# How do we analyze SETTING?

AP English Literature

"Setting is the natural, manufactured, political, cultural, and temporal environment, including everything that characters know and own." (Roberts, *Writing about Literature*)

A quick note about a cool word: VERISIMILITUDE (the quality of being true or real)

In order to analyze this element, we must first understand all that falls under the "setting" umbrella.
**What do we consider to be part of the setting in a work of fiction?**

- ## social, cultural, and political atmospheres

- ## time period, historical events

- ## geographic locations

- ## natural or manmade surroundings

- ## physical descriptions (clothes, objects, buildings, rooms, etc.)

- ## non-character "beings" (animals/objects that take on some character-like traits but are not human)

Remember that in order to reach analysis, we need to go beyond a simple description of the setting (WHAT) and move toward the significance behind these choices (HOW/WHY).

**In what ways can setting function in a work of fiction?**

- augment a work's realism (verisimilitude)

- accentuate qualities of character

- structure and shape the plot—make certain plot elements possible

- carry symbolic meaning

- contribute to tone or mood