Characteristics of the novel

Function	• tells a **fictional story**, which transports the reader into a fictional world (which can be close to real life or fantastical) to entertain and sometimes educate the reader
Focus	• able to give large amounts of detail because length is unlimited • can focus on any number of **characters/protagonists** and show developments over time; different **narrative perspectives** (third person, first person limited - omniscient narrator) possible • may cover several **events** or **locations** • can focus on a long period of **time**, sometimes over several generations • time settings could be historical, contemporary or futuristic
Structure	• long, informative **introduction** or direct start 'in the middle of things' • **order of the plot** can be chronological or written with narrative techniques such as frame story (story within a story), flashbacks (taken back in time), back story (history of characters or objects) or foreshadowing (hints for future development) • mainly separated into **chapters** • cliffhangers (exciting endings to chapters, making the reader want to read more) • **ending** can be closed, open, predictable or unexpected
Language and style	• always in the genre of **prose** (following the flow of natural speech - no rhymes or verses) • can be written in many different **styles**, may be artful (stylistic devices) • contains descriptive sections, reported speech and direct speech

> 💡 **Important sub-genres of the novel with examples**
> • **crime:** Sherlock Holmes by Arthur Conan Doyle
> • **dystopia:** Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury
> • **fantasy:** Lord of the Rings by J.R.R. Tolkien
> • **historical:** The Eagle of the Ninth by Rosemary Sutcliffe
> • **romance:** Sense and Sensibility by Jane Austen
> • **science fiction:** Cloud Atlas by David Mitchell

Characteristics of the short story

Function	• gives a short glimpse of a life-changing event or revelation • captures an important moment or an important feeling
Focus	• single event, single setting, short time span • only one or two characters
Structure	• direct beginning, little or no introduction • central turning point or surprising 'twist in the tale near the end
Language and style	• often elliptical (details or sentence parts left out) • one distinctive language or style choice

📖 **Analysing narrative texts**

① **Preparation:**
- Read carefully. Note keywords or unusual words and the overall effect of the text.
- Check what you have been asked to do: e.g. **analyse, examine, compare, interpret**. (Operatoren)
- Make notes about author and background; note if the text belongs to a particular sub-genre.
- Who and/or what is the main subject of the text?
- Collect evidence for the effect of the text, using notes on structure, characterisation, narrative perspective/technique, style, register etc.

② **Writing**:
Use the **checklist** to choose what is important for your task and write a structured answer:

- **Introduction**
  Include general information about the text. Don't forget: author, title, text type and theme!

- **Body**
  - Each paragraph should make one point to support your argument/interpretation.
  - Always connect the author's choice (stylistic devices, characters, location, time etc.) with its effect. Look for possible reasons why the author made these choices. Explain everything in your own words, but use quotations from the text to support your statements, marking them clearly as quotations and giving line references.
  - Clearly distinguish between facts and your interpretation!

- **Conclusion**
  End your answer with a short summary, or (if asked) a comparison of this text with other works, or with your own experience, or your personal impression of the text.

💡 **Don't forget to proofread your analysis!**

💡 **Checklist for tasks on narrative texts**
- **type and context:** genre, author
- **plot:** what happens; theme
- **setting:** time, place, atmosphere
- **protagonists:** relationships, direct/indirect characterisation
- **narrator and point of view**
- **narrative techniques:** chronology, frame story, suspense, descriptions, comments
- **plot structure:** character introduction, turning point, surprising turn of events
- **language:** word choices, register, style
- effect created by the relationship between **style and content**

🔆 **Useful Phrases:**

🔆 **Introduction**
• The text is (not) a typical example of a (sub-genre) novel/ short story ...
• It is a ... but it also contains elements of a ...
• It was written in ... by ...
• In the ... century ... were very popular because ...
• The author is famous for ..

🔆 **Talking specifically about the plot, setting and characters**
• The text tells the story of ... from the point of view of...
• It is set in ... (time or place)
• The narrator is ...
• The main character(s) is or are
• We get to know ... by ...
• His or Her relationship with ... is
• There is a conflict between ... and
• He or She is faced with the dilemma of ...
• The author uses the narrative perspective of ... to ...
• Narrative techniques used include ...

🔆 **Talking about the structure**
• At the beginning, ... Later he or she learns or changes.
• The turning point is ... At the end,...
• There is a surprising turn of events when ...
• The development of ... is mirrored or paralleled by ...

🔆 **Talking about language and style**
The detailed description of ... evokes ... makes the reader feel ... creates an atmosphere of ...
• The repetition of ... The use of words such as ... emphasises or underlines ...
• It is striking that...
• The author makes use of or combines ... in order to ...
• Suspense is created by...

🔆 **Summing up/Conclusion**
• The way ... is presented reminds the reader of ...
• This text is a good example of ...
• The reader is left with the impression that ...
• In conclusion, the most important aspect is ...