

## The Spatial Dimension in Palestinian Children's Literature: A Reading of Employing Place in Examples of Modern Children's Literature



Sāleḥ Tāha 'Abboud

**ABSTRACT:** The story prepared for children is based on an elaborate construction that consists of a set of narrative elements that employ in its context many important connotations for the recipient child, whether he is a reader or a listener of the text. This article aims to identify the element of place and its use in children's literature in examples of modern Palestinian children's literature, and aims to clarify what role the place plays within the narrative text prepared for children and the extent of its importance in it, based on the assumption that the place has an important and effective role in the structure of the narrative event. And that moving the event from one scene to another requires moving between multiple places that all serve the plot of the story, and the article assumes that the writer's choice of place is a deliberate choice that is very consistent with the meaning and central idea in the text.

The article divides between a brief discussion of the concept of children's literature and highlighting its importance, then it deals with the place in children's stories and its types and functions, then it deals with a brief analysis of a sample of ten texts from contemporary Palestinian children's literature; In order to identify the characteristic of the place and its employment. The research adopts an analytical approach based on the analysis of the selected texts based on the relationship of place in them to the main idea and meaning; In order to explain the role of the place in the plot and its impact on it.

**KEYWORDS:** Children's literature, modern Palestinian literature, place, place employment.

### CHILDREN'S LITERATURE AND ITS IMPORTANCE

Children's literature is literature that brings children together in its contents and contributes to pushing young people to read, read and listen, and creates in them an incentive for interest and pleasure, which enriches their limited vocabulary, phrases and sensory images, and which creates in the rising generations a desire and curiosity to learn about new ideas that are different from them. Resist traditional ways of thinking that connect them through other everyday cognitive and environmental channels.

The term "children's literature" has a fairly common and simple meaning, and refers to materials that are written for children and young adults to read, and that are published by book publishers in public libraries and bookstores (Reynolds, 2014: 11), and because children have difficulty understanding science at an early age Children's literature comes as an effective means of transferring knowledge in an enjoyable narrative style that is consistent with their mental and emotional capacities and emotional energies (Abu Fanna, 2001). Everything that is written for children, whether it is stories, scientific material, plays, scientific knowledge, questions and inquiries, in books, magazines, radio and television programs, etc., are all materials that together constitute children's literature (Abdel-Fattah, 2000). What is meant by children's literature in its general sense is the mental production written in books directed at children in various branches of knowledge. As for children's literature in its specific meaning, it means any good speech, provided that it creates artistic pleasure in the children's hearts, whether it is prose or poetry, and whether it is written orally (orally or verbally). Al-Hiti, 1986: 47), and what is meant by the term children's literature in all of what the scholars agreed upon is that every linguistic experience - which has an artistic form - is enjoyable and pleasant, which the child passes through and interacts with, thus helping his artistic sense, elevating his literary growth, and his integrated development; Thus, it contributes to building his personality, defining his identity, and teaching him the art of living (Al-Hiti, 1986: 64).

Children's literature depends on texts mixed with pictures and graphics, and children's literature texts may be devoid of educational or behavioral purpose and are satisfied with the child's entertainment and entertainment only. which resonates in everything related to children's literature, its contents and concept, as well as in its definition (Yahya, 2000).

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Children's literature is of great importance for children at all stages of their development and ages. The literary text prepared for them serves them many great services, and constitutes for them mental, emotional and psychological nourishment, and its importance becomes clear through its impact on their upbringing, the formation of their personality, the formation of their artistic tastes, and their artistic tastes (Ali, 2006). In fact, scholars, thinkers and philosophers have valued children's literature in raising young people, and have drawn attention to its importance in cultivating children's morals, developing their imagination, accustoming them to benign behavior, and providing them with areas of pleasure, entertainment and entertainment (Samak, 1998: 447). Children's literature is one of the most important tools of childhood upbringing, which is a pillar of the future of the Arab world, and upon which the future of Arab society and the personality of its child is based, which is intended to be strong and influential, and interest in building children's literature contributes to clarifying the future path for them (Diab, 1995).

### **THE PLACE IN THE CHILDREN'S STORY, ITS TYPES, AND ITS FUNCTIONS**

Place is included in many fields that are associated with it and its study, including the sciences: physics, geography, philosophy and literary criticism (Saleh, 1997: 42). The sensible" (Muhammad, 1984: 124), as well as Aristotle's definition, which stated: "The place is the first container, and it is not part of the thing, because it is equal to the contained thing, and there is the special place and the common place" (Badawi, 1984: 491). Ibn Sina defines the place that joins those mentioned above, in which he said: "It is the inner surface of the celestial body of the apparent surface of the enclosed body" (Al-Obaidi, 1987: 33). Abd al-Qaher al-Jurjani is considered one of the most prominent speakers concerned with the place among the ancient Arab critics, as he proposed three definitions of it: the ambiguous place, the specific place, and the confined place (Al-Jurjani, 2004: 191), which means that al-Jurjani has identified types of place since the Middle Ages, and has transcended Contemporary scholars in the field of literary criticism divided these divisions, and invented others, including: the psychological place, the physical place, the absolute place, the artistic place and the like (Saleh, 1997: 12).

The place, as a vital element of the story, greatly affects the character, as it contributes to the formation of its physical features and psychological characteristics. 26), and the function that the place performs in the character's life determines its relationship with it. This relationship may be intimate, or it may be hostile; The place may match the personality that occupies it and feel it, and it becomes a part of it, and it turns into a part of it; The personality may form its place, and other places that match it, contradict it, harmonize with it, and rebel against it; The place may be an objective equivalent to the dream of the personality, or a symbol of injustice and oppression. It may be a sanctuary that carries the meanings of salvation, purity, and innocence; It may be a prison, a hotbed of corruption, death, and ruin; Here, the importance of the place in which the character lives, as it constitutes its social, cultural, economic, and psychological dimension. If the place was humid and the temperature was high, it affected the character to be inactive (Shawabka, 1991: 18).

The place connects the parts of the narrative text to each other, as it contributes to the formulation of the personality, the events, and their formation, which is the location of the events, their theater, and the relationship between the place, the event, and the personality are interconnected. The word place evokes with it the word "event" in the narrative world, and "the intense description of a place, and its exaggeration, indicates his possession of an event, or his control of the scene of events, and leading them to their end" (Hassanin, 2004: 26), and thus connects the place as an organic compound. In the components of the narrative text in general and the narrative text prepared for children, and related to the rest of the story components; It affects it, and contributes to conveying the event, portraying the character and highlighting the dominant language in the text, and all of this calls for attention to the place within the story and its elements.

The reader perceives the details of the place in the narrative text in a conscious and spontaneous manner, and the data of the place collapses into his unconsciousness, affecting his understanding of the overall context of the text. Text to Symbols (Al-Qasim, 2007).

Places differ in their forms, as they can be distinguished by different scales, sizes and dimensions related to the concepts of narrowness and breadth, openness and closure, length and width, movement and stability, high and low, and so on. The attributes of the spatial form with fixed characteristics and values, such as the closed place that is associated with warmth, intimacy, protection and a sense of privacy. The open space is empty, lost and infinite. In such places, people feel alienation, loneliness, weakness and loneliness, and they are considered hostile and stalking places for humans (Al-Qasim, 2007).

The division of the place into types depends on the extent of its relationship with the human being or the extent of the human connection with him. Humans divide their world into general and private stereotyped places, because the type of place imposes on them a kind of behavior, so that their living conditions are compatible with the requirements of their needs and lives. The writer Ghaleb Halasa divided the place into four types: the first is the hostile place, which is the type that reflects certain embodiments in the fictional work, and takes the character of a patriarchal society. Exile, devoid of human nature, etc. The second

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type is the engineering place, in which detailed information and data abound, as if it takes the place of the engineer and deletes all the characteristics of an evaluative nature from the place, that is, when the place turns into a set of surfaces, colors and details that the eye picks up separately. There is a third type, which is the metaphorical, i.e. virtual, place, which is complementary to the events, and clarifies what was immersed in them, and its purpose is suspense. The fourth type is what he called the place as a living experience, and it is the place in which the fiction writer lived, but he moved away from it and began to live it through imagination, and this type is rare in Arab fictional art (Halsa, 1989: 8-9).

Some scholars talked about four functions performed by the place towards the basic structure of the personality in the literary narrative text, which are functions that exist in reality, the first of which is the symbolic function, and its role is to deepen the feeling of the place, and the feeling of belonging to it, and it helps to confirm the basic construction of the personality, because the repeated experiences are somewhere It helps in developing a sense of continuity and belonging, and it is not a requirement that the place be the one that supports the human sense of belonging and identity. The second function that the place performs is the expressive function, as the place allows the person, young or old, to move through it, and expresses the values he believes in and acquired in his individual or collective framework. To talk about his memories encumbered in it, it allows an expressive space through it. The cognitive function is one of the important functions of the place in the context of its narrative and narrative employment, especially in children, as the place is provided with appropriate information for behavior, and is provided with means that help restore our public and private memories, and restore to the recipient something of his cognitive memory both simple and complex (Al-Qasim, 2007).

### **THE PLACE IN MODERN PALESTINIAN CHILDREN'S STORIES**

We present a description of ten stories from modern Palestinian children's literature, and we monitor the nature, significance and form of the spatial environment in each of them; In order to get acquainted with the employment of the place in it, which are the following stories:

**1.** The Magic Ball, a children's story written by Shadia Safadi Zoabi (2001), and the story tells what happened to Raghad, and she was sitting on the balcony of their house on a moonless night, so the conversation with her mother took her to her mother telling her the story of Prince Badr al-Zaman, then the mother recounts the story and the course of its events Which revolves in the palace, where one of the scientists invented a magic ball that makes those who look at it able to see the whole world and learn from it wonderful sciences, and Prince Badr Al-Zaman moved through it between unspecified strange places and countries, and after a period of time the magic ball occupied him for everything, and he did not He is considered interested in his work and his role in the palace. His preoccupation with it was a reason for the weakness of the kingdom after the illness of his father, the king. Then the kingdom weakened more and enemies attacked it, until a prince named Kahraman seized it and occupied it without the ability of Badr al-Zaman to defend it, and then the queen returned to her prosperity; Because the new prince was not preoccupied with the magic ball as his predecessor did, and thus the mother ended her story for her daughter Raghad, and Raghad expressed her admiration for Prince Kahraman, and expressed her grumbling about Badr al-Zaman's actions. When she was born, her father brought her a computer as a gift, and she understood that the computer could actually do to her what the magic ball had done to the prince in imagination (Zoabi-Safadi, 2001).

The places mentioned in the aforementioned story are: the balcony, the palace, the strange country, then back to the palace, ending with the house, which is a sequential and logical path that meets with the movement of the event in the story and with the purpose of the text. At night, and this suits the transfer of the story from reality to imagination, through the mother's narration of the story of the prince and the magic ball, then the events move to the palace, which is the logical place in which Prince Badr Al-Zaman lives, and the palace indicates wealth and the availability of comfort and decent living, which the prince did not invest Rather, he lost him by being preoccupied with the magic ball, and the event returns to the house again; In order for the event to end on a personal occasion, Raghad's birthday, and her getting the computer as a gift. The place in this story is a logically employed place that supports the central idea in the text, and it meets with the transition between reality and fantasy and the return from fantasy to reality, and this indicates a convincing use of the place in the text.

**2.** The Friends Tree, a children's story written by writer and journalist Nader Abu Tamer, and tells the story of a boy whose name was not explicitly mentioned, and he is looking for friends for him, so his classmate called Aseel Ibn advised him to lie under a tree next to his house, and then the fruits of friends will fall on him, so he hurried to implement The advice of his colleague, and a fruit fell on his head, then a worm came out of it saying to him: Look, so he went back to Aseel, and she told him to buy seedlings and plant them, and when they grow up, they will bear fruit and give him friends, so he bought a seedling from Umm Saleh, and came back carrying it and planting it, and the seedling grew and sat under it, and its fruits fell and did not She bore him friends, so Aseel

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asked about that, and she told him if you wanted friends, treat people and take care of them as you did with a seedling, and then the boy knew the secret of making friends (Abu Tamer, 2001).

The dominant place in the last story is the classroom, then the story moves to a more appropriate spatial environment, which is the garden of the house under the tree, and they are the two specific places in the story. There is a friend in it, and the garden of the house is not a place to get friends, and the boy tried to fulfill his wish to get friends, then the surprise was to reveal the secret of getting friends, and it is not dependent on the place, but rather dependent on the care, love and sacrifice of others, it is the individual activity that brings friends and brings them closer from human. It became clear in the story that the place in its shadow is linked to the movement of the character and accompanies it according to its declared desire in the story, and therefore it is an important element whose role depends on the storyline and its other elements.

**3.** Much more expensive than gold, a story by the writer Suhail Kiwan (2013), which tells about the child Hamed, who found a piece of gold on his way to school, so he started trying to dispose of and buy it, but the market traders warned him that it belonged to a poor woman looking for her, so what was From Hamed, however, he ignored it, and in the end the woman came and discovers with bitterness and sadness that Hamed is her son, and that he lacks the lowest levels of education that is more precious than gold (Kiwan, 2013).

The role of the place in the story revolves around the way Hamed encountered the gold piece, then the school where he tried to use and enjoy it there, then the market, then the house, where the story ends with a sad and disappointing closed end. The place within the course of the story is considered appropriate and contains its events, especially since the problem is related to a piece of gold and a boy, so it is natural for the boy to visit his school to spend what he wants from it and then walk to the market, where he can benefit from it, but the house, which is the place of returning to the truth and the truth, is the one who ended The story has a shocking ending. It seems clear that the place has been employed in a manner commensurate with the movement of the personality and its goal, and that it follows it in terms of its desires and ambitions, and this indicates the contribution of the place in creating an environment suitable for the personality and its behavioral interactions.

**4.** Injustice does not last, a story by the writer Zuhair Daim (2006), which tells the story of four roosters living in a coop with a group of hens and chicks, then a new turkey enters their coop, and he was violent with them and oppressing them, and he decided to expel the black rooster from the coop, so they met The roosters and consulted, and decided to confront him, and when he returned to the rooster, and before he attacked the black rooster, the four of them attacked him and beat him, so he ran away, leaving the serf (Daim, 2006).

It is clear that the place that contains the events of the story is the coop of chickens and roosters, it is the scene of all events, and with it the story began and ended, and it is a suitable place for the event and for the story with all its components, and the event of injustice, which is considered the knot until the departure of the turkey, which represents the solution, proceeds in balance With the value of the place that symbolizes cooperation, love, participation and softness, and contradicts the values of violence, domination, arrogance and aggression, and thus the writer was able to adapt the story and its purpose to the place in a purposeful and convincing manner, and the place in it had a role that proves that it is appropriate, and thus the place meets a lot with the merits of the story and its symbolic dimensions.

**5.** Jalal's apple, a children's story by the writer Maysoun Asadi (2012), and the story tells what happened with the talented student Jalal, who was not noticed by anyone at school, and was never taken care of properly, so his father raised this, and after discussing the topic at home, the story ends with a decision Jalal left school permanently (Asadi, 2012).

The story revolves in two places, the first place is the school, where the problem appears in the text, the alienation that Jalal lives in and the feelings of lack of interest in him there, and then the second place, which is the house next to the loving family who is interested in him, and they are two places related to Jalal's life, in which he spends most of his time, which is a general condition for most children who are distributed daily between two places: home and school.

The writer succeeded in employing the two places convincingly, making the character reach the right decision in the end under the shadow of the concerned family, and thus the place, in turn, contributes to the event in facilitating the plot and its succession towards an end that paves the way for a desired change that serves the main purpose of the story.

**6.** The story I am not violent by the writer Furat Ali Abu Taha (2001), which tells about a boy named Amir, who is a student in the fifth grade, polite and excels in academics, and a story that changes him when he arrives one beautiful spring day at his school, and during the third period, In the Arabic language, he misread, and his colleagues burst out laughing, then his colleagues continued to call him a blown word for a period of days, which annoyed him a lot, so he started cursing and hitting them, and he became violent. After he ignored them, Amir returned to being as polite and superior as he was (Abu Taha, 2001).

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The place in control of the event in the story is the school and the class in which Amir's problem was born, and he is the central character in the story, and it is the same place that incubates the solution of ignoring those who annoy him, and choosing the school as a space and space for the event that suits the event very much, and fits the purpose in the story and the significance it bears for the reader, the school is a place For study and proper and benign behavioral education, a place where many people from different social classes gather; To refine them through its educational and achievement tracks within an inclusive and appropriate educational framework that achieves the desired educational goals. The story succeeded in employing the school as a public educational space to present the problem and reach the solution, and this confirms the importance of the place in drawing the map of the event from its beginning to its conclusion, in a manner that suits the purpose and significance of the story prepared for the child.

**7.** The story of the generous fish, written by the writer and writer Muhammad Ali Taha (2001), and narrates the story of a poor fisherman and his wife, who caught a gold fish, but she asks him to release it and return it to the sea in exchange for the fulfillment of his wishes, and although the old fisherman is content, his greedy wife asked Palaces, money, and a garden full of flowers, then she asked to be the queen of the sea, and to be served by the golden fish, which angered the fish and pushed it to return them to poverty, hunger and hut (Taha, 2001).

The story moves between the sea, the house and the palace, all of which are spatial positions that meet the movement of the central character in the story, i.e. the fisherman, who works in the sea, and because he is a fisherman, and because the beginning of the transformation is subject to a magical and strange fish, the sea had to be present as an assumed place, and then the story begins. More in a more appropriate spatial environment is the old house, which indicates poverty and depicts the very low material situation, which justifies the greed of the wife whose greed transferred the event to the palace, which as a place indicates wealth and a comfortable and luxurious material condition that did not last long because of greed. The sea bears the sign of goodness, generosity and breadth, and the fish was generous with the good-hearted fisherman, and this confirms the relationship of the sea as a place with one of the values inspired in the story.

**8.** The story of Christmas tree by writer Naim Araydi (2001), and it tells the story of a girl who asks her parents to plant a tree, and she spent a whole night thinking what kind of trees to plant, so she slept and dreamed that she planted a large tree, then saw in the dream that she meets many trees, some of them for shade. And another for the fruit and the other for the decoration, and this increased her confusion. On the night of the Christmas tree, she saw a dream, in which was a tree that was useful for fruit, decoration and shade at the same time, and asked her to plant it, and when she woke up, she decided to ask her teacher about that tree in order to plant it (Araidi, 2001).

The beginning of the events took place in the garden of the house, where trees are planted, but most of the text and its events revolve in a dream in the room of the little girl who dreams of planting the tree that gives shade, fruits and adornment, and thus the present place in the story is the house in a state of sleep and not wakefulness, and this serves the text It indicates the entrenchment of the value of agriculture in the subconscious of the central character in the story.

The tree is one of the causes of life and a sign of belonging to nature, earth and life, and the tree is one of the factors of production, life and giving. It is appropriate for the beginning of the tree's life, and thus we find a link between the tree and the girl through the symbolic link between the garden and the house, and this indicates a close relationship between place and evolution and development.

**9.** The Magical Gift, a children's story by writer Nabihah Jabareen (2013), and the story talks about the birthday of a girl named Shaden, who is in the first grade of primary school. She invited some of her classmates, her teacher, and her grandmother to attend her birthday party, so her father gave her a red dress, while her mother gave her cake Delicious made of chocolate that she loves, and she received gifts from her colleagues and her teacher, and her grandmother's gift was the most important gift, it was an old book without text and without pictures, with magical Arabic letters, when she put her finger on the letters: b. h. R. The book moved her to the sea, so she saw the ships and the port, and when she put her finger on the letters: F. z. a. and. The book transported her into space; She saw the stars and planets, but she felt great fear; She called her grandfather and sought help from him, and then Basat al-Reeh transferred her to Egypt, the Hijaz, Jordan, Lebanon, and Palestine, and then she returned safely to her homeland, and she is very happy with the wonderful gift (Jabareen, 2013).

The story in its content depends on an imaginary structure that is not realistic, and therefore there are many places through the events of the exotic story, the magic book transferred it in a blink of an eye to the sea and then to space, and after the intervention of the grandmother Shaden rides the carpet of the wind that transports it between countries: Egypt, the Hijaz, Jordan, Lebanon, and Palestine. her house.



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The presence of this spatial diversity indicates the relationship of multiple places to the imaginative and exotic dimensions in the story prepared for children.

**10.** The story of Hisham and Aunt Hiam, which is a children's story written by the writer Nozha Abu Ghosh, and tells the story of Hisham in the third grade, a polite student who loves his school and his teacher, and despite his happiness at going to school, he felt sad when the teacher announced the approaching of their departure on a trip to Tel Aviv, because He does not have enough money to participate in it, his family is poor, and when he returned home, he felt sad, so he went out to his grandfather's farm near the village, and there he sat under an olive thinking, and suddenly he saw the old aunt Hyam approaching and panting from fatigue, so he sat with her and talked to her about his problem, so she offered him a job with her. He agreed and collected money through him to participate in the trip, then he went to the school with joy to pay him, and there he was surprised by the crying of his friend Amir, who lost his money to participate in the trip, and after inspecting the bags by the teacher, he found money in Hisham's bag, so they thought that he stole his friend's money, and Hisham's sadness intensified when he returned He went home, and he did not find a solution to his problem, so he sought help from the grandmother who took him out of the problem and went to school and showed Hisham's innocence of the theft charge, and then Hisham participated in the trip after everyone's respect for him increased (Abu Ghosh, 2000).

The place that is used in this story is the house, then the school, then the house of Aunt Hiam, ending with entertainment sites during Hisham's participation in the school trip. It seems through this gradual presentation of those places arranged according to the plot of the story that moving from one place to another takes into account the escalation of the knot in the text, Then the passage of the text from the circle of closed places to the circle of the external place, that is, the place where he communicated and helped Aunt Hiam, indicates Hisham's exit from the focus of the crisis to the solution at the hands of the grandmother who helped him twice in a row, and this indicates the importance of the place and the change in it in the context of the narration The logic of the sequence of events in the story.

**11.** The most beautiful bouquet of roses for my mother, a story written by the writer Amal Harb (2000). It tells the story of Sabreen, who went out to her garden, looking at the flowers, their beauty and their fragrant smells, in the spring, so she began to think in the garden what she would gift her mother on the occasion of the upcoming Mother's Day, she was confused because she did not have money to buy what she wanted for her mother, and suddenly she saw a bird jumping among the flowers, so she was led to the idea of collecting for her mother a flower of every color as a gift for her. Her mother was happy with the gift, thanked her, and considered her gift the most beautiful (Harb, 2000).

The garden is the place of the central event in the story, and it is a successful place that suits the event, the character, and the purpose of the story, and if the writer had not chosen this place, the solution to the problem would not have been achieved as it happened, and the garden is the meeting place of flowers and plants, and it is related to the spring season and Mother's Day, which always coincides with the beginning of spring. It is clear that the writer chose the place to use it to build the plot in a convincing way, which indicates the entry of the place within the founding elements of a good and coherent plot stylistically and artistically in the story.

### CONCLUSION

The article briefly monitored the emergence of the place element in children's literature written by a group of Palestinian children's literature writers in the last two decades, during which time there were many transformations in this genre of literary in Arab writers in general and among the Palestinian Arabs of 1948 in particular, and the article tried through its material The theory turned to children's literature, its importance, and its structural and formal elements, and came to a definition of the place, its functions and types, and then presented a brief analysis of samples of children's stories that represent them. In order to monitor the presence of the place in it.

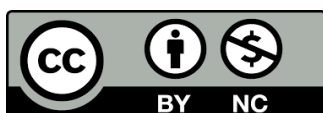
The research concludes, through the preliminary analysis of its selected sample, several notable conclusions, including: The writer's choice of place in his story prepared for children is a deliberate choice that is very consistent with the desired goal, intrigues, and the central idea in the text. He also concluded that the dominant feature of the places mentioned in them is that they are places that are close to the environment for children. (The house, the school, the village, the forest, the garden, the sea...), which reflects the writers' awareness of choosing places that are relatively familiar to the receiving children. After defining the concept of place and its relationship to the elements of storytelling in the light of children's literature by the sample selected in it, the research concludes that the spatial environment is of importance related to the construction and plot of the story, and that there is a close relationship between the texts and the places that constitute the space of the main events in them.

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The research recommends the need to pay attention to the role played by the place in the stories of the Palestinian child, and the need to understand the relationships between it and the components of the narrative text and its other elements related to the place in a bond that serves the purpose of the text, its central idea and its apparent educational message.

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