Analysis of Fiction: A Guideline

1. How is the story related?

1. Which narrative situation prevails?
- first-person narrator: a.) narrating I, b.) experiencing I – protagonist or witness?
- authorial narrator (third-person narrator outside of the story world, omniscient, intrusive?
- figural narrator?
- Neutral scenic (dialogue and action as seen from outside)
2. Where and to which extent does the narrator show or tell the story? Where does he reflect about storytelling?
3. How reliable or unreliable is the narrator?

2. How are the characters' thoughts, feelings and words presented?

- narrative report
- indirect discourse
- free indirect discourse
- direct discourse
- interior monologue

3. How does the discourse time relate to the story time?

- ellipsis
- summary
- scene
- stretch
- pause

4. Where does the narrative begin?

- ab ovo (from the very beginning)
- in medias res (into the middle of things)

5. Does the narrative follow the chronological order of events or rearrange it?

- in chronological order
- anachronic

6. Does the narrator

- flashforward (prolepsis)

anticipate the future or look back into the past?	- flashback (analepsis)
7. Does the narrator relate an event which happens, once only or is a single event related several times?	- event occurs regularly - event occurs only once - event is related several times
8. When and where does the story take place?	- single setting or multiple circumstances - objective location and perceived atmosphere - relationship between internal space (mind) and external space (world outside) - social, political, cultural spaces and boundaries (inclusion, exclusion, transgression) - Symbolic function (semantic space) - Selection of contemporary or historical setting
9. Who takes part in the story?	- telling names - psychological disposition of characters - internal activities (perceptions, emotions, thoughts, subconscious phenomena) - external activities (speech, action) - position within the social structure (race, class, gender) - direct and indirect characterization by self and others - position within the structure of perspectives - position within aesthetic structure: round / well-developed / major / closed character vs. flat / fuzzy / obscure / minor / open character? - character similar to or opposed to other

	characters?
	- character constellation: supporters, opponents…
10. What is the structure of the action?	- chronological / logical order?
	- Are the beginning, the peak and the ending clearly marked?
	- Is the action linear, circular or fragmentary?
	- Does chance or action propel the plot?
	- How do the internal action and external action relate to each other?
	- How does the action relate figures and circumstances?
	- How do multiple strands of action relate to each other?
11. Why does the story combine this particular discourse with this story?	- Does the narrative use a particular idea or phrase as a recurrent leitmotif?
	- What does the narrative do to the reather: creates suspense / makes the reader identify with / creates ironic distance to / motivates the reader to reflect on … / makes the reader aware of … / allows the reader to escape reality?
12. In which way does the text interact with other texts or media?	- inclusion of factual information from newspapers, news clippings, blending of fact and fiction
	- description of photos and paintings, graphic depiction of still lives and landscapes
	- music as a topic or musical rhythm of the language
	- theatrical performances of characters in the novel, presentation of the novel as a puppet show manipulated by the narrator
	- talk about movies, use of cinematic techniques
13. How does the text relate to	- Social, political, and economic situations
	- Ideas in art, philosophy, science, ethics

cultural

contexts?