

**There are six types of conflict that will be explored during this unit. Conflict is what drives a story forward. Without conflict, the hero would have nothing to do.**

## **Common Examples of Conflict**

**Character vs. Self (Person vs. Character)** is when the central conflict of a story is internal to the main character. This internal conflict occurs when a character struggles with a desire or moral dilemma. The character has to decide if his decision will benefit himself or society even if the character has to do something he doesn't want to do. This type of conflict is also known as **INTERNAL CONFLICT**. An example would be if you were deciding whether or not to cheat on a test.

**Character vs. Character (Person vs. Person)** is when, in a novel, there is a conflict between two characters. An example is the hero's conflict with the central villain of the story. Usually this conflict will play a large role in the plot and contribute to the development of both characters. There are usually several arguments or disagreements before the climax is reached. This type of conflict is also known as **EXTERNAL CONFLICT**. An example would be Harry Potter vs. Voldemort.

**Character vs. Society (Character vs. Environment)** occurs when the main character is in opposition to societal traditions or concepts. The two parties in this type of conflict are the protagonist (main character) versus the character's own society. This type of conflict is often used by writers to make a statement about the positive or negative aspects of the whole society. This type of conflict is also **EXTERNAL CONFLICT**. An example would be Anne in The Diary of Anne Frank against the Nazis.

**Character vs. Nature** is the theme in literature that places a character against the forces of nature. Many disaster movies focus on this theme, which is also found in stories about struggling for survival in remote places. This is also **EXTERNAL CONFLICT**. An example would be Jonas struggling to survive with Gabriel in the snow at the end of The Giver.

**Character vs. Destiny (Character vs. Fate)** is a theme where the character attempts to break away from a predetermined path. This path is chosen for the character without his knowledge. It is also the conflict between fate and freewill. This is also **EXTERNAL CONFLICT**. An example would be Tyrone going against the stereotyped behavior expected from him.

**Character vs. the Supernatural (Character vs. the Gods)** is when a supernatural creature puts obstacles into a character's path or when a character must struggle with his own spiritual side. This is also **EXTERNAL CONFLICT**. An example would be the beating heart in Poe's A Tell Tale Heart.