

Realism

Definition:

Realism is a trend/technique that has been used in almost every outlet of entertainment, whether it be literature, movies, or artwork. Authors use realism in order to display the world accurately and to depict how day-to-day life really was at the time a piece of literature takes place.

- Realism was a reaction to Romanticism; the down-to-earth quality of Realism heavily contrasts with the drama of Romanticism.
- There are no sweeping declarations of love and incredibly heroic acts in realism. Rather, plots focus more closely on characterization and the characters' plausible, yet complex, moral dilemmas.

Examples:

Middlemarch: A Study of Provincial Life, by George Eliot, is an example of a realist novel. The work is set in the early 1830s and features a large, complex cast of characters and multiple, layered plots. Complexity of character and event is part of real life, and thus, realist works tried to mimic this. The book pursues multiple themes and issues relevant to that time period, such as politics, religion, and the status of women.

Another example of realism is Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Known as the great American novel, this tale chronicles the journey of a young boy, Huck Finn, accompanied by an older runaway slave named Jim. Realist techniques appear throughout this work, including the use of vernacular in dialogue as well as portraying slavery in society.

Realist works, like *Middlemarch* and *Huck Finn* can be identified by four key characteristics: verisimilitude, complex characters, believable plot events, and vernacular dialogue.

The second and third links below lead to a realist short story called "Daisy Miller," as well as an analysis detailing how, exactly, it is a solid example of Realism.

Helpful Link s:

<http://public.wsu.edu/~campbelld/amlit/realism.htm>

<http://melissaswritingcorner.wordpress.com/2012/03/13/henry-james-daisy-miller-a-true-portrait-of-realism-and-regionalism/>

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/208/208-h/208-h.htm>