

# CONFLICT!

Conflict in life? Not so great. Conflict in literature? **NECESSARY!** Conflict is the central issue or problem a protagonist faces during the story. Without conflict, there are no obstacles for the main character to overcome and not much of a story for your reader to invest in. Conflict moves the plot forward; without it, a story is dull and uninspiring. There are several types of conflict used by authors; we will study them in mentor texts AND you will use conflict when you start drafting in the 2nd Quarter.

Two main types: INTERNAL (self) and EXTERNAL (character, nature, society)

## INTERNAL CONFLICT

Character vs. SELF

Conflict or struggle happens inside a character's **head** or **heart**. Inner conflict makes a character believable.

- death and dying
- wrestling with a decision
- weighing a consequence
- think: angel/devil on shoulder
- peer pressure
- **middle school is FULL of inner conflict**

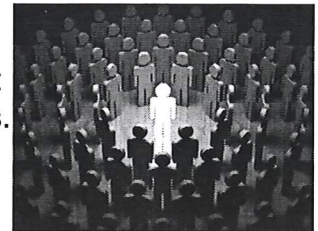


"I saw someone cheat on their history test. What should I do?"

## EXTERNAL CONFLICT

Character vs. Society

A character fights against social traditions and rules.



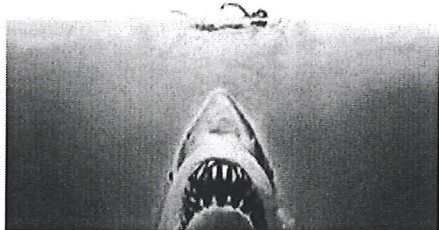
- Characters might not do what is expected of them (by society)
- Rule breakers and free-thinkers
- REMEMBER: what a society thinks is "right" or "normal" might not be what is actually right: think segregation in the 50's/60's, women not having the vote until 1920, bullies in a high school picking on a "nerd"
- Often times, this is the central conflict of war or historical fiction novels
- THINK: *Remember the Titans*, *The Book Thief*, *Maniac Magee*, *Rosa Parks*, *Katniss vs. the Capitol*

## EXTERNAL CONFLICT

Character vs. Nature

Character(s) struggles with natural forces. Often times, themes of survival, problem solving, and perseverance are present.

- your protagonist could be dealing with: weather, wild animals, a sinking ship, hurricanes, or survival in an unforgiving climate
- Think: *Hatchet* or *Lord of the Flies* And movies like: *Jaws*, *Jurassic Park*, *Castaway*, *Titanic*, *The Martian*, *Honey, I Shrunk the Kids*



## EXTERNAL CONFLICT

Character vs. Character

Conflict occurs between characters. Their struggle could be emotional, verbal, or physical. Character vs. Character is always the conflict present when a hero fights a villain.

- Harry Potter vs. Voldemort
- A realistic fiction story where two friends become enemies because of rumors spread at school
- Physical fighting - combat
- Luke Skywalker & Darth
- War of words/emotions
- Books like: *Everything Everything*, *The Outsiders*, *Miss Peregrine's Series*, MOST books contain this fundamental conflict

