

*Merriam-Webster* dictionary defines a Bildungsroman as “a novel about the moral and psychological growth of the main character.”

More specifically, a ***Bildungsroman***...

The term *Bildungsroman* denotes a novel of all-around self-development.

1. A *Bildungsroman* is, most generally, the story of a single individual's growth and development within the context of a defined social order. The growth process, at its roots a quest story, has been described as both "an apprenticeship to life" and a "search for meaningful existence within society."

2. To spur the hero or heroine on to their journey, some form of loss or discontent must jar them at an early stage away from the home or family setting.

3. The process of maturity is long, arduous, and gradual, consisting of repeated clashes between the protagonist's needs and desires and the views and judgments enforced by an unbending social order.

4. Eventually, the spirit and values of the social order become manifest in the protagonist, who is then accommodated into society. The novel ends with an assessment by the protagonist of himself and his new place in that society.