

# Six Types of Conflict

## The Plot Thickens

### What's a Conflict?

A **conflict** is a problem that the main character or characters face.

### Examples

*An arctic adventurer struggles to survive hunger and cold.*

*A brother and sister fight over control of the television.*

**Every story worth reading has a conflict.**

**If there is no conflict, there is no tension.**

**Some stories has multiple conflicts.**

### Overview of Conflict Types

1. **Person vs. Person**
2. **Person vs. Self**
3. **Person vs. Society**
4. **Person vs. Nature**
5. **Person vs. Supernatural**
6. **Person vs. Technology**

### Person vs. Person

**The central character faces opposition from another person or group of people.**

### Examples

- *Two girls compete for the same role in the school play.*
- *A ninja warrior fights a rival clan to avenge his master's death.*

### Person vs. Self

**The central character faces an internal struggle.**

### Examples

- *A young man goes through hard times after losing his father in a car accident.*
- *An Olympic athlete pushes his performance to the limit despite his physical disability*

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### Person vs. Society

**The central character or group of characters battles against traditions, institutions, or laws.**

### Examples

- *A student takes his fight against the school dress code all the way to the Supreme Court.*
- *A group of students protest in front of a university known for its unfair and racially motivated admission practices.*

**The central character struggles against animals, the elements, or other natural forces.**

### Examples

- *A castaway washes up on an island and must learn to survive with the available resources.*
- *A ship captain pursues a great white whale through stormy seas.*

### Person vs. Supernatural

**The central character is challenged by forces that are not of this world.**

## Examples

- *A boy wizard must use his powers to protect his community from evil monsters.*
- *A group of teenagers sleep in a haunted house and begin disappearing one by one.*

## Person vs. Technology

**The central character struggles with or against the forces of technology.**

### Examples

- *A group of strangers gets stuck in an elevator.*
- *A teenage boy is pursued by robots from space that transform into cars.*

**Practice Read each description, identify the antagonist (opposing force) and the type of conflict.**

### Example

*An archeologist attempts to escape a hidden temple overrun by a vampire army.*

**Antagonist:** *Vampire army*

**Conflict Type:** *Person vs. Supernatural*

**1** *An elderly man struggles to learn how to use his new phone.*

**Answer** **Antagonist:** *Cell phone*

**Conflict Type:** *Person vs. Technology*

**2** *Two boxers who were formerly friends compete for the championship belt.*

**Answer** **Antagonist:** *Former friend*

**Conflict Type:** *Person vs. Person*

**3** *A young woman fights to gain admittance in an elite prep school that was only for boys.*

**Answer** **Antagonist:** *Boys prep school / sexism*

**Conflict Type:** *Person vs. Society*

**4** *A group of colonists struggle to survive the winter in a strange land*

**Answer** **Antagonist:** *Cold weather / hunger*

**Conflict Type:** *Person vs. Nature*

**5** *A student struggles against the urge to procrastinate and play video games rather than to do his homework.*

**Answer** **Antagonist:** *Laziness / Procrastination*

**Conflict Type:** *Person vs. Self*

## Types of Conflict Worksheet 1

**Directions:** Read the description of the story. Determine the protagonist (central character) and antagonist (opposing force). Then describe the type of conflict (example: person vs. nature).

1. After breaking his mother's favorite vase, Casey struggles to decide whether he should tell his mother the truth or attempt to hide his mistake and blame the family dog.

**Protagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Antagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Conflict

2. Kiko is a ninja warrior trained by Mountain Master Yoho Mahrati. When Master Mahrati is slain by Shan Bhutan of the Lotus Clan in the most cowardly of fashions, Kiko lays it all on the line to avenge the death of his master. Will Kiko overcome Shan Bhutan and the powerful Lotus Clan?

**Protagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Antagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Conflict

3. It's the year 3030 and society is completely dependent on computers and robots. A young boy named Domino is flying his hovering board to school when all the machines start attacking people due to a powerful computer virus. What will Domino do now that the machines that are supposed to help him have turned against him?

**Protagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Antagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Conflict

4. Brian has the best dog in the world. In fact, he has one of the only dogs in the world. That's because dogs are not allowed in Brian's world, where people believe that dogs spread diseases. Brian's dog will be executed if he is caught. Soon Brian learns of a mysterious underground dog owners club and joins the fight to legalize dogs. Can Brian and his new friends prove to the world that dogs are safe and friendly?

**Protagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Antagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Conflict

5. Janie is on a whitewater-rafting trip along a choppy river when their guide suddenly has a heart attack. Now she and the other passengers must learn to work together to survive the treacherous rapids. As if things weren't bad enough, some of the passengers have spotted a bear following the confused rafters along the shore. Will Janie make it home safely?

**Protagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Antagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Conflict

6. Kirstin was once teased for being heavy, but then she lost a lot of weight. Now Kirstin is very skinny, but there is just one problem: she still sees an overweight girl when she looks in the mirror. Her friends and family try to convince her of how beautiful she is, but she doesn't believe them. Worse still, she is continuing to diet. Will Kirstin be able to align her body image with reality or will she destroy herself?

**Protagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Antagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Conflict

7. Greg is just a regular boy who tries his best in school and just so happens to have a magical unicorn. When he's not studying and playing baseball, Greg is riding his unicorn through the enchanted land of Harmonia. When Greg brings something to Harmonia that he shouldn't, a secret gate is unlocked and the muck-muck monsters are unleashed, causing terrible pollution in Harmonia. Can Greg and his unicorn stop the muck-muck monsters before they find a way to Greg's world?

**Protagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Antagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Conflict

8. Everything was going just fine for Mae until yesterday. That was when she found out that her eyes were turning green. In Mae's world people discriminate against those with green eyes. Green-eyed people cannot vote or hold public office and they are often forced to work the worst jobs for the least pay, if they can even find a job. Mae's parents want her to have surgery to change her eye color, but her grandma, who also has green eyes, encourages her to fight for her rights. With her grandma behind her, Mae joins a resistance movement and becomes the poster child for green-eyed rights, but how will all of this attention affect Mae's family, especially her parents who wanted her to hide who she was?

**Protagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Antagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Conflict

9. Jack Juniper is the best fighter pilot in the Air Force. He can take down an enemy jet while doing a barrel roll. One day while Jack is escorting some friendly pilots to a military base, something that Jack has never seen before attacks the convoy... aliens! Can Jack outmaneuver the highly skilled alien pilots or is the mission doomed to failure?

**Protagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Antagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Conflict

10. Ronny has won second place in the science fair for the last two years, and Newton Robinson has taken first. Ronny hated how Newton gloated and held those victories high over Ronny's head. This year, Ronny will stop at nothing to beat Newton. He has even enlisted the help of a Nobel Prize nominated scientist who was banished from the scientific community for his rouge experiments. Can Ronny and his mad scientist partner win against the undefeated Newton at this year's science fair?

**Protagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Antagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Conflict

## Types of Conflict Worksheet 2

**Directions:** Read the brief description of each plot. Identify the protagonist and antagonist and determine the type of conflict.

1. After years of saving money, John bought his dream home. It was a two-story beach house in a secluded area. John thought it was absolutely perfect, until he noticed the termites. First there were just a few, nibbling away at the back deck, but soon there were thousands. This is the story of how John went to war with the termites, a war that he eventually won, but one that cost him his dream home.

**Protagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Antagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Conflict

2. It's Carly's 8<sup>th</sup> grade year and she wants to graduate more than anything else. Unfortunately she's been playing in her reading class and now she's backed into a corner. She has to get a perfect score on the final exam or she won't graduate. With the help of a foreign exchange student whom she calls Beans, Carly studies harder than ever before. Will it be enough?

**Protagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Antagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Conflict

3. When Diego and his buddies accept a dare to stay in an old abandoned house, they knew that it would be scary, but they had no idea just how scary it would be. As his friends begin disappearing one by one, Diego learns that the house is not abandoned at all, but inhabited by a vampire. Diego no longer cares about spending the night in the house. All he cares about now is getting out alive. Will he escape or be a vampire's lunch?

**Protagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Antagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Conflict

4. Scott Martin is having a rough year. After a serious car accident, Scott was left in a wheel chair. Now he has sunk into a deep depression. He is no longer interested in hanging out with his friends and he feels like a burden everywhere he goes. His friends and family are planning an intervention to show Scott how much he means to them, but it's going to take a lot to get through to him. Will Scott realize that life is a gift and that he can still make a difference?

**Protagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Antagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Conflict

5. Linda wants nothing more than to see her children happy, but her youngest has asked for a Robo-Kite, the hottest toy of this holiday season. After many hours of searching, Linda finally finds one at a department store, but Bruce finds it at the same time, and his son Robert wants it equally bad. Join Linda as she battles with Bruce to acquire a hot consumer item and learns a lesson about life and the holiday spirit along the way.

**Protagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Antagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Conflict

6. It's the last day of school and Mr. Harahan wants to reward his class with a movie. Excitement is in the air as Mr. Harahan plugs in the media player, but when he presses the power button, nothing happens. Laugh along as Mr. Harahan struggles to play the movie.

**Protagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Antagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Conflict

7. Annie and her family live on a farm in rural Kansas. When a huge storm rolls in suddenly, she and her family must retreat to the shelter, but all the animals are out grazing. Worse still, a tornado has been spotted in their area. Will Annie and her family be able to rustle the livestock into the barn in time?

**Protagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Antagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Conflict

8. When an evil ogre kidnaps the princess, the brave knight Lewis sets out to return her safely to the castle. Along the way he must defeat monsters, powerful wizards, and an evil dragon. Will Lewis prevail on his quest or will the powerful ogre crush him?

**Protagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Antagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Conflict

9. Freddy just turned sixteen and he wants a car badly, so he starts mowing lawns and landscaping to earn money with his neighbor Eric. After a few days working together, Freddy and Eric have a disagreement and Eric leaves to start his own company. Now the former friends are competing ferociously for work in their neighborhood. Things take a turn for the worse when Eric starts sabotaging Freddy's operation. Will Freddy retaliate? Can the former friends reconcile? Will Freddy ever get a car?

**Protagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Antagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Conflict

10. It's the year 1847 and Hallie is tired of being treated as a second-class citizen. As a married woman, she does not have the right to own property and she has no legal claim to any money that she earns. She and a group of concerned activists, including Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, hold a convention in Seneca Falls, New York with a plan to change the world. Join Hallie as she marches, lobbies, and struggles to win equal rights for her gender, one mind at a time.

**Protagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Antagonist:** \_\_\_\_\_

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