



# Interpreting Literature

The analysis of the story

«**Mr. Tennyson**»

By William Trevor

# Analyzing Fiction

- **Plot**
- **Characters**
- **Setting**
- **Point of view**
- **Tone**
- **Theme**

# Plot

## Typical plot structure:

<b>Exposition</b>	<p>Exposition begin with the descriptions of Mr. Tennyson and the life in his school. Readers knew that simple teacher of English has a secret with a few girls, which are his pupils.</p> <p>Besides, we meet Jenny. She is a pupil of 2A class, and she knows Mr. Tennyson's secret.</p>
<b>Complication</b>	<p>We know more and more new about Mr. Tennyson, Jenny and their relatives, family. We see, how Jenny falls in love with Mr. Tennyson and how this feeling of love increases.</p>
<b>Climax</b>	<p>The conversation between Mr. Tennyson and Jenny after the lesson.</p>
<b>Denouement</b>	<p>The conflict wasn't resolved.</p>

# Conflicts

**There are different types of conflicts in this story.**

- The internal conflict of Mr. Tennyson
- The internal conflict of Jenny
- The conflicts between Jenny and Mr. Tennyson
- The conflicts between Jenny and Chinny Martin

# The internal conflicts of Mr. Tennyson

- He was happy with Sarah, but he understood that he wouldn't be able to stay with her.
- "I should move away from here" he said "But I can't bring myself to do it. Because She'll always come back to see her family and whenever she does I can catch a glimpse of her."
- He also felt himself guilty about the abortion of Sarah.
- In addition, he probably feels himself good, when tell about Sarah to loving girls. He is perhaps happy to be loved by such girls as Sarah.

# The internal conflicts of Jenny

- She dreams about Mr. Tennyson every night and every morning. Nobody around her knows about this love.
- However, when she knew about Chinny Martin's love, she feels herself better. She thinks it is very pleasant to be loved by anything.
- She doubts should she tell mother the story with Martin and decided, that shouldn't.
- We see constantly fight inside her mind.



# The conflicts between Sarah and Mr. Tennyson

- Sarah tried to get Robert to be with her.
- Robert explained her that he had a wife and four children.
- Sarah was very young and very naive.
- It would difficult for her to understand him.



# The conflicts between Jenny and Chinny Martin

- Chinny Martin felt in love with Jenny.
- He wanted to be with her and to get her attention.
- But she just felt sorry for them.
- This conflict wasn't resolved, because Chinny wouldn't stop his attempts to be with Jenny.



# Characters

## Main characters

- Robert Tennyson
- Jenny
- Sarah Spence

## Background characters

- Chippy Martin
- Jenny's mother
- Jenny's father
- Mrs. Tennyson

# Robert Tennyson

- He was an English teacher.
- He had a wife and four children. His car was old red Ford Escort.
- He had dark hair with little grey in it. His face was boyish, like a French boy's.
- Favorite writer of Mr. Tennyson was Shakespeare.
- Robert hadn't a lot of money. He lived in a tiny gate-lodge because he couldn't afford anything better.
- Every girl knew about his story with Sarah Spence and every girl imagine him with other girls like Sarah. Boy, parent and other teacher didn't know anything about it. Mr. Tennyson spent weekend with her. He loved her.
- Many school-girls dreamed about him. But he was not brave enough to stay with her. He made unhappy himself and Sarah Spence. He even hadn't an opportunity to share his feelings with his family or his friends that is why he told about Sarah with girls from his school. One of these girls was Jenny.
- In addition, girls believed, that he had this problem with girls, because of unhappily married. All of them sorry him and a lot of those girls fell in love with him.

# Jenny

- She was beautiful girl. She had pale fair hair. Her eyes were large and of a faded blue. She was lanky, with legs which she considered to be too long.
- She lived with her family, her mother and father. Jenny got on well with her family. But she had a secret that she couldn't share with her mother.
- The secret was her feelings to Mr. Tennyson. Jenny dreamed about him. She was naive and she thought that Robert Tennyson was unhappy because of his family. She even thought that he could become a great writer if he would start a new life without his family.
- Robert meant a lot for Jenny. She didn't care about his age, his family and his relationships with other girls. She didn't pay attention to boys from her school.
- And in the end of the story when Mr. Tennyson asked her to stay for a minute and started to comment her essay Jenny decide to open her feelings to him.
- But Mr. Tennyson didn't really care about her feelings he just wanted to share his own emotions with someone. When Jenny realized that he loved only Sarah Spence and nobody also.

# Sarah Spence

- Sarah Spence was an ex-student of Foxfield Comprehensive.
- She was a legend among a generation of girls. The reason for such popularity was her relationships with Mr. Tennyson.
- Many girls envied her, but during the story it becomes understandable that this love didn't make her happy.
- She wanted him to be with her, but he couldn't leave his family. I believe that she continued to hope to stay with him for a long time. But it was only illusion.
- She entered to Warwick University and where she had an abortion. I think it is a time of understanding for her. It dawned on her that he would never stay with her. Anyway we can only guess about her feelings.

# Chinny Martin

- Chinny Martin was a student of Foxfield Comprehensive too.
- He was an ordinary boy, how Jenny said about him.
- Chinny felt in love with Jenny he always tried to get her attention. He wrote notes for her he wanted to be with her.
- He had a motorcycle and tried to take Jenny for a ride to impress her. But Jenny refused him again and again. He irritated her. She didn't like him and his silly. She even didn't like his nickname Chinny.
- Actually Chinny was so unimpressive how Jenny considered. He is true to his feelings and he left no attempts to achieve his goal.

# Jenny's mother

- She was a housewife and she loved her family. She took care for her daughter and her husband. She spent time with her husband watching TV. After that he had a conversation with Jenny about her school-life. But she didn't know about Jenny's attitude to Mr. Tennyson.
- She tried to support her daughter as she can.

# Jenny's father

- He was a painter and decorator with his own business. Jenny was the only child in their family. It is because there'd been four miscarriages, all of them might have been boys which naturally might have continued his business, how he'd wanted.
- However, he loved his wife and his daughter. He was worried about Jenny and took care for her. He made all their house heat by his decoration. Jenny's room was neat too, with pebbly cream wallpaper expertly hung by him.

# Mrs. Tennyson

- She had freckles and thick, unhealthy legs. I believe that she was unhappy during the story.
- She had four children and probably spent hours working around the house.
- She also lived with man who didn't love her. I suppose that she knew that Robert had another woman. She was forced to put up with it and to live in such unimpressive way.



# Setting

- The events of the story take place in different places.
- The main place of events is Foxfield Comprehensive. In addition to the school, the reader sees the supermarket and the house of Jenny.
- It's a small town where everyone knows each other. But this is only an external situation.
- In fact, we look at the world through the eyes of a girl - Jenny. This gives a special mood to the story.
- The mood of love, dreams, teenage hopes and the destruction of these hopes. When Mr. Tennyson leaves the parking lot at the end of the story, the author does not describe the weather, but it seems to us that it's raining, because we understand that this is exactly the mood that Jenny has now.

# Point of view

- Narrative is an observe author. The can only see that happening through Jenny's eyes. We go with her to the supermarket, are with her on her classroom or in her house.
- We see people whom she meets. And we don't have a full impression of these people. We know only about Jenny's attitude to them.
- The main advantage of this method of description is that we are not influenced by the author. But we also don't have full knowledge of the heroes and events.

## Tone – condescending

**Theme** is love, unrequited love