

What Makes a Realistic Short Story?

A realistic short story has these characteristics:

- **Characters** who are developed and interesting. Well-developed characters have realistic thoughts and actions.
- A believable **setting**, or the time and place in which a story takes place, created using sensory details. **Sensory details** use the five senses to help readers experience the story
- A clearly defined **focus**, or main idea, and **plot**, or events in the story centered on a **conflict**, or problem.
- A definite **point of view**, or perspective from which the story is told. Stories usually use the first-person or third-person point of view.
- **Dialogue** that develops the story and moves the action along.
- **Effective sentence structure** and correct spelling, grammar, and usage.

A realistic short story also includes:

- **Characters, setting, and dialogue** that seem **real** and a **plot that could actually happen**.
- A **contemporary setting** that most readers recognize.