

For a plot device to work well, you must answer yes to the following 3 questions: Is it logical? Reasonable? Meaningful?

A FEW OF THE MOST COMMON PLOT DEVICES

The MacGuffin is an object whose actual nature is not important to the story but its existence is what propels the characters into action.

Can also be referred to as "**plot coupons**" or "**plot vouchers**" that are objects crucial for resolving the conflict and completing the story.

Deus ex machina manipulates the plot to fulfill the needs of the story instead of allowing the characters and events to work themselves out logically.

Shoulder angel represents conscience and is often accompanied by a shoulder devil representing temptation.

Red herrings distract the reader's attention from plot twists that are important for the story.

Chekhov's gun is a dramatic principle that means if a rifle is hanging on the wall, it must be fired or it shouldn't be there.

- **Flashing Arrow** is a technique used to focus the reader's, but not the characters', attention on an object or location that *will* be important later in the story.

A **Plot Twist** is any unexpected turn of the story that gives a new view on its entire topic.

- A plot twist at the end of the story is called a **twist ending**.

A **Deathtrap** is an overly complicated method for killing a character that is used only as a means for that character to escape, thought to be dead, and later makes a miraculous comeback.

- It may also be referred to as a **Comic Book Death**.

Reverse Chronology is a technique that begins a story at the end and works back toward the beginning.

Flashbacks are usually presented as characters' memories and are used to explain their backgrounds and the back-story.

Foreshadowing is a technique that can heighten tension and introduce anticipation for future events.

Device of Convenience makes the seemingly impossible possible with little to nothing that can back it up.

Real World verses the world of fiction: This device challenges fiction to be just like real life with the belief it will be more authentic that way.