

focus is a bit narrower: foreshadowing can be related to \*mood, \*atmosphere and other abstract ideas; a plant is a physical, tangible thing that has definitely been included to avoid the appearance of unnatural coincidence. (See: *foreshadowing*.)

**Plot** (récit) A term first used by Aristotle in the fourth century B.C. to describe the arrangement of a story's events, including the actions of the protagonist and how these actions affect other characters.

In a story or novel said to be heavily plotted, each incident that occurs is closely related to the next one; one incident, in fact, usually leads to the next. The events could not be rearranged in a heavily plotted novel, because the chain of cause and effect would be broken. Eventually, in a novel with a strong plot, the tension will build to a climax. A heavily plotted novel's opposite is the episodic novel, whose \*episodes are not interrelated, and in which one incident does not lead logically into the next.

Real life does not always divide itself into episodes in which one event leads directly into or causes the next; yet writers whose goal is to write fiction that closely mimics the effects of real life often find themselves seeking a definite shape or structure to the events. The challenge is to make such a structure seem real without appearing contrived. (See: *story*.)

**Poetic Style** Prose in a style that uses the techniques and devices of poetry, including rhythm and imagery, to create its effects.

While there is little imagery in this passage from Gertrude Stein's *Melanctha*, the \*novella uses a poetic style in its incorporation of a repetitive rhythm, with the many sentences beginning with "he"; the consistently unconventional word order of the sentences, meant to show the speech and thought patterns of Jeff Campbell; and the recurrence of individual words, like "always" and "now":

These months had been an uncertain time for Jeff Campbell. He never knew how much he really knew about Melanctha. He saw her now for long times and very often. He was beginning always more and more to like her. But he did not seem to himself to know very much about her. He was beginning to feel he could almost trust the goodness in her. But then,