Setting

What Is Setting?
Setting is the location (where) and time (when) of a story, novel or play. Setting can also include the social conditions under which the action takes place. Setting serves several functions in a literary work, and it's important to be able to identify them. Setting can be significant because it can prompt characters to interact and allow plots to develop.

Setting Includes:
- **Physical environment**: a house, a street, a city, a landscape, a region, etc.
- **Time**: hour, year, century, etc.
- **Weather**: season, temperature, climate, etc.

  Ex: The setting of "A Clean, Well Lighted Place" is a train station.
  Ex: The setting of *Macbeth* is medieval Scotland.

Primary Functions of Setting:
- Establish time and place
- Make certain events seem probable
- Reveal character
- Create atmosphere
- Communicate ideas

Note: Many works have multiple settings. These different settings may have different functions within a single work.

How To Identify Setting:
When reading a work, you must determine if the setting is significant. To do so, take notice when:
- A "minor" or "insignificant" aspect of setting is given undue attention by the author.
- Certain settings are emphasized repeatedly by the author.
- An author has described the setting with exquisite detail or metaphorical connotations:
    - Exquisite detail indicates that setting is more than a mere "backdrop" for action.
    - Metaphorical connotations often create analogies (comparisons) between qualities in the setting and qualities found in the characters.

Remember:
Setting is the location and time of a story. It serves different functions and can be a significant element of the story.