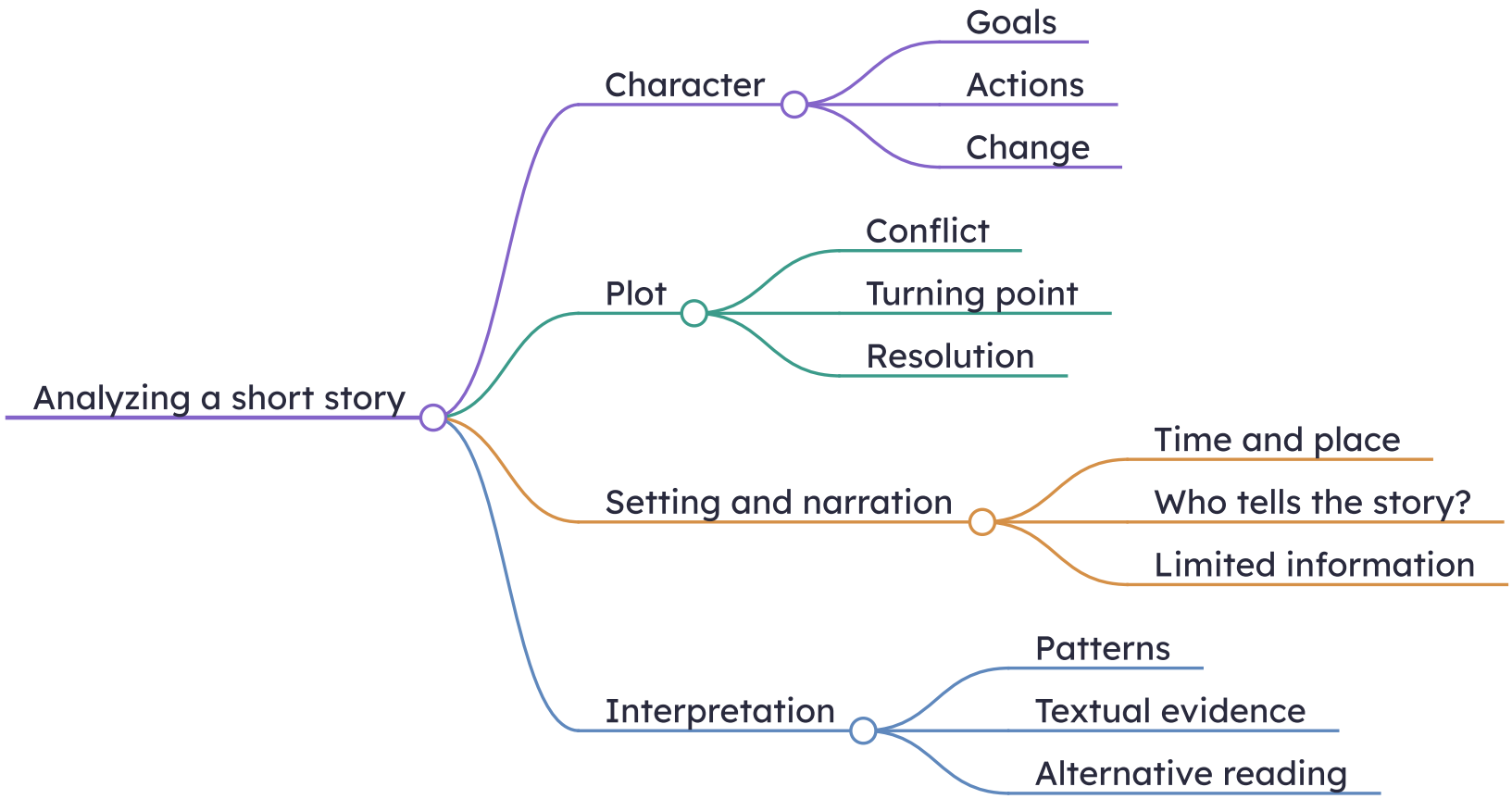
Analyzing a short story

Connect character, plot, setting, and narration to an interpretation supported by the text.



Read one branch at a time. Then cover the details and explain them in your own words.

Understand the topic

Analysis explains how a story creates meaning; summary mainly recounts events. Notice characters' choices, changes, and conflicts. Consider what the narrator knows and what remains hidden. Use relevant passages to support an interpretation, while recognizing that another reading may be defensible with evidence.

How the map is organized

Organize observations by story element, then use the theme branch to connect them into an argument.

> **Watch out for this**
> The narrator, a character, and the author are not interchangeable voices.

Try it yourself

Choose a change in a character's behavior. Compare two scenes and explain how the conflict contributes to that change.

Two questions to answer

What makes a response analytical?

Analysis connects textual observations to an interpretation.

What strengthens an interpretation?

Evidence and explanation allow a reader to evaluate the claim.

Sources

writingcenter.unc.edu
https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/literature-fiction/

Original practice material compiled by Studera.ai. Explore at studera.ai/en/resources/mind-map-examples.