In the novel, Pip’s transformation from a poor orphan into a gentleman living in London goes through various challenges. His mistakes teach him valuable lessons as he realizes what his benefactors and Joe did for him. Parallelly, he falls in love with prideful Estelle and does his best to win her affection. By the end of the novel, Estelle is a widow and humbled, and Pip asks her to marry him, which she accepts. Without a doubt, “The Great Expectations” is one of the best English novels which tells the main characters personal growth and development.Example #4Frankenstein by Mary ShelleyAlthough written in the 19th century, Frankenstein by Mary Shelley is one of the best science fictions. The story of a young scientist, Victor Frankenstein obsessed with the idea of creating life. He creates ‘the Creature’ and is repulsed by his own experiment. The Creature brings havoc in Victor Frankenstein’s life after he fails to give him a partner. Both Victor and the creature meet with a tragic end. The story teaches a lesson that we must never intervene with nature.Example #5Tess of the d’Urbervilles by Thomas HardyTess of the d’Urbervilles by Thomas Hardy is one of the best novels of the last century, which explores the role of fate and chance in an individual’s life. Tess belongs to a poor family, but her father discovers that their family perhaps descendants of D’Urbervilles, a noble family, after meeting Parson Tringham. Taking pride in his ancient lineage, he spends whatever they have and forces his young daughter to work on a farm where she is raped. Later, another young man, Angel Clare, marries her but after this disclosure, he leaves her. By the end of the novel, Angel returns and accepts her, but Tess is hanged for murdering her former rapist, Alec.Novel Meaning and FunctionA novel presents a whole picture as compared to a short story which displays only one aspect of life, or one side of the story. It also shows a vast panorama to its readers to see the story through an age in which it is presented such as The Tale of Two Cities has been written during the times when France and England were going through a lot of changes. Similarly, a novel also presents a conflict and its resolution. For every writer, a novel is a strong tool to present the philosophical, historical, social, cultural and moral perspectives. Literature Novels & Short Stories novel, an invented prose narrative of considerable length and a certain complexity that deals imaginatively with human experience, usually through a connected sequence of events involving a group of persons in a specific setting. Within its broad framework, the genre of the novel has encompassed an extensive range of types and styles: picaresque, epistolary, Gothic, romantic, realist, historical—to name only some of the more important ones.Explore essential elements of the novel with Clifton Fadiman and actorsLearn about essential elements of the novel—including mood, motivation, characterization, and style—with editor and anthologist Clifton Fadiman and actors from London's Old Vic theatre company. This is a 1962 production of Encyclopædia Britannica Educational Corporation.See all videos for this articleThe novel is a genre of fiction, and fiction may be defined as the art or craft of contriving, through the written word, representations of human life that instruct or divert or both. The various forms that fiction may take are best seen less as a number of separate categories than as a continuum or, more accurately, a cline, with some such brief form as the anecdote at one end of the scale and the longest conceivable novel at the other. When any piece of fiction is long enough to constitute a whole book, as opposed to a mere part of a book, then it may be said to have achieved novelhood. But this state admits of its own quantitative categories, so that a relatively brief novel may be termed a novella (or, if the insubstantiality of the content matches its brevity, a novelette), and a very long novel may overflow the banks of a single volume and become a roman-fleuve, or river novel. Length is very much one of the dimensions of the genre.The term novel is a truncation of the Italian word novella (from the plural of Latin novellus, a late variant of novus, meaning “new”), so that what is now, in most languages, a diminutive denotes historically the parent form. The novella was a kind of enlarged anecdote like those to be found in the 14th-century Italian classic Boccaccio’s Decameron, each of which exemplifies the etymology well enough. The stories are little new things, novelties, freshly minted diversions, toys; they are not reworkings of known fables or myths, and they are lacking in weight and moral earnestness. It is to be noted that, despite the high example of novelists of the most profound seriousness, such as Tolstoy, Henry James, and Virginia Woolf, the term novel still, in some quarters, carries overtones of lightness and frivolity. And it is possible to descry a tendency to triviality in the form itself. The ode or symphony seems to possess an inner mechanism that protects it from aesthetic or moral corruption, but the novel can descend to shameful commercial depths of sentimentality or pornography. It is the purpose of this section to consider the novel not solely in terms of great art but also as an all-purpose medium catering for all the strata of literacy.Such early ancient Roman fiction as Petronius’ Satyricon of the 1st century ad and Lucius Apuleius’ Golden Ass of the 2nd century contain many of the popular elements that distinguish the novel from its nobler born relative the epic poem. In the fictional works, the medium is prose, the events described are unheroic, the settings are streets and taverns, not battlefields and palaces. There is more low fornication than princely combat; the gods do not move the action; the dialogue is homely rather than aristocratic. It was, in fact, out of the need to find—in the period of Roman decline—a literary form that was anti-epic in both substance and language that the first prose fiction of Europe seems to have been conceived. The most memorable character in Petronius is a nouveau riche vulgarian; the hero of Lucius Apuleius is turned into a donkey; nothing less epic can well be imagined.The medieval chivalric romance (from a popular Latin word, probably Romanice, meaning written in the vernacular, not in traditional Latin) restored a kind of epic view of man—though now as heroic Christian, not heroic pagan. At the same time, it bequeathed its name to the later genre of continental literature, the novel, which is known in French as roman, in Italian as romanzo, etc. (The English term romance, however, carries a pejorative connotation.) But that later genre achieved its first great flowering in Spain at the beginning of the 17th century in an antichivalric comic masterpiece—the Don Quixote of Cervantes, which, on a larger scale than the Satyricon or The Golden Ass, contains many of the elements that have been expected from prose fiction ever since. Novels have heroes, but not in any classical or medieval sense. As for the novelist, he must, in the words of the contemporary British-American W.H. Auden, Famous Novels, Last Lines Quiz Become the whole of boredom, subject to Vulgar complaints like love, among the Just Be just, among the Filthy filthy too, And in his own weak person, if he can, Must suffer dully all the wrongs of Man. The novel attempts to assume those burdens of life that have no place in the epic poem and to see man as unheroic, unredeemed, imperfect, even absurd. This is why there is room among its practitioners for writers of hardboiled detective thrillers such as the contemporary American Mickey Spillane or of sentimental melodramas such as the prolific 19th-century English novelist Mrs. Henry Wood, but not for one of the unremitting elevation of outlook of a John Milton. The novel is propelled through its hundred or thousand pages by a device known as the story or plot. This is frequently conceived by the novelist in very simple terms, a mere nucleus, a jotting on an old envelope: for example, Charles Dickens’ Christmas Carol (1843) might have been conceived as “a misanthrope is reformed through certain magical visitations on Christmas Eve,” or Jane Austen’s Pride and Prejudice (1813) as “a young couple destined to be married have first to overcome the barriers of pride and prejudice,” or Fyodor Dostoyevsky’s Crime and Punishment (1866) as “a young man commits a crime and is slowly pursued in the direction of his punishment.” The detailed working out of the nuclear idea requires much ingenuity, since the plot of one novel is expected to be somewhat different from that of another, and there are very few basic human situations for the novelist to draw upon. The dramatist may take his plot ready-made from fiction or biography—a form of theft sanctioned by Shakespeare—but the novelist has to produce what look like novelties. The example of Shakespeare is a reminder that the ability to create an interesting plot, or even any plot at all, is not a prerequisite of the imaginative writer’s craft. At the lowest level of fiction, plot need be no more than a string of stock devices for arousing stock responses of concern and excitement in the reader. The reader’s interest may be captured at the outset by the promise of conflicts or mysteries or frustrations that will eventually be resolved, and he will gladly—so strong is his desire to be moved or entertained—suspend criticism of even the most trite modes of resolution. In the least sophisticated fiction, the knots to be untied are stringently physical, and the denouement often comes in a sort of triumphant violence. Serious fiction prefers its plots to be based on psychological situations, and its climaxes come in new states of awareness—chiefly self-knowledge—on the parts of the major characters. Melodramatic plots, plots dependent on coincidence or improbability, are sometimes found in even the most elevated fiction; E.M. Forster’s Howards End (1910) is an example of a classic British novel with such a plot. But the novelist is always faced with the problem of whether it is more important to represent the formlessness of real life (in which there are no beginnings and no ends and very few simple motives for action) or to construct an artifact as well balanced and economical as a table or chair; since he is an artist, the claims of art, or artifice, frequently prevail. There are, however, ways of constructing novels in which plot may play a desultory part or no part at all. The traditional picaresque novel—a novel with a rogue as its central character—like Alain Lesage’s Gil Blas (1715) or Henry Fielding’s Tom Jones (1749), depends for movement on a succession of chance incidents. In the works of Virginia Woolf, the consciousness of the characters, bounded by some poetic or symbolic device, sometimes provides all the fictional material. Marcel Proust’s great roman-fleuve, À la recherche du temps perdu (1913–27; Remembrance of Things Past), has a metaphysical framework derived from the time theories of the philosopher Henri Bergson, and it moves toward a moment of truth that is intended to be literally a revelation of the nature of reality. Strictly, any scheme will do to hold a novel together—raw action, the hidden syllogism of the mystery story, prolonged solipsist contemplation—so long as the actualities or potentialities of human life are credibly expressed, with a consequent sense of illumination, or some lesser mode of artistic satisfaction, on the part of the reader. A novel is a fictional narrative prose work characterized by an extended and complex plot, with well-developed characters and settings. It explores themes, emotions, and human experiences through sustained storytelling. Typically longer than a short story, novels offer a comprehensive exploration of life, society, and the human condition, inviting readers into immersive and imaginative worlds.Its Origin : The novel, as a literary form, has a complex and fascinating origin in English literature, evolving over centuries to become a prominent and diverse genre. Its roots can be traced back to various influences, cultural shifts, and innovations in storytelling. The term “novel” itself has Latin origins, derived from the word “novellus,” meaning new or fresh. However, the novel, as we understand it today, didn’t emerge until the 18th century. Prior to that, storytelling primarily took the form of epic poems, ballads, and short stories. One of the earliest works that bears resemblance to the novel is Sir Thomas Malory’s “Le Morte d’Arthur,” written in the 15th century. Although it’s a compilation of Arthurian legends, it exhibits some novelistic features, such as a sustained narrative and character development. However, it wasn’t until the 17th century that the novel began to take recognizable shape. The roots of the English novel can be found in the prose romances of the 16th and 17th centuries. These works, often characterized by adventure, romance, and moral allegory, laid the groundwork for the development of longer, more complex narratives. Writers like John Bunyan, with “The Pilgrim’s Progress” (1678), and Aphra Behn, with “Oroonoko” (1688), contributed to the evolution of prose fiction. The 18th century is often considered the “birth” of the English novel. This period witnessed a surge in literacy rates, the rise of the middle class, and increased leisure time for reading. Novels became a popular form of entertainment and a medium for exploring the complexities of human nature and societal issues. Daniel Defoe’s “Robinson Crusoe” (1719) is often regarded as one of the first true novels in English. Defoe presented a realistic narrative with a detailed account of the protagonist’s experiences on a deserted island, blending adventure with moral reflection. This marked a departure from the allegorical and fantastical elements of earlier prose romances. Following Defoe, Samuel Richardson made significant contributions to the development of the novel with “Pamela” (1740) and “Clarissa” (1748). These works, written in the form of letters, introduced a more psychological and character-driven approach to storytelling. Richardson’s emphasis on individual experience and sentiment laid the foundation for the sentimental novel. Another pivotal figure in the history of the novel is Henry Fielding. His satirical and humorous works, such as “Joseph Andrews” (1742) and “Tom Jones” (1749), marked the emergence of the picaresque novel, characterized by the adventures of a roguish protagonist. Fielding’s novels showcased a more expansive and panoramic view of society, moving away from the intense introspection of Richardson. The latter half of the 18th century saw the rise of the Gothic novel, with works like Horace Walpole’s “The Castle of Otranto” (1764) and Ann Radcliffe’s “The Mysteries of Udolpho” (1794). These novels introduced elements of suspense, horror, and the supernatural, adding a new layer to the evolving novelistic tradition. In the 19th century, the novel continued to flourish with the works of Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, the Brontë sisters, and others. These authors explored a wide range of themes, including social injustice, morality, and the impact of industrialization. Dickens, in particular, used the novel as a platform to address the social issues of his time, creating vivid characters and intricate plots. The 20th century witnessed further diversification of the novel, with the emergence of modernist and postmodernist forms. Writers like Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, and Salman Rushdie experimented with narrative structure, perspective, and language, pushing the boundaries of traditional storytelling. In summary, the English novel has a rich and multifaceted history, evolving from the prose romances of earlier centuries to the diverse and experimental forms of the modern era. Its development reflects cultural, social, and literary changes, making the novel a dynamic and enduring form of artistic expression.The Technique of the Novel :The technique of the novel in English literature is a dynamic and evolving aspect that encompasses a range of narrative strategies, stylistic choices, and structural innovations. Over the centuries, authors have employed various techniques to craft compelling and immersive narratives, contributing to the richness and diversity of the novel as a literary form.One fundamental technique is Narrative Point of View. Authors strategically choose whether to narrate the story from a first-person perspective, offering insights into the protagonist’s thoughts and emotions, or from a third-person perspective, providing a broader and more objective view of the characters and events. The use of multiple perspectives, known as a narrative technique of shifting viewpoints, allows for a nuanced exploration of different characters’ experiences.Characterization is another crucial technique that breathes life into the novel. Authors employ both direct and indirect methods to develop characters, revealing their personalities, motivations, and conflicts. Through dialogue, actions, and inner thoughts, characters become dynamic entities that drive the narrative forward and engage readers on emotional and intellectual levels.Plot structure is a key component of novelistic technique. Novels can follow a linear chronology, moving seamlessly from one event to the next, or they can utilize nonlinear structures, such as flashbacks or parallel narratives, to create complexity and depth. The organization of events, whether through a traditional three-act structure or experimental forms, contributes to the overall impact of the narrative.The use of symbolism and metaphorical language is a technique that adds layers of meaning to the novel. Authors employ symbols to represent abstract concepts or evoke specific emotions, enriching the reading experience. Metaphors, similes, and allegories contribute to the novel’s aesthetic appeal, allowing for a more profound exploration of themes and ideas.Dialogue serves as a vital technique for character interaction and the advancement of the plot. Well-crafted dialogue not only reveals individual voices but also contributes to the overall tone and atmosphere of the novel. Through conversations, characters express their perspectives, engage in conflict, and build relationships, creating a dynamic and immersive reading experience.Setting, both as a physical and cultural backdrop, is a technique that shapes the novel’s atmosphere and influences the narrative. Descriptive language and attention to detail transport readers to specific locations, fostering a sense of place that enhances the overall realism or fantastical quality of the novel. The cultural and historical context of the setting also plays a crucial role in shaping characters and events.The technique of pacing is essential for maintaining reader engagement. Authors carefully control the speed at which the story unfolds, balancing moments of tension and release. Effective pacing creates a rhythm that keeps readers invested in the narrative, heightening the impact of key events and revelations.Innovations in narrative technique have been a hallmark of the novel’s evolution. Modernist and postmodernist authors, such as Virginia Woolf and James Joyce, experimented with stream-of-consciousness writing and fragmented structures. These techniques challenged traditional storytelling conventions, pushing the boundaries of the novel as a form of artistic expression. The technique of the novel in English literature encompasses a wide array of narrative strategies, stylistic choices, and structural innovations. Authors employ these techniques to shape characters, construct plots, create immersive settings, and engage readers on multiple levels. The continual evolution and experimentation with novelistic techniques highlight the adaptability and enduring significance of the novel as a dynamic and diverse literary form. Share — copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format for any purpose, even commercially. Adapt — remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially. The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms. Attribution — You must give appropriate credit , provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made . You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use. ShareAlike — If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the same license as the original. No additional restrictions — You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits. You do not have to comply with the license for elements of the material in the public domain or where your use is permitted by an applicable exception or limitation . No warranties are given. The license may not give you all of the permissions necessary for your intended use. For example, other rights such as publicity, privacy, or moral rights may limit how you use the material. 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Literature Oral literature Folklore fable fairy tale folk play folksong heroic epic legend myth proverb Oration Performance audiobook spoken word Saying Major written forms Book Drama closet drama Poetry lyric narrative Prose Nonsense verse Ergodic Electronic Long prose fiction Anthology Serial Novel/romance Short prose fiction Novella Novelette Short story Drabble Sketch Flash fiction Parable Religious Wisdom Prose genres Fiction Children's Encyclopedic Genre action adventure coming-of-age crime erotic fantasy horror military paranormal romance science fiction supernatural western Historical Realist Speculative Non-fiction Academic

history philosophy Anecdote Epistle Essay Journalism Letter Life Nature Persuasive Travelogue Poetry genres Narrative Children Epic Dramatic Verse novel National Lyric Ballad Elegy Epigram Ghazal Haiku Hymn Limerick Ode Qasida Sonnet Villanelle Lists Epic Groups and movements Poets Dramatic genres Comedy Libretto Play historical moral Satire Script Tragedy Tragicomedy History Ancient Classical Medieval Modernist Postmodern Lists and outlines Outline Glossary Books Writers Movements Cycles Literary awards poetry Short story collection Lost literary work Lacuna Theory and criticism Sociology Magazines Composition Language Narrative Feud Estate Literature portalvte A novel is an extended work of narrative fiction usually written in prose and published as a book.[1] The word derives from the Italian: novella for 'new', 'news', or 'short story (of something new)', itself from the Latin: novella, a singular noun use of the neuter plural of novellus, diminutive of novus, meaning 'new'.[2] According to Margaret Doody, the novel has "a continuous and comprehensive history of about two thousand years", with its origins in the Ancient Greek and Roman novel, Medieval Chivalric romance, and the tradition of the Italian Renaissance novella.[3] The ancient romance form was revived by Romanticism, in the historical romances of Walter Scott and the Gothic novel.[4] Some novelists, including Nathaniel Hawthorne,[5] Herman Melville,[6] Ann Radcliffe,[7] and John Cowper Powys,[8] preferred the term romance. Such romances should not be confused with the genre fiction romance novel, which focuses on romantic love. M. H. Abrams and Walter Scott have argued that a novel is a fiction narrative that displays a realistic depiction of the state of a society, like Harper Lee's To Kill a Mockingbird.[9][10] The romance, on the other hand, encompasses any fictitious narrative that emphasizes marvellous or uncommon incidents.[11][12][13] In reality, such works are nevertheless also commonly called novels, including Mary Shelley's Frankenstein[14] and J. R. R. Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings.[15] The spread of printed books in China led to the appearance of the vernacular classic Chinese novels during the Ming dynasty (1368–1644), and Qing dynasty (1616–1911). An early example from Europe was Hayy ibn Yaqdhan by the Sufi writer Ibn Tufayl in Muslim Spain.[16] Later developments occurred after the invention of the printing press. Miguel de Cervantes, author of Don Quixote (the first part of which was published in 1605), is frequently cited as the first significant European novelist of the modern era.[17] Literary historian Ian Watt, in The Rise of the Novel (1957), argued that the modern novel was born in the early 18th century. Recent technological developments have led to many novels also being published in non-print media: this includes audio books, web novels, and ebooks. Another non-traditional fiction format can be found in graphic novels. While these comic book versions of works of fiction have their origins in the 19th century, they have only become popular recently. This section needs additional citations for verification. Please help improve this article by adding citations to reliable sources in this section. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed.Find sources: "Novel" – news · newspapers · books · scholar · JSTOR (December 2024) (Learn how and when to remove this message) Madame de Pompadour spending her afternoon with a book (François Boucher, 1756) Paper as the essential carrier: Murasaki Shikibu writing her The Tale of Genji in the early 11th century, 17th-century depiction A novel is a long, fictional narrative. The novel in the modern era usually makes use of a literary prose style. The development of the prose novel at this time was encouraged by innovations in printing, and the introduction of cheap paper in the 15th century. Several characteristics of a novel might include: Fictional narrative: Fictionality is most commonly cited as distinguishing novels from historiography.[citation needed] However this can be a problematic criterion.[citation needed] Throughout the early modern period authors of historical narratives would often include inventions rooted in traditional beliefs in order to embellish a passage of text or add credibility to an opinion. Historians would also invent and compose speeches for didactic purposes. Novels can, on the other hand, depict the social, political and personal realities of a place and period with clarity and detail not found in works of history. Several novels, for example Ông cố vấn written by Hữu Mai, were designed to be and defined as a "non-fiction" novel which purposefully recorded historical facts in the form of a novel.[citation needed] Literary prose: While prose rather than verse became the standard of the modern novel, the ancestors of the modern European novel include verse epics in the Romance language of southern France, especially those by Chrétien de Troyes (late 12th century), and in Middle English (Geoffrey Chaucer's (c. 1343 – 1400) The Canterbury Tales).[18] Even in the 19th century, fictional narratives in verse, such as Lord Byron's Don Juan (1824), Alexander Pushkin's Yevgeniy Onegin (1833), and Elizabeth Barrett Browning's Aurora Leigh (1856), competed with prose novels. Vikram Seth's The Golden Gate (1986), composed of 590 Onegin stanzas, is a more recent example of the verse novel.[19] Experience of intimacy: Both in 11th-century Japan and 15th-century Europe, prose fiction created intimate reading situations. Harold Bloom[20] characterizes Lady Murasaki's use of intimacy and irony in The Tale of Genji as "having anticipated Cervantes as the first novelist." On the other hand, verse epics, including the Odyssey and Aeneid, had been recited to select audiences, though this was a more intimate experience than the performance of plays in theaters.[citation needed] A new world of individualistic fashion, personal views, intimate feelings, secret anxieties, "conduct", and "gallantry" spread with novels and the associated prose-romance. Length: The novel is today the longest genre of narrative prose fiction, followed by the novella. However, in the 17th century, critics saw the romance as of epic length and the novel as its short rival. A precise definition of the differences in length between these types of fiction, is, however, not possible. The philosopher and literary critic György Lukács argued that the requirement of length is connected with the notion that a novel should encompass the totality of life.[21] However, according to the English novelist E. M. Forster, a novel should be composed with at least fifty-thousand words.[22] East Asian countries, like China, Korea, Vietnam and Japan, use the word 小說 (variant Traditional Chinese and Shinjitai: 小説; Simplified Chinese: 小说; Hangeul: ; Pinyin: xiǎoshuō; Jyutping: siu2 syut3; Wugniu: 3siau-seq7; Peh-oe-ji: sió-soat; Hepburn: shōsetsu; Revised: soseol; Vietnamese: tiểu thuyết), which literally means "small talks" or "little talks", to refer to works of fiction of whatever length.[23] In Chinese, Japanese and Korean cultures, the concept of novel as it is understood in the Western world was (and still is) termed as "long length small talk" (長篇小說), novella as "medium length small talk" (中篇小說), and short stories as "short length small talk" (短篇小說). However, in Vietnamese culture, the term 小說 exclusively refers to 長篇小說 (long-length small talk), i.e. standard novel, while different terms are used to refer to novella and short stories. Such terms originated from ancient Chinese classification of literature works into "small talks" (tales of daily life and trivial matters) and "great talks" ("sacred" classic works of great thinkers like Confucius). In other words, the ancient definition of "small talks" merely refers to trivial affairs, trivial facts, and can be different from the Western concept of novel. According to Lu Xun, the word "small talks" first appeared in the works of Zhuang Zhou, which coined such word. Later scholars also provided a similar definition, such as Han dynasty historian Ban Gu, who categorized all the trivial stories and gossips collected by local government magistrates as "small talks". Hồ Nguyên Trừng classified his memoir collection Nam Ông mộng lục as "small talks" clearly with the meaning of "trivial facts" rather than the Western definition of novel. Such classification also left a strong legacy in interpretations of the Western definition of “novel” at the time when Western literature was first introduced to East Asian countries. For example, Thanh Lãng and Nhất Linh classified the epic poems such as The Tale of Kiều as "novel", while Trần Chánh Chiếu emphasized the "belongs to the commoners", "trivial daily talks" aspect in one of his work.[24][25][26][27][28] In Korea and Japan, very short stories [ko][29] stand out as a separate genre.[30] Depending on their length, Korean works in the genre of soseol can be divided into novels (Korean: ; Hanja: 長篇小說; RR: jangpyeon soseol; MR: changp'yŏn sosŏl; lit. full-length novel),[31][32] novellas (Korean: ; Hanja: 中篇小說; RR: jungpyeon soseol; MR: chungp'yŏn sosŏl; lit. midlength novel),[33] short stories (Korean: ; Hanja: 短篇小說; RR: danpyeon soseol; MR: tanp'yŏn sosŏl; lit. short novel),[34][35] and very short stories (Korean: ; RR: kongteu; MR: k'ongt'ŭ; from French conte [fr];[36][37] Korean: ; Hanja: 掌篇小說; RR: jangpyeon soseol; MR: changp'yŏn sosŏl; lit. a novel the size of a palm of a hand;[38] or Korean: ; Hanja: 葉篇小說; RR: yeoppyeon soseol; MR: yŏpp'yŏn sosŏl; lit. a novel the size of a tree leaf[39]).[40] See also: Ancient Greek novel and Byzantine novel The earliest novels include classical Greek and Latin prose narratives from the first century BC to the second century AD, such as Chariton's Callirhoe (mid 1st century), which is "arguably the earliest surviving Western novel",[41] as well as Petronius' Satyricon, Lucian's True Story, Apuleius' The Golden Ass, and the anonymous Aesop Romance and Alexander Romance. These works were often influenced by oral traditions, such as storytelling and myth-making, and reflected the cultural, social, and political contexts of their time. Afterwards, their style was adapted in later Byzantine novels such as Hysimine and Hysimines by Eustathios Makrembolites[42] Narrative forms were also developed in Classical Sanskrit in India during the 5th through 8th centuries. Vasavadatta by Subandhu, Daśakumāracarita and Avantisundarīkathā by Daṇḍin, and Kadambari by Banabhatta are among notable works. These narrative forms were influenced by much older classical Sanskrit plays and Indian classical drama literature, as well as by oral traditions and religious texts.[43] See also: Classic Chinese Novels The You Xian Ku by Zhang Zhuo The 7th-century Chinese narrative prose work You Xian Ku written by Zhang Zhuo is considered by some to be one of the earliest "romances" or "novels" of the Tang dynasty,[44][45] and it was influential on later works of fiction in East Asia.[45] Urbanization and the spread of printed books in Song dynasty (960–1279)[citation needed] led to the evolution of oral storytelling, chuanqi and huaben, into long-form multi-volume vernacular fictional novels by the Ming dynasty (1368–1644). The European developments of the novel did not occur until after the invention of the printing press by Johannes Gutenberg around 1439, and the rise of the publishing industry over a century later.[46] Long European works continued to be in poetry in the 16th century. The modern European novel is often said to have begun with Don Quixote in 1605.[17] Another important early novel was the French pastoral novel L'Astrée by Honore d'Urfe, published in 1610. Main article: Chivalric romance Chaucer reciting Troilus and Criseyde: early-15th-century manuscript of the work at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge Romance or chivalric romance is a type of narrative in prose or verse popular in the aristocratic circles of High Medieval and Early Modern Europe. They were marvel-filled adventures, often of a knight-errant with heroic qualities, who undertakes a quest, yet it is "the emphasis on heterosexual love and courtly manners distinguishes it from the chanson de geste and other kinds of epic, which involve heroism."[47] In later romances, particularly those of French origin, there is a marked tendency to emphasize themes of courtly love. Originally, romance literature was written in Old French, Anglo-Norman and Occitan, later, in English, Italian and German. During the early 13th century, romances were increasingly written as prose. The shift from verse to prose dates from the early 13th century; for example, the Romance of Flamenca. The Prose Lancelot or Vulgate Cycle also includes passages from that period. This collection indirectly led to Thomas Malory's Le Morte d'Arthur of the early 1470s. Prose became increasingly attractive because it enabled writers to associate popular stories with serious histories traditionally composed in prose, and could also be more easily translated.[48] Popular literature also drew on themes of romance, but with ironic, satiric or burlesque intent. Romances reworked legends, fairy tales, and history, but by about 1600 they were out of fashion, and Miguel de Cervantes famously burlesqued them in Don Quixote (1605). Still, the modern image of the medieval is more influenced by the romance than by any other medieval genre, and the word "medieval" evokes knights, distressed damsels, dragons, and such tropes.[49] Main article: Novella The term "novel" originates from the production of short stories, or novella that remained part of a European oral culture of storytelling into the late 19th century. Fairy tales, jokes, and humorous stories designed to make a point in a conversation, and the exemplum a priest would insert in a sermon belong into this tradition. Written collections of such stories circulated in a wide range of products from practical compilations of examples designed for the use of clerics to compilations of various stories such as Boccaccio's Decameron (1354) and Geoffrey Chaucer's Canterbury Tales (1386–1400). The Decameron was a compilation of one hundred novelle told by ten people—seven women and three men—fleeing the Black Death by escaping from Florence to the Fiesole hills, in 1348. 1474: The customer in the copyist's shop with a book he wants to have copied. This illustration of the first printed German Melusine looked back to the market of manuscripts. The modern distinction between history and fiction did not exist in the early sixteenth century and the grossest improbabilities pervade many historical accounts found in the early modern print market. William Caxton's 1485 edition of Thomas Malory's Le Morte d'Arthur (1471) was sold as a true history, though the story unfolded in a series of magical incidents and historical improbabilities. Sir John Mandeville's Voyages, written in the 14th century, but circulated in printed editions throughout the 18th century,[50] was filled with natural wonders, which were accepted as fact, like the one-footed Ethiopians who use their extremity as an umbrella against the desert sun. Both works eventually came to be viewed as works of fiction. In the 16th and 17th centuries two factors led to the separation of history and fiction. The invention of printing immediately created a new market of comparatively cheap entertainment and knowledge in the form of chapbooks. The more elegant production of this genre by 17th- and 18th-century authors were belles lettres—that is, a market that would be neither low nor academic. The second major development was the first best-seller of modern fiction, the Spanish Amadis de Gaula, by García Montalvo. However, it was not accepted as an example of belles lettres. The Amadis eventually became the archetypical romance, in contrast with the modern novel which began to be developed in the 17th century. Many different genres of literature made their debut during the Edo period in Japan, helped by a rising literacy rate among the growing population of townspeople, as well as the development of lending libraries. Ihara Saikaku (1642–1693) might be said to have given birth to the modern consciousness of the novel in Japan, mixing vernacular dialogue into his humorous and cautionary tales of the pleasure quarters, the so-called Ukiyozōshi ("floating world") genre. Ihara's Life of an Amorous Man is considered the first work in this genre. Although Ihara's works were not regarded as high literature at the time because it had been aimed towards and popularized by the chōnin (merchant classes), they became popular and were key to the development and spread of ukiyozōshi. Main article: Chapbook A chapbook is an early type of popular literature printed in early modern Europe. Produced cheaply, chapbooks were commonly small, paper-covered booklets, usually printed on a single sheet folded into books of 8, 12, 16 and 24 pages. They were often illustrated with crude woodcuts, which sometimes bore no relation to the text. When illustrations were included in chapbooks, they were considered popular prints. The tradition arose in the 16th century, as soon as printed books became affordable, and rose to its height during the 17th and 18th centuries. Many different kinds of ephemera and popular or folk literature were published as chapbooks, such as almanacs, children's literature, folk tales, nursery rhymes, pamphlets, poetry, and political and religious tracts.[51] The term "chapbook" for this type of literature was coined in the 19th century. The corresponding French and German terms are bibliothèque bleue (blue book) and Volksbuch, respectively.[52][53][54] The principal historical subject matter of chapbooks was abridgements of ancient historians, popular medieval histories of knights, stories of comical heroes, religious legends, and collections of jests and fables.[55] The new printed books reached the households of urban citizens and country merchants who visited the cities as traders. Cheap printed histories were, in the 17th and 18th centuries, especially popular among apprentices and younger urban readers of both sexes.[56] The early modern market, from the 1530s and 1540s, divided into low chapbooks and high market expensive, fashionable, elegant belles lettres. The Amadis and Rabelais' Gargantua and Pantagruel were important publications with respect to this divide. Both books specifically addressed the new customers of popular histories, rather than readers of belles lettres. The Amadis was a multi–volume fictional history of style, that aroused a debate about style and elegance as it became the first best-seller of popular fiction. On the other hand, Gargantua and Pantagruel, while it adopted the form of modern popular history, in fact satirized that genre's stylistic achievements. The division, between low and high literature, became especially visible with books that appeared on both the popular and belles lettres markets in the course of the 17th and 18th centuries: low chapbooks included abridgments of books such as Don Quixote. The term "chapbook" is also in use for present-day publications, commonly short, inexpensive booklets.[51] Main articles: Heroic romances and 17th-century French literature Heroic Romance is a genre of imaginative literature, which flourished in the 17th century, principally in France. The beginnings of modern fiction in France took a pseudo-bucolic form, and the celebrated L'Astrée, (1610) of Honore d'Urfe (1568–1625), which is the earliest French novel, is properly styled a pastoral. Although its action was, in the main, languid and sentimental, there was a side of the Astree which encouraged that extravagant love of glory, that spirit of " panache", which was now rising to its height in France. That spirit it was which animated Marin le Roy de Gomberville (1603–1674), who was the inventor of what have since been known as the Heroical Romances. In these there was experienced a violent recrudescence of the old medieval elements of romance, the impossible valour devoted to a pursuit of the impossible beauty, but the whole clothed in the language and feeling and atmosphere of the age in which the books were written. In order to give point to the chivalrous actions of the heroes, it was always hinted that they were well-known public characters of the day in a romantic disguise. Richard Head, The English Rogue (1665) Stories of witty cheats were an integral part of the European novella with its tradition of fabliaux. Significant examples include Till Eulenspiegel (1510), Lazarillo de Tormes (1554), Grimmelshausen's Simplicissimus Teutsch (1666–1668) and in England Richard Head's The English Rogue (1665). The tradition that developed with these titles focused on a hero and his life. The adventures led to satirical encounters with the real world with the hero either becoming the pitiable victim or the rogue who exploited the vices of those he met. A second tradition of satirical romances can be traced back to Heinrich Wittenwiler's Ring (c. 1410) and to François Rabelais' Gargantua and Pantagruel (1532–1564), which parodied and satirized heroic romances, and did this mostly by dragging them into the low realm of the burlesque. Don Quixote modified the satire of romances: its hero lost contact with reality by reading too many romances in the Amadisian tradition. Other important works of the tradition are Paul Scarron's Roman Comique (1651–57), the anonymous French Rozelli with its satire on Europe's religions, Alain-René Lesage's Gil Blas (1715–1735), Henry Fielding's Joseph Andrews (1742) and Tom Jones (1749), and Denis Diderot's Jacques the Fatalist (1773, printed posthumously in 1796).[57] 1719 newspaper reprint of Robinson Crusoe A market of literature in the modern sense of the word, that is a separate market for fiction and poetry, did not exist until the late seventeenth century. All books were sold under the rubric of "History and politicks" in the early 18th century, including pamphlets, memoirs, travel literature, political analysis, serious histories, romances, poetry, and novels. That fictional histories shared the same space with academic histories and modern journalism had been criticized by historians since the end of the Middle Ages: fictions were "lies" and therefore hardly justifiable at all. The climate, however, changed in the 1670s. The romance format of the quasi–historical works of Madame d'Aulnoy, César Vichard de Saint-Réal,[58] Gatien de Courtilz de Sandras,[59] and Anne-Marguerite Petit du Noyer, allowed the publication of histories that dared not risk an unambiguous assertion of their truth. The literary market-place of the late 17th and early 18th century employed a simple pattern of options whereby fictions could reach out into the sphere of true histories. This permitted its authors to claim they had published fiction, not truth, if they ever faced allegations of libel. Prefaces and title pages of seventeenth and early eighteenth century fiction acknowledged this pattern: histories could claim to be romances, but threaten to relate true events, as in the Roman à clef. Other works could, conversely, claim to be factual histories, yet earn the suspicion that they were wholly invented. A further differentiation was made between private and public history: Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe was, within this pattern, neither a "romance" nor a "novel". It smelled of romance, yet the preface stated that it should most certainly be read as a true private history.[60] See also: Picaresque novel The rise of the modern novel as an alternative to the chivalric romance began with the publication of Miguel de Cervantes' novel Don Quixote:[61][62] "the first great novel of world literature".[63] It continued with Scarron's Roman Comique (the first part of which appeared in 1651), whose heroes noted the rivalry between French romances and the new Spanish genre.[64] In Germany an early example of the novel is Simplicius Simplicissimus by Hans Jakob Christoffel von Grimmelshausen, published in 1668, Late 17th-century critics looked back on the history of prose fiction, proud of the generic shift that had taken place, leading towards the modern novel/novella.[65] The first perfect works in French were those of Scarron and Madame de La Fayette's "Spanish history" Zayde (1670). The development finally led to her Princesse de Clèves (1678), the first novel with what would become characteristic French subject matter.[66][67] Europe witnessed the generic shift in the titles of works in French published in Holland, which supplied the international market and English publishers exploited the novel/romance controversy in the 1670s and 1680s.[68] Contemporary critics listed the advantages of the new genre: brevity, a lack of ambition to produce epic poetry in prose; the style was fresh and plain; the focus was on modern life, and on heroes who were neither good nor bad.[69] The novel's potential to become the medium of urban gossip and scandal fueled the rise of the novel/novella. Stories were offered as allegedly true recent histories, not for the sake of scandal but strictly for the moral lessons they gave. To prove this, fictionalized names were used with the true names in a separate key. The Mercure Gallant set the fashion in the 1670s.[70] Collections of letters and memoirs appeared, and were filled with the intriguing new subject matter and the epistolary novel grew from this and led to the first full blown example of scandalous fiction in Aphra Behn's Love-Letters Between a Nobleman and His Sister (1684/ 1685/ 1687). Before the rise of the literary novel, reading novels had only been a form of entertainment.[71] However, one of the earliest English novels, Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe (1719), has elements of the romance, unlike these novels, because of its exotic setting and story of survival in isolation. Crusoe lacks almost all of the elements found in these new novels: wit, a fast narration evolving around a group of young fashionable urban heroes, along with their intrigues, a scandalous moral, gallant talk to be imitated, and a brief, concise plot.[citation needed] The new developments did, however, lead to Eliza Haywood's epic length novel, Love in Excess (1719/20) and to Samuel Richardson's Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded (1741).[citation needed] Some literary historians date the beginning of the English novel with Richardson's Pamela, rather than Crusoe.[72] Main article: Augustan prose The idea of the "rise of the novel" in the 18th century is especially associated with Ian Watt's influential study The Rise of the Novel (1957).[73] In Watt's conception, a rise in fictional realism during the 18th century came to distinguish the novel from earlier prose narratives.[74] Main article: Philosophical fiction Laurence Sterne, Tristram Shandy, vol.6, pp. 70–71 (1769) The rising status of the novel in eighteenth century can be seen in the development of philosophical[75] and experimental novels. Philosophical fiction was not exactly new. Plato's dialogues were embedded in fictional narratives and his Republic is an early example of a Utopia. Ibn Tufail's 12th century Philosophus Autodidactus with its story of a human outcast surviving on an island, and the 13th century response by Ibn al-Nafis, Theologus Autodidactus are both didactic narrative works that can be thought of as early examples of a philosophical[76] and a theological novel,[77] respectively. The tradition of works of fiction that were also philosophical texts continued with Thomas More's Utopia (1516) and Tommaso Campanella's City of the Sun (1602). However, the actual tradition of the philosophical novel came into being in the 1740s with new editions of More's work under the title Utopia: or the happy republic; a philosophical romance (1743).[citation needed] Voltaire wrote in this genre in Micromegas: a comic romance, which is a biting satire on philosophy, ignorance, and the self-conceit of mankind (1752, English 1753). His Zadig (1747) and Candide (1759) became central texts of the French Enlightenment and of the modern novel.[citation needed] An example of the experimental novel is Laurence Sterne's The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman (1759–1767), with its rejection of continuous narration.[78] In it the author not only addresses readers in his preface but speaks directly to them in his fictional narrative. In addition to Sterne's narrative experiments, there are visual experiments, such as a marbled page, a black page to express sorrow, and a page of lines to show the plot lines of the book. The novel as a whole focuses on the problems of language, with constant regard to John Locke's theories in An Essay Concerning Human Understanding.[79] Samuel Richardson's Pamela (1741) The rise of the word "novel" at the cost of its rival, the romance, remained a Spanish and English phenomenon, and though readers all over Western Europe had welcomed the novel(la) or short history as an alternative in the second half of the 17th century, only the English and the Spanish had openly discredited the romance.[citation needed] But the change of taste was brief and Fénelon's Telemachus [Les Aventures de Télémaque] (1699/1700) already exploited a nostalgia for the old romances with their heroism and professed virtue. Jane Barker explicitly advertised her Exilius as "A new Romance", "written after the Manner of Telemachus", in 1715.[80] Robinson Crusoe spoke of his own story as a "romance", though in the preface to the third volume, published in 1720, Defoe attacks all who said "that [...] the Story is feign'd, that the Names are borrow'd, and that it is all a Romance; that there never were any such Man or Place". The late 18th century brought an answer with the Romantic Movement's readiness to reclaim the word romance, with the gothic romance, and the historical novels of Walter Scott. Robinson Crusoe now became a "novel" in this period, that is a work of the new realistic fiction created in the 18th century.[citation needed] Main article: Sentimental novel Sentimental novels relied on emotional responses, and feature scenes of distress and tenderness, and the plot is arranged to advance emotions rather than action. The result is a valorization of "fine feeling", displaying the characters as models of refined, sensitive emotional affect. The ability to display such feelings was thought at this time to show character and experience, and to help shape positive social life and relationships.[81] An example of this genre is Samuel Richardson's Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded (1740), composed "to cultivate the Principles of Virtue and Religion in the Minds of the Youth of Both Sexes", which focuses on a potential victim, a heroine that has all the modern virtues and who is vulnerable because her low social status and her occupation as servant of a libertine who falls in love with her. She, however, ends in reforming her antagonist.[citation needed] Male heroes adopted the new sentimental character traits in the 1760s. Laurence Sterne's Yorick, the hero of the Sentimental Journey (1768) did so with an enormous amount of humour. Oliver Goldsmith's Vicar of Wakefield (1766) and Henry Mackenzie's Man of Feeling (1771) produced the far more serious role models.[citation needed] These works inspired a sub- and counterculture of pornographic novels, for which Greek and Latin authors in translations had provided elegant models from the last century.[82] Pornography includes John Cleland's Fanny Hill (1748), which offered an almost exact reversal of the plot of novels that emphasise virtue. The prostitute Fanny Hill learns to enjoy her work and establishes herself as a free and economically independent individual, in editions one could only expect to buy under the counter.[83] Less virtuous protagonists can also be found in satirical novels, like Richard Head's English Rogue (1665), that feature brothels, while women authors like Aphra Behn had offered their heroines alternative careers as precursors of the 19th-century femmes fatales.[84] The genre evolves in the 1770s with, for example, Werther in Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's The Sorrows of Young Werther (1774) realising that it is impossible for him to integrate into the new conformist society, and Pierre Choderlos de Laclos in Les Liaisons dangereuses (1782) showing a group of aristocrats playing games of intrigue and amorality.[citation needed]. By around 1700, fiction was no longer a predominantly aristocratic entertainment, and printed books had soon gained the power to reach readers of almost all classes, though the reading habits differed and to follow fashions remained a privilege. Spain was a trendsetter into the 1630s but French authors superseded Cervantes, de Quevedo, and Alemán in the 1640s. As Huet was to note in 1670, the change was one of manners.[85] The new French works taught a new, on the surface freer, gallant exchange between the sexes as the essence of life at the French court. The situation changed again from 1660s into the 1690s when works by French authors were published in Holland out of the reach of French censors.[86] Dutch publishing houses pirated fashionable books from France and created a new market of political and scandalous fiction. This led to a market of European rather than French fashions in the early 18th century.[87] Intimate short stories: The Court and City Vagaries (1711). By the 1680s fashionable political European novels had inspired a second wave of private scandalous publications and generated new productions of local importance. Women authors reported on politics and on their private love affairs in The Hague and in London. German students imitated them to boast of their private amours in fiction.[88] The London, the anonymous international market of the Netherlands, publishers in Hamburg and Leipzig generated new public spheres.[89] Once private individuals, such as students in university towns and daughters of London's upper class began to write novels based on questionable reputations, the public began to call for a reformation of manners.[90] An important development in Britain, at the beginning of the century, was that new journals like The Spectator and The Tatler reviewed novels. In Germany Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's Briefe, die neuste Literatur betreffend (1758) appeared in the middle of the century with reviews of art and fiction. By the 1780s such reviews played had an important role in introducing new works of fiction to the public. Influenced by the new journals, reform became the main goal of the second generation of eighteenth century novelists. The Spectator Number 10 had stated that the aim was now "to enliven morality with wit, and to temper wit with morality [...] to bring philosophy out of the closets and libraries, schools and colleges, to dwell in clubs and assemblies, at tea-tables and coffeehouses"). Constructive criticism of novels had until then been rare.[91] The first treatise on the history of the novel was a preface to Marie de La Fayette's novel Zayde (1670). A much later development was the introduction of novels into school and later university curricula.[when?] The French churchman and scholar Pierre Daniel Huet's Traitté de l'origine des romans (1670) laid the ground for a greater acceptance of the novel as literature, that is comparable to the classics, in the early 18th century. The theologian had not only dared to praise fictions, but he had also explained techniques of theological interpretation of fiction, which was a novelty. Furthermore, readers of novels and romances could gain insight not only into their own culture, but also that of distant, exotic countries.[citation needed] When the decades around 1700 saw the appearance of new editions of the classical authors Petronius, Lucian, and Heliodorus of Emesa.[92] the publishers equipped them with prefaces that referred to Huet's treatise and the canon it had established. Also exotic works of Middle Eastern fiction entered the market that gave insight into Islamic culture. The Book of One Thousand and One Nights was first published in Europe from 1704 to 1715 in French, and then translated immediately into English and German, and was seen as a contribution to Huet's history of romances.[93] The English, Select Collection of Novels in six volumes (1720–22), is a milestone in this development of the novel's prestige. It included Huet's Treatise, along with the European tradition of the modern novel of the day: that is, novella from Machiavelli's to Marie de La Fayette's masterpieces. Aphra Behn's novels had appeared in the 1680s but became classics when reprinted in collections. Fénelon's Telemachus (1699/1700) became a classic three years after its publication. New authors entering the market were now ready to use their personal names rather than pseudonyms, including Eliza Haywood, who in 1719 following in the footsteps of Aphra Behn used her name with unprecedented pride. Main article: Romanticism See also: Newgate novel Image from a Victorian edition of Walter Scott's Waverley (1814) The very word romanticism is connected to the idea of romance, and the romance genre experienced a revival, at the end of the 18th century, with gothic fiction, that began in 1764 with Horace Walpole's The Castle of Otranto, subtitled (in its second edition) "A Gothic Story".[94] Subsequent important gothic works are Ann Radcliffe's The Mysteries of Udolpho (1794) and 'Monk' Lewis's The Monk (1795). First edition of Aleksis Kivi's The Seven Brothers (1870) The new romances challenged the idea that the novel involved a realistic depiction of life, and destabilized the difference the critics had been trying to establish, between serious classical art and popular fiction. Gothic romances exploited the grotesque,[95] and some critics thought that their subject matter deserved less credit than the worst medieval tales of Arthurian knighthood.[96] The authors of this new type of fiction were accused of exploiting all available topics to thrill, arouse, or horrify their audience. These new romantic novelists, however, claimed that they were exploring the entire realm of fictionality. And psychological interpreters, in the early 19th century, read these works as encounters with the deeper hidden truth of the human imagination: this included sexuality, anxieties, and insatiable desires. Under such readings, novels were described as exploring deeper human motives, and it was suggested that such artistic freedom would reveal what had not previously been openly visible. The romances of de Sade, Les 120 Journées de Sodome (1785), Poe's Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque (1840), Mary Shelley, Frankenstein (1818), and E.T.A. Hoffmann, Die Elixiere des Teufels (1815), would later attract 20th-century psychoanalysts and supply the images for 20th- and 21st-century horror films, love romances, fantasy novels, role-playing computer games, and the surrealists. The historical romance was also important at this time. But, while earlier writers of these romances paid little attention to historical reality, Walter Scott's historical novel Waverley (1814) broke with this tradition, and he invented "the true historical novel".[97] At the same time he was influenced by gothic romance, and had collaborated in 1801 with 'Monk' Lewis on Tales of Wonder.[97] With his Waverley novels Scott "hoped to do for the Scottish border" what Goethe and other German poets "had done for the Middle Ages, "and make its past live again in modern romance".[98] Scott's novels "are in the mode he himself defined as romance, 'the interest of which turns upon marvelous and uncommon incidents'".[99] He used his imagination to re-evaluate history by rendering things, incidents and protagonists in the way only the novelist could do. His work remained historical fiction, yet it questioned existing historical perceptions. The use of historical research was an important tool: Scott, the novelist, resorted to documentary sources as any historian would have done, but as a romantic he gave his subject a deeper imaginative and emotional significance.[99] By combining research with "marvelous and uncommon incidents", Scott attracted a far wider market than any historian could, and was the most famous novelist of his generation, throughout Europe.[97] Main articles: French literature of the 19th century and Victorian literature See also: Sensation novel In the 19th century the relationship between authors, publishers, and readers, changed. Authors originally had only received payment for their manuscript, however, changes in copyright laws, which began in 18th and continued into the 19th century[100] promised royalties on all future editions. Another change in the 19th century was that novelists began to read their works in theaters, halls, and bookshops.[101] Also during the nineteenth century the market for popular fiction grew, and competed with works of literature. New institutions like the circulating library created a new market with a mass reading public.[102] Another difference was that novels began to deal with more difficult subjects, including current political and social issues, that were being discussed in newspapers and magazines. Under the influence of social critics like Thomas Carlyle,[103] the idea of social responsibility became a key subject, whether of the citizen, or of the artist, with the theoretical debate concentrating on questions around the moral soundness of the modern novel.[104] Questions about artistic integrity, as well as aesthetics, including the idea of "art for art's sake", proposed by writers like Oscar Wilde and Algernon Charles Swinburne, were also important.[105] Major British writers such as Charles Dickens[106] and Thomas Hardy[107] were influenced by the romance genre tradition of the novel, which had been revitalized during the Romantic period. The Brontë sisters were notable mid-19th-century authors in this tradition, with Anne Brontë's The Tenant of Wildfell Hall, Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre and Emily Brontë's Wuthering Heights.[108] Publishing at the very end of the 19th century, Joseph Conrad has been called "a supreme 'romancer.'"[109] In America "the romance ... proved to be a serious, flexible, and successful medium for the exploration of philosophical ideas and attitudes." Notable examples include Nathaniel Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter, and Herman Melville's Moby-Dick.[110] A number of European novelists were similarly influenced during this period by the earlier romance tradition, along with the Romanticism, including Victor Hugo, with novels like The Hunchback of Notre-Dame (1831) and Les Misérables (1862), and Mikhail Yuryevich Lermontov with A Hero of Our Time (1840). Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin (1852) Many 19th-century authors dealt with significant social matters.[111] Émile Zola's novels depicted the world of the working classes, which Marx and Engels's non-fiction explores. In the United States slavery and racism became topics of far broader public debate thanks to Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin (1852), which dramatizes topics that had previously been discussed mainly in the abstract. Charles Dickens' novels led his readers into contemporary workhouses, and provided first-hand accounts of child labor. The treatment of the subject of war changed with Leo Tolstoy's War and Peace (1868/69), where he questions the facts provided by historians. Similarly the treatment of crime is very different in Fyodor Dostoyevsky's Crime and Punishment (1866), where the point of view is that of a criminal. Women authors had dominated fiction from the 1640s into the early 18th century, but few before George Eliot so openly questioned the role, education, and status of women in society, as she did. As the novel became a platform of modern debate, national literatures were developed that link the present with the past in the form of the historical novel. Alessandro Manzoni's I Promessi Sposi (1827) did this for Italy, while novelists in Russia and the surrounding Slavonic countries, as well as Scandinavia, did likewise. Along with this new appreciation of history, the future also became a topic for fiction. This had been done earlier in works like Samuel Madden's Memoirs of the Twentieth Century (1733) and Mary Shelley's The Last Man (1826), a work whose plot culminated in the catastrophic last days of a mankind extinguished by the plague. Edward Bellamy's Looking Backward (1887) and H. G. Wells's The Time Machine (1895) were concerned with technological and biological developments. Industrialization, Darwin's theory of evolution and Marx's theory of class divisions shaped these works and turned historical processes into a subject of wide debate. Bellamy's Looking Backward became the second best-selling book of the 19th century after Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin.[112][113] Such works led to the development of a whole genre of popular science fiction as the 20th century approached. See also: Modernism, Postmodernism, Antinovel, and Nouveau roman Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, Vladivostok, 1995 James Joyce's Ulysses (1922) had a major influence on modern novelists, in the way that it replaced the 18th- and 19th-century narrator with a text that attempted to record inner thoughts, or a "stream of consciousness". This term was first used by William James in 1890 and, along with the related term interior monologue, is used by modernists like Dorothy Richardson, Marcel Proust, Virginia Woolf, and William Faulkner.[114] Also in the 1920s expressionist Alfred Döblin went in a different direction with Berlin Alexanderplatz (1929), where interspersed non-fictional text fragments exist alongside the fictional material to create another new form of realism, which differs from that of stream-of-consciousness. Later works like Samuel Beckett's trilogy Molloy (1951), Malone Dies (1951) and The Unnamable (1953), as well as Julio Cortázar's Rayuela (1963) and Thomas Pynchon's Gravity's Rainbow (1973) all make use of the stream-of-consciousness technique. On the other hand, Robert Coover is an example of those authors who, in the 1960s, fragmented their stories and challenged time and sequentiality as fundamental structural concepts. Chinua Achebe, Buffalo, 2008 The 20th century novel deals with a wide range of subject matter. Erich Maria Remarque's All Quiet on the Western Front (1928) focuses on a young German's experiences of World War I. The Jazz Age is explored by American F. Scott Fitzgerald, and the Great Depression by fellow American John Steinbeck. Totalitarianism is the subject of British writer George Orwell's most famous novels. Existentialism is the focus of two writers from France: Jean-Paul Sartre with Nausea (1938) and Albert Camus with The Stranger (1942). The counterculture of the 1960s, with its exploration of altered states of consciousness, led to revived interest in the mystical works of Hermann Hesse, such as Steppenwolf (1927), and produced iconic works of its own, for example

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The novel 1780–1832 Archived 2021-11-11 at the Wayback Machine at the British Library The novel 1832–1880 Archived 2021-06-25 at the Wayback Machine at the British Library The House of the Seven Gables with "Preface" "The 100 greatest novels of all time". The Telegraph. 2 March 2021. Archived from the original on 2022-01-11. Retrieved 4 March 2021. Retrieved from " Literature Novels & Short Stories novel, an invented prose narrative of considerable length and a certain complexity that deals imaginatively with human experience, usually through a connected sequence of events involving a group of persons in a specific setting. Within its broad framework, the genre of the novel has encompassed an extensive range of types and styles: picaresque, epistolary, Gothic, romantic, realist, historical—to name only some of the more important ones.Explore essential elements of the novel with Clifton Fadiman and actorsLearn about essential elements of the novel—including mood, motivation, characterization, and style—with editor and anthologist Clifton Fadiman and actors from London's Old Vic theatre company. This is a 1962 production of Encyclopædia Britannica Educational Corporation.See all videos for this articleThe novel is a genre of fiction, and fiction may be defined as the art or craft of contriving, through the written word, representations of human life that instruct or divert or both. The various forms that fiction may take are best seen less as a number of separate categories than as a continuum or, more accurately, a cline, with some such brief form as the anecdote at one end of the scale and the longest conceivable novel at the other. When any piece of fiction is long enough to constitute a whole book, as opposed to a mere part of a book, then it may be said to have achieved novelhood. But this state admits of its own quantitative categories, so that a relatively brief novel may be termed a novella (or, if the insubstantiality of the content matches its brevity, a novelette), and a very long novel may overflow the banks of a single volume and become a roman-fleuve, or river novel. Length is very much one of the dimensions of the genre.The term novel is a truncation of the Italian word novella (from the plural of Latin novellus, a late variant of novus, meaning “new”), so that what is now, in most languages, a diminutive denotes historically the parent form. The novella was a kind of enlarged anecdote like those to be found in the 14th-century Italian classic Boccaccio’s Decameron, each of which exemplifies the etymology well enough. The stories are little new things, novelties, freshly minted diversions, toys; they are not reworkings of known fables or myths, and they are lacking in weight and moral earnestness. It is to be noted that, despite the high example of novelists of the most profound seriousness, such as Tolstoy, Henry James, and Virginia Woolf, the term novel still, in some quarters, carries overtones of lightness and frivolity. And it is possible to descry a tendency to triviality in the form itself. The ode or symphony seems to possess an inner mechanism that protects it from aesthetic or moral corruption, but the novel can descend to shameful commercial depths of sentimentality or pornography. It is the purpose of this section to consider the novel not solely in terms of great art but also as an all-purpose medium catering for all the strata of literacy.Such early ancient Roman fiction as Petronius’ Satyricon of the 1st century ad and Lucius Apuleius’ Golden Ass of the 2nd century contain many of the popular elements that distinguish the novel from its nobler born relative the epic poem. In the fictional works, the medium is prose, the events described are unheroic, the settings are streets and taverns, not battlefields and palaces. There is more low fornication than princely combat; the gods do not move the action; the dialogue is homely rather than aristocratic. It was, in fact, out of the need to find—in the period of Roman decline—a literary form that was anti-epic in both substance and language that the first prose fiction of Europe seems to have been conceived. The most memorable character in Petronius is a nouveau riche vulgarian; the hero of Lucius Apuleius is turned into a donkey; nothing less epic can well be imagined.The medieval chivalric romance (from a popular Latin word, probably Romanice, meaning written in the vernacular, not in traditional Latin) restored a kind of epic view of man—though now as heroic Christian, not heroic pagan. At the same time, it bequeathed its name to the later genre of continental literature, the novel, which is known in French as roman, in Italian as romanzo, etc. (The English term romance, however, carries a pejorative connotation.) But that later genre achieved its first great flowering in Spain at the beginning of the 17th century in an antichivalric comic masterpiece—the Don Quixote of Cervantes, which, on a larger scale than the Satyricon or The Golden Ass, contains many of the elements that have been expected from prose fiction ever since. Novels have heroes, but not in any classical or medieval sense. As for the novelist, he must, in the words of the contemporary British-American W.H. Auden, Famous Novels, Last Lines Quiz Become the whole of boredom, subject to Vulgar complaints like love, among the Just Be just, among the Filthy filthy too, And in his own weak person, if he can, Must suffer dully all the wrongs of Man. The novel attempts to assume those burdens of life that have no place in the epic poem and to see man as unheroic, unredeemed, imperfect, even absurd. This is why there is room among its practitioners for writers of hardboiled detective thrillers such as the contemporary American Mickey Spillane or of sentimental melodramas such as the prolific 19th-century English novelist Mrs. Henry Wood, but not for one of the unremitting elevation of outlook of a John Milton. The novel is propelled through its hundred or thousand pages by a device known as the story or plot. This is frequently conceived by the novelist in very simple terms, a mere nucleus, a jotting on an old envelope: for example, Charles Dickens’ Christmas Carol (1843) might have been conceived as “a misanthrope is reformed through certain magical visitations on Christmas Eve,” or Jane Austen’s Pride and Prejudice (1813) as “a young couple destined to be married have first to overcome the barriers of pride and prejudice,” or Fyodor Dostoyevsky’s Crime and Punishment (1866) as “a young man commits a crime and is slowly pursued in the direction of his punishment.” The detailed working out of the nuclear idea requires much ingenuity, since the plot of one novel is expected to be somewhat different from that of another, and there are very few basic human situations for the novelist to draw upon. The dramatist may take his plot ready-made from fiction or biography—a form of theft sanctioned by Shakespeare—but the novelist has to produce what look like novelties. The example of Shakespeare is a reminder that the ability to create an interesting plot, or even any plot at all, is not a prerequisite of the imaginative writer’s craft. At the lowest level of fiction, plot need be no more than a string of stock devices for arousing stock responses of concern and excitement in the reader. The reader’s interest may be captured at the outset by the promise of conflicts or mysteries or frustrations that will eventually be resolved, and he will gladly—so strong is his desire to be moved or entertained—suspend criticism of even the most trite modes of resolution. In the least sophisticated fiction, the knots to be untied are stringently physical, and the denouement often comes in a sort of triumphant violence. Serious fiction prefers its plots to be based on psychological situations, and its climaxes come in new states of awareness—chiefly self-knowledge—on the parts of the major characters. Melodramatic plots, plots dependent on coincidence or improbability, are sometimes found in even the most elevated fiction; E.M. Forster’s Howards End (1910) is an example of a classic British novel with such a plot. But the novelist is always faced with the problem of whether it is more important to represent the formlessness of real life (in which there are no beginnings and no ends and very few simple motives for action) or to construct an artifact as well balanced and economical as a table or chair; since he is an artist, the claims of art, or artifice, frequently prevail. There are, however, ways of constructing novels in which plot may play a desultory part or no part at all. The traditional picaresque novel—a novel with a rogue as its central character—like Alain Lesage’s Gil Blas (1715) or Henry Fielding’s Tom Jones (1749), depends for movement on a succession of chance incidents. In the works of Virginia Woolf, the consciousness of the characters, bounded by some poetic or symbolic device, sometimes provides all the fictional material. Marcel Proust’s great roman-fleuve, À la recherche du temps perdu (1913–27; Remembrance of Things Past), has a metaphysical framework derived from the time theories of the philosopher Henri Bergson, and it moves toward a moment of truth that is intended to be literally a revelation of the nature of reality. Strictly, any scheme will do to hold a novel together—raw action, the hidden syllogism of the mystery story, prolonged solipsist contemplation—so long as the actualities or potentialities of human life are credibly expressed, with a consequent sense of illumination, or some lesser mode of artistic satisfaction, on the part of the reader. Ah, the novel—a world contained within pages, a playground for words and ideas. With our daily lives dominated by screens, curling up with a good novel is a cherished escape and a nostalgic pastime for many. But what exactly is a novel? In this article, we’ll dive into the art and anatomy of the novel, exploring how a simple string of sentences transforms into a full-fledged literary journey. The AI writing partner for anyone with work to do What is a novel? A novel is a fictional work of prose that weaves together characters, plots, and settings to create a narrative world, capturing a specific theme or element of the human experience. The word “novel” comes from the Italian term novella, which originally meant “new” or “news” and referred to short, new stories. Over time, these tales evolved into longer, more complex narratives, giving rise to the modern novel. Novels fall into the fiction genre, born from the author’s imagination with invented characters, plots, and settings. While nonfiction focuses on real people and events, novels explore themes or emotions through imagined storytelling, offering an escape into alternate worlds. Style and length Often style and length are the two defining factors that set novels apart from other literary works. While short stories can be read in a single sitting, novels are much longer narratives in chapters or parts, requiring a bigger time investment. Due to their length, novels deliver a more expansive, detailed, and nuanced exploration of stories, emotions, and ideas. The distinctive style of novels comes from prose—a natural flow of language that mimics everyday speech, setting it apart from the structured rhythm and rhyme of verse. Unlike verse—which relies on meter, rhyme schemes, and line breaks—prose allows for greater flexibility in sentence structure and length. This allows novels to delve deeply into character development, dialogue, and narrative complexity. Though storytelling has ancient roots, the novel as we know it began to take shape in the 17th and 18th centuries, with authors such as Miguel de Cervantes (Don Quixote) and Daniel Defoe (Robinson Crusoe) pioneering the form. These early works laid the groundwork for what became a defining genre of literature—a medium through which writers could explore human nature, society, and imagination in depth. Key elements of a novel There are several essential elements to great novels, which are important to know if you are thinking about writing your own novel. Let’s explore each one in detail. Plot The plot is the backbone of a novel—a sequence of events that gives structure to the story. It’s the roadmap that takes characters (and readers) from one point to the next, building suspense, conflict, and resolution. Without a plot, a novel would be nothing more than a series of unrelated scenes. The plot is what binds everything together, driving the narrative forward. There are many different types of plots in literature, but some of the most common include: Linear plots, where events happen chronologically, take readers on a straightforward journey from beginning to end. Nonlinear plots often jump around in time or flash between past and present, creating a more complex, layered story. Circular plots, where the story ends in a similar place or situation as where it began, bring the narrative full circle. Plot is crucial because it engages the reader’s attention and creates a framework for the novel’s themes and character development. A well-crafted plot keeps readers hooked, while a weak plot can leave them feeling disconnected from the story. Character development At the heart of every novel are its characters. Character development refers to how characters grow, change, or stay the same throughout the story. In well-written novels, characters evolve as the plot progresses, reacting to challenges and revealing new facets of themselves. Typically, the protagonist is the main character, the one driving the story forward. This character is often the one readers root for, as they face challenges, pursue goals, or overcome conflicts. In contrast, the antagonist is the character or force that opposes the protagonist, creating tension and conflict. This doesn’t always mean the antagonist is a villain—sometimes, they simply clash with the protagonist. Characters tend to be either dynamic or static in nature. Dynamic characters change throughout the story. They grow, learn lessons, or undergo transformations that shape the plot’s outcome. These changes often stem from the challenges they face, making them more relatable and complex. On the other hand, static characters remain unchanged. While they can still be interesting and important to the plot, their personalities remain largely the same from beginning to end. Static characters often serve as foils to dynamic characters, highlighting the changes the latter undergoes. Setting The setting of a novel refers to the time and place where the story unfolds. It’s not just a backdrop—it can shape the mood, influence the plot, and impact the characters in meaningful ways. Settings can range from real-world locations, like Victorian England in Jane Eyre, to entirely fictional worlds, like Middle-earth in The Lord of the Rings. Settings such as the desolate, war-torn landscape of The Things They Carried immerse readers in the harsh realities of war, while the adventure-driven world of Lonesome Dove invites readers on a rugged, untamed frontier journey in the Old West. The setting can create an emotional tone for the novel, whether it’s eerie, romantic, or adventurous. In many cases, the setting becomes a character of its own, influencing the actions and fates of the protagonists. Themes Last but not least, the theme is the final element of a novel, which gives the story an underlying message or the idea it seeks to explore. Themes can be broad concepts like love, power, or freedom, but they’re often woven into the story in subtle ways, expressed through characters, settings, and conflicts. Some of the most common themes in literature include: Good vs. evil: Explored in classics like William Golding’s Lord of the Flies or Harper Lee’s To Kill a Mockingbird, this theme pits opposing forces against each other, with the moral implications of their choices at the forefront. Love and relationships: Seen in countless novels, from Jane Austen’s Pride and Prejudice to Emily Brontë’s Wuthering Heights, this theme explores romantic, familial, and platonic connections between characters. Coming of age: This theme follows a character’s journey from youth to maturity, as seen in novels like J.D. Salinger’s The Catcher in the Rye or Elena Ferrante’s My Brilliant Friend. It often focuses on self-discovery and personal growth. Comparisons with other literary forms Here’s a closer look at how novels stack up against short stories, novellas, and epics. Novels vs. short stories The most obvious difference between novels and short stories is length. Novels typically span hundreds of pages, allowing for more in-depth character development, intricate plots, and complex themes. In contrast, short stories are brief, often only a few pages long, and focus on a single moment or idea. Because of their brevity, short stories tend to be more focused, with less room for subplots or a deep exploration of characters. For example, F. Scott Fitzgerald’s The Great Gatsby offers a layered narrative across many chapters, while a short story like William Faulkner’s Barn Burning creates an impact within a limited scope. Novels provide a slow burn; short stories deliver quick, sharp insights. Novels vs. novellas Novellas sit somewhere between short stories and novels in terms of length. While they are longer than short stories, they are much shorter than the typical novel, generally ranging from 20,000 to 50,000 words. A novella provides more space than a short story for plot and character development but lacks the extensive scope of a full-length novel. As a result, novellas are often focused on a single character or event without branching into the complexities of multiple subplots. Examples include James Baldwin’s Giovanni’s Room and George Orwell’s Animal Farm, which deliver rich stories in a concise format. A novella offers the best of both worlds—more depth than a short story but quicker reads than a novel. Novels vs. epics Epics, often considered the grandest form of storytelling, differ from novels in length and scale. While novels may cover an extensive narrative, epics often span generations, cultures, or mythologies, blending history and legend. Works like Homer’s The Iliad or Virgil’s The Aeneid are sweeping tales of heroism, warfare, and the gods, far grander in scope than the typical novel. Novels, though varied, tend to focus more on individual human experiences rather than epic quests or divine interventions. Novel FAQs Is “novel” a genre? No, a novel is not a genre; it is a literary form. Novels can fall into genres such as mystery, romance, science fiction, fantasy, historical fiction, or literary fiction. The term “novel” refers to the length and structure of the work rather than its genre, meaning novels can encompass any type of storytelling, depending on the themes and elements the author explores. Examples of novels Some famous examples of novels include Emma by Jane Austen, Beloved by Toni Morrison, Jane Eyre by Charlotte Brontë, and A Farewell to Arms by Ernest Hemingway. What is the difference between a novel and a novella? The main difference between a novel and a novella is length. Novels typically exceed 50,000 words and can go up to several hundred thousand words, offering a broader exploration of characters, plots, and subplots. Novellas are shorter, generally ranging from 20,000 to 50,000 words, and provide a more concise story while allowing for character and plot development. Novellas, like The Metamorphosis by Franz Kafka or Of Mice and Men by John Steinbeck, focus on a single event or idea, making them more compact than the typically sprawling narrative of a novel. A novel is a fictional piece of prose that is typically written in a narrative style and presented as a bound book. Novels tell stories, which are usually defined as a series of events described in a sequence. The novel has been a part of human culture for over a thousand years, although its origins are somewhat debated. Regardless of how it began, the novel has risen to prominence and remained one of the most popular and treasured examples of human culture and writing. Its form and presentation tends to change with the times, but it remains an essential part of the literary cultures of nearly all societies around the world. Required Elements Novels are different from stories, poems, and narratives in a number of key respects. Though they are presented in the form of a book, they are much more than that — in most cases, any bound paper constitutes a book. All novels are books, therefore, but not all books are novels. Most literary scholars define novels by what they contain and how they are presented. First, a novel must written down rather than told through an oral account. Many ancient stories were passed down from generation to generation through story tellers, and though many of these may have been long enough or complex enough to be novels, they do not qualify unless they are recorded in some permanent way. The work must also be wholly fictitious. Personal reflections, recounting of actual events, or historical reports do not qualify; neither do myths, which tend to have their basis in reality or theology. So long as it is written down and is entirely a work of the author or authors’ imagination, it will usually qualify. There is no universally established guideline for a novel’s length, point-of-view, or even establishment of a moral or philosophical point. Most of the time, though, the storyline must be somewhat complex, and there must be several angles to the narrative. The main differences between a short story and a novel are length and plot development. As a general rule, works up to 100 pages are short stories; longer works cross the line into novel territory. The only exception to this rule is the novella, which is usually held to be a work of fiction that falls somewhere between a short story and a novel. There is no defined rule for when a work transitions between these phases, and much is left up to the discretion of the reader. Novellas are typically shorter than ordinary novels and often contain only a few characters, but not always. The distinction is usually quite fluid. Early Examples An early Sanskrit story called Dasakumaracarita may be the earliest example, though an 11th century Japanese book called The Tale of Genji is more commonly accepted as the origin of modern novels. This tale was written by Lady Murasaki Shikibu, a minor court member. It traces the heroics and female conquests of the main character, whom many have dubbed “a Japanese Don Juan.” It is perhaps in this work that novels gained their reputation for being, at times, a bit silly and trifling, despite numerous examples throughout the centuries of superlative writing in the style. The first novels existed as single outputs — wide distribution was impossible until the use of printing presses became common throughout the world. Even large-scale printing did not make these works immediately popular, though. Throughout the centuries, the novel stumbled along with great waxing and waning in popularity. Many modern examples of so-called great masterpieces were written throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, when novels finally gained a permanent position as an acceptable form of literature. Since that time, they have become the most common form of published literature, far outpacing plays, poetry, and works of non-fiction that once held sway over the literate world. Cultural Significance and Power Novels are often beloved for their creation of spectacular worlds, empathetic characters, and carefully thought out arguments. They are often seen as a boundless realm of exploration and creativity, with subgenres springing up to include nearly every type of subject that can be written about. They occur in many genres, from science fiction to business, women’s interest, and legal thrillers. The abolitionist novel Uncle Tom's Cabin is sometimes cited as a major influence that drew the United States toward the Civil War. In the late 19th century, it was not uncommon for people to jam boatyards and mob newspaper stands for the next chapter of Charles Dickens' latest serialized work, either. In the early 2000s the success of J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter series sparked hundreds of midnight bookstore openings and lavish parties around the world at the first release of each book. Longevity and Evolution This literary style remains cost-effective despite the range of things that can be included. Unlike the soaring costs of special effects and computer graphics needed to make a fantastical movie, authors need only imagination and talent to create expansive worlds and detailed characters out of words alone. In many ways, the Internet has also helped reshape this type of writing. So-called “e-books” have provided a cost-effective mechanism for distributing material electronically, and a number of writers also publish their work to the web on blogs or personal web pages. Graphic novels — that is, novels made up almost entirely of pictures or detailed illustration — have also found mainstream popularity. Language & Humanities is dedicated to providing accurate and trustworthy information. We carefully select reputable sources and employ a rigorous fact-checking process to maintain the highest standards. To learn more about our commitment to accuracy, read our editorial process. By Jessica Ellis With a B.A. in theater from UCLA and a graduate degree in screenwriting from the American Film Institute, Jessica Ellis brings a unique perspective to her work as a writer for Language & Humanities. While passionate about drama and film, Jessica enjoys learning and writing about a wide range of topics, creating content that is both informative and engaging for readers. A novel is a narrative work of prose fiction that tells a story about specific human or character experiences over a considerable length. Prose style and length, as well as fictional or semi-fictional subject matter, are the most clearly defining characteristics of a novel. Unlike works of epic poetry, it tells its story using prose rather than verse; unlike short stories, it tells a lengthy narrative rather than a brief selection. There are, however, other characteristic elements that set the novel apart as a particular literary form. A novel is a work of prose fiction that tells a narrative over an extended length.Novels date as far back as 1010's Tale of Genji by Murasaki Shikibu; European novels first appeared in the early seventeenth century.Novels overtook epic poetry and chivalric romances as the most popular mode of storytelling, with an emphasis on the personal reading experience.Today, novels come in a wide array of subgenres. For the most part, novels are dedicated to narrating individual experiences of characters, creating a closer, more complex portrait of these characters and the world they live in. Inner feelings and thoughts, as well as complex, even conflicting ideas or values are typically explored in novels, more so than in preceding forms of literature. It’s not just the stories themselves that are more personal, but the experience of reading them as well. Where epic poetry and similar forms of storytelling were designed to be publicly read or consumed as an audience, novels are geared more towards an individual reader. What is a novel? The following traits must be present for a work to be considered a novel: Written in prose, as opposed to verse. Narrators may have different degrees of knowledge or different points of view (first person versus third person and so on). While stylized novels such as epistolary novels do exist, the key distinction here is between prose and verse. Of considerable length/word count. There is no specific word count that automatically makes a work a novel, but in general, a short novel would be considered a novella, and even shorter than that would be short fiction. Fictional content. Semi-fictionalized novels (such as historical works inspired by true events or persons) exist, but a work of pure non-fiction cannot be classified as a novel. Individualism, both on the page and for the intended audience. In the everyday vernacular, the novel has come to be associated most closely with fiction, as opposed to nonfiction. For the most part, that association stands: not all fiction is novels, but all novels are fiction. A non-fiction prose work that is of the same length as a novel could fall into several other categories, such as historiography, biography, and so on. Although a novel is typically a work of fiction, many novels do weave in real human history. This can range from full-fledged novels of historical fiction—which focus on a specific era in history or depict semi-fictional narrative about real historical persons—to works of fiction that simply exist in the “real” world and carry that baggage and implications. There also are early modern works of historical nonfiction that were embellished with unconfirmed traditions or made-up speeches for dramatic effect. Despite this, we can assume that, when we’re talking about novels, we’re talking about works of narrative fiction. Novels come in all styles imaginable, with every author bringing their own unique voice to the table. There are a handful of major subgenres that tend to make up a large share of the market, although there are many other genres (and mash-ups of genres) out there. A few of the major types of novels you might need to know about: Mystery novels revolve around a crime that must be solved, often a murder but not always. The traditional format will have a detective—either professional or amateur—as the protagonist, surrounded by a group of characters who help solve the crime or are suspects. Over the course of the story, the detective will sift through clues, including false leads and red herrings, to solve the case. Some of the best-known novels of all time fall into the mystery genre, including the Nancy Drew and Hardy Boys series, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes novels, and Agatha Christie’s novels. Christie’s And Then There Were None is the world’s best-selling mystery novel. One of the more popular genres of novels is science fiction and fantasy, which both deal with speculative world building. The lines between the two are often blurred, but in general, science fiction tends to imagine a world that’s different because of technology, while fantasy imagines a world with magic. Early science fiction included the works of Jules Verne and continued on through George Orwell’s seminal classics such as 1984; contemporary science fiction is a highly popular genre. Some of the best-known novels in Western literature are fantasy novels, including the Lord of the Rings series, The Chronicles of Narnia, and Harry Potter; they owe their debt to European epic literature. Thriller novels are occasionally combined with other genres, most often with mystery or science fiction. The defining characteristic is that these novels are often designed to induce a sense of fear, suspense, or psychological horror in the reader. Early versions of this genre included The Count of Monte Cristo (a revenge thriller) and Heart of Darkness (a psychological/horror thriller novella). More contemporary examples might be the novels of Stephen King. Romance novels of the present day have some things in common with “romances” of the past: the idea of romantic love as an end goal, the occasional scandal, intense emotions at the center of it all. Today’s romances, however, are more specifically focused on telling a story of a romantic and/or sexual love between characters. They often follow highly specific structures and are all but required to have an optimistic or “happy” resolution. Romance is currently the most popular novel genre in the United States. Just like its name suggests, historical fiction is simply a fictional story that takes place at some real, past time in human history. Some instances of historical fiction involve fictional (or semi-fictional) stories about actual historical figures, while others insert wholly original characters into real-life events. Iconic works of historical fiction include Ivanhoe, A Tale of Two Cities, Gone with the Wind, and The Hunchback of Notre Dame. Realist fiction is, quite simply, fiction that eschews heightened genre or style to attempt to tell a story that “could” take place in the world as we know it. The focus is on representing things truthfully, without romanticization or artistic flourishes. Some of the best-known realist authors include Mark Twain, John Steinbeck, Honoré de Balzac, Anton Chekhov, and George Eliot. A novel can be structured in a myriad of ways. Most commonly, novels will be structured chronologically, with story segments divided into chapters. However, this is not the only structural option for authors. Chapters tend to revolve around some small portion of the novel that is unified by a character, theme, or piece of plot. In larger novels, chapters may be grouped together into even larger sections, perhaps grouped by time period or an overarching portion of the story. The division into smaller "chunks" of story is one of the defining elements of a novel; a story that's short enough to not need such divisions is likely not lengthy enough to qualify as a full-lengthy novel. Authors may choose to structure novels in a variety of different ways. Instead of telling a story chronologically, for instance, the story may toggle between different time periods in order to maintain suspense or make a thematic point. Novels may also switch between the perspectives of multiple characters, rather than focusing on a single character as the sole protagonist. A novel may be told in the first person (narrated by a character) or in the third person (narrated by an outside "voice" with varying degrees of knowledge). Regardless of the time frame, a novel’s plot will often follow what is known as the three-act structure. The opening chapters will be concerned with acquainting readers with the main cast of characters and the world of the story, before a specific incident, typically referred to as the “inciting incident,” shakes up the status quo and launches the “real” story. From that point, the story (now in “Act 2”) will enter a series of complications as the protagonist pursues some goal, encountering obstacles and smaller goals along the way. At the midpoint of the story, there will often be some major shift that raises the stakes, all leading up to the emotional and narrative climax towards the end of the novel. “Act 3” concerns itself with this finale and the fallout. Burgess, Anthony. "Novel." Encyclopaedia Britannica, . 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No additional restrictions — You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits. You do not have to comply with the license for elements of the material in the public domain or where your use is permitted by an applicable exception or limitation . No warranties are given. The license may not give you all of the permissions necessary for your intended use. For example, other rights such as publicity, privacy, or moral rights may limit how you use the material. Have you ever pondered the secrets behind the captivating narratives that whisk you away on adventures, tug at your heartstrings, or plunge you into the unknown? Within the realm of novels, these enthralling tales hold the power to enchant, inspire, and transform. As we journey together into this world, we’ll unveil the essence of what makes novels such a beloved form of storytelling. So, buckle up and get ready to embark on a literary journey that will expand your horizons and deepen your appreciation for the captivating art of novel writing. A novel is a literary work of fiction that narrates an extended story featuring a plot, a cast of characters, and a central theme, offering a compelling and immersive reading experience. As a versatile and engaging form of storytelling, novels often explore the complexities of human relationships, emotions, societal issues, and philosophical questions, providing readers with a rich and multifaceted window into the human experience. By utilizing well-crafted prose, vivid descriptions, and engaging dialogue, novels create a sense of immersion and connection between readers and the characters, allowing for a deeper exploration of the world and our place within it. The novel, a captivating and versatile literary form, has undergone significant transformations throughout history, reflecting the ever-changing cultural, political, and social landscapes of its time. From its early beginnings to its contemporary manifestations, the novel has continually evolved, adapting to new ideas, narrative techniques, and readers’ tastes. The origins of the novel can be traced back to ancient literary traditions, including the Greek romances and the episodic narratives of the Middle Ages. However, the modern novel emerged during the 18th century, primarily in Western Europe, with the rise of print culture and the growing middle class. The early novel, characterized by works such as Daniel Defoe’s “Robinson Crusoe” (1719) and Samuel Richardson’s “Pamela” (1740), focused on realistic stories of individuals and their experiences, often exploring themes of personal growth, morality, and social identity. The 19th century is often regarded as the golden age of the novel, with the form reaching new heights of popularity and literary accomplishment. During this period, the novel became an essential vehicle for social commentary, addressing pressing issues such as industrialization, class divisions, and gender roles. Writers like Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, and George Eliot produced works that both entertained readers and sparked critical reflection on the world around them. In addition, the 19th century saw the rise of new subgenres, such as the Gothic novel, which incorporated elements of horror and the supernatural