Conflict

Conflict is more than “a fight”. It happens when the protagonist of a story wants something and encounters obstacles in achieving his or her goal.

Character vs. Character
In the story “Jack and the Beanstalk” Jack, the protagonist, must prevail over the Giant, who wants to keep his gold. This is an example of the goals of two characters in conflict.

Character vs. Environment or Circumstance
In the story “Hatchet” by Gary Paulsen, Brian, the protagonist, must learn to survive in the wilderness on his own with only a hatchet to help him. This is an example of a character having to deal with his environment in order to survive.

Character vs. Self
In the story, “On My Honor” by Marion Dane Bauer, Joel must decide what to do when he has promised his father, with the comment “on my honor”, that he would not do something but does and with tragic consequences. This is an example of the protagonist struggling with himself to “do the right thing”.

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