

Literary Terms

Terms you should already be familiar with:

1. Simile
2. Metaphor
3. Imagery
4. Alliteration
5. Personification
6. Stanza
7. Onomatopoeia
8. Climax
9. Setting
10. Plot
11. Characterization
12. Character Sketch
13. Conflict (internal and external)

Terms that you need to learn:

1. **Antagonist:** The major character in a narrative or drama that works against the hero or protagonist.
2. **Atmosphere:** The overall emotional impression we get from the words, images, and setting of a text and the pace set by the story's plot.
3. **Dialogue:** the actual words that characters speak.
4. **Diction:** The author's choice of words, the vocabulary level of the story. (Example: slang, formal)
5. **Expository Writing:** Writing that is systematically explanatory, and communicates information.
6. **Fiction:** Genres of narration that may be based on events and characters that are not real.
7. **Mood:** The overall feeling - light and happy or dark and brooding - created by the author's choice of words.
8. **Non-fiction:** Any piece of writing about actual people, places, or events.
9. **Persuasive writing:** A piece of writing used to convince an audience to think in a certain way or to take a particular action.
10. **Point of view:** The perspective the author establishes to tell the story. **Third Person narrator** uses *he, she, or they* to tell the story and does not participate in the action. **First Person narrator** uses *I* and is a major or minor participant in the action. **Second Person narrator** uses *you*, but is rarely used.
11. **Protagonist:** the main character in a literary work.

12. **Theme:** The story's main ideas - the "message" that the author intends to communicate by telling the story. Themes are often universal truths that are suggested by the specifics of the story.

13. **Descriptive writing:** Vividly portrays a person, place, or thing in such a way that the reader can visualize the topic and enter into the writer's experience.

14. **Narrative writing:** Tells a story or part of a story. Narrative writing appears in and is not limited to novels, short stories, biographies, autobiographies, historical accounts, essays, poems, and plays.

15. **Foreshadowing:** A technique used by authors to provide clues for the reader to be able to predict what might occur later in the story.

16. **Irony:** A particular tone created when the speaker intends a meaning that is opposite to the words he or she says. **Verbal Irony** occurs when what a character says and thinks he/she means is actually different from what the audience perceives is meant. **Dramatic Irony** occurs when the audience knows more about a character's situation than the character himself.