

LITERARY ELEMENTS is a learning tabletop game designed to address these problems and provide a safe and enjoyable platform for developing high reading competence through structured discussions of literary texts. When used in a formal learning environment LITERARY ELEMENTS dismantles the inherent hierarchy between instructor and students, gives back the ownership of the reading process to the students, challenges both instructor and students to compete by the same rules. LITERARY ELEMENTS helps instructors flip the classroom and facilitate learning from a position of equal authority with the students. When used in informal learning environments LITERARY ELEMENTS provides solid structure, professionally crafted tools and clear rules for a well-organised playing and learning experience. LITERARY ELEMENTS has a lot more to offer. It promotes critical thinking, collaboration, communication, creativity. It offers profound insights into the functioning of language, the flow of information, human consciousness and culture. It builds a solid sense of fairness and justice. It sustains the natural urge of humans to look for meaning. It nourishes positive attitudes to the arts and beauty.

Components

LITERARY ELEMENTS, as the name suggests, breaks down the experience of reading literature into its constituent elements. Actually, these elements are abstract ideas, but for the purposes of the game they are transformed into tangible cards, which are then given into the hands of players to explore and arrange in various ways. The rules of the game ensure that everyone is included and has equal opportunity to learn and win. They also provide incentives for players to compete and collaborate for the creation of ever more complex webs of meaning.

1. The first set (intended for readers aged 5-13) includes the following types and number of cards:



place (3) - a galaxy, planet, country, town, spot on the map, real or imaginary, now, in the past or the future, where something happens or someone is.



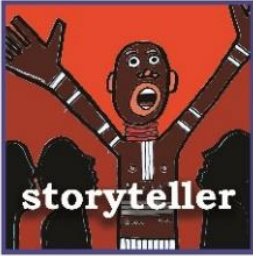
time (3) - a moment or interval in the past, present or future.



other lives (3) – older or newer versions of a story or poem, or simply other forms like film, music, or comic book.



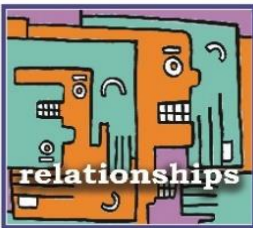
story (3) - a series of events and thoughts, told in the order they occurred, or in any other order.



storyteller (3) - a person, male or female, visible or invisible, human or inhuman, who tells the story or part of it.



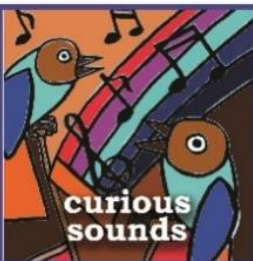
hero (3) - a person, good or bad, male or female, visible or invisible, human or inhuman, who plays a role in the story or poem.



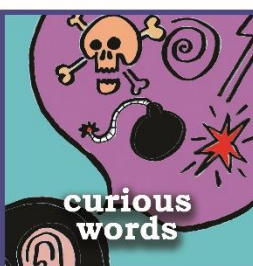
relationships (3) - connections, links, relations or feelings that exist between heroes or things in the story.



problem (3) - a puzzle, question or difficulty that the heroes or we, the readers, need to solve.



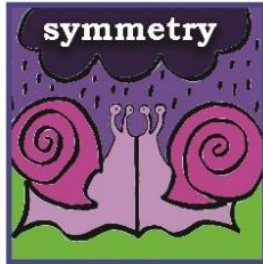
curious sounds (3) - sounds that are interesting, unexpected, and make us think.



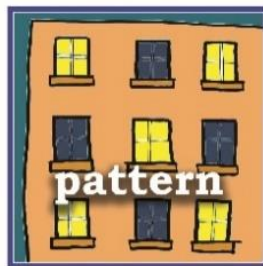
curious words (3) - words, phrases or names that are interesting, difficult, and make us think.



curious ideas (3) - thoughts or notions that are interesting, difficult or make us think.



symmetry (3) - beauty, harmony, balance, similarity, correspondence between heroes and things in the story.



pattern (3) - when things repeat, oppose or otherwise create ordered and meaningful structures.



chameleon (3) – you can use this card instead of every one of the above in case they have been used up.



critical thinking (3) – use this card if you think that the move of another player is unclear, illogical or inadequate



Interpretation (3) – use this card if you have an overall interpretation of the discussed story or poem

Four blank cards – two triangles and two squares – are also included. Every group of readers may create additional literary elements and add them to their own stack. They can also suggest them to the author to be officially included in the game.

Rules

1. Before starting the game every player must have read the literary work that will be discussed during the game. The work should be available, so that players can consult and refer to it. The game should work with all literary genres and lengths, but during the testing phase best results were achieved with short forms and excerpts.
2. All cards are put face up and each player receives a booklet with descriptions of the cards. The triangular, square (and pentagonal) cards stand for different literary features, while the round ones are special.
3. Anyone can play his or her turn at any time, but once she has played, she will need to wait until everyone else has done so before she can play again.
4. The first player to start the game chooses a triangular, square (and pentagonal) card and places it in the middle of the playing space. She also needs to provide a satisfactory explanation of how the literary feature on the card relates to the discussed work. If no one objects to the explanation, she receives points – 3 for a triangular card, 4 for a square card (and 5 for a pentagonal card).
5. Next players must choose their cards in such a way that their comments not only relate to the work but also connect with a comment already made by a previous player. They also arrange their cards accordingly. After the first card is played, a new card can be added only to one of the free sides of an already played card. In this case, the player who played the latter card receives 1 point.
6. Every player has the right to object to a comment offered by another player by using the “critical thinking” card. After giving the challenged player the opportunity to explain, the challenged comment is put to the vote. If it prevails, the player receives his or her points and the challenger loses 1 point. If the challenger prevails, she gains 1 point, while the comment is withdrawn and the player who made it loses his or her turn.
7. Players can use a pentagonal card only after having played 1 triangular and 1 square one.
8. Players can use to offer an overall interpretation of the work, by using the round “interpretation” card, only after having played 2 triangular, 2 square (and 1 pentagonal) cards. If no one objects, the player who has played the round card receives 10 points. More than one overall interpretation can be offered for a single work.
9. One of the players keeps record of all comments, challenges and points for future reference.