

LITERARY TERMS – P. 1

ALLEGORY – A story within a story. A story that teaches a moral lesson.

ALLITERATION – The repetition of words that have the same first consonant sound.

ALLUSION – Indirect reference to a well-known person/place/thing/event.

AMBIGUITY – The state of being unclear/difficult to understand.

ANALOGY – To compare for the purpose of explanation or clarification (metaphors compare objects to objects; analogies compare relationships to relationships).

ANAPHORA – repetition of a word/phrase that begins each line of a poem, speech, or sermon to create artistic effect.

ANTAGONIST – Person or force opposing the PROTAGONIST.

ARCHETYPE – Ideas, characters, stories, images that are common to human experiences across cultures.

ASSONANCE – The repetition of a vowel sound in a line of text or poetry.

BIBLIOMACY – Foretelling the future by interpreting a randomly chosen passage from a book, especially the Bible.

CHARACTERIZATION – Highlighting the details and development of a character.

CIRCUMLOCUTION -- Exaggeratedly long and complex sentences used to convey a meaning that could have been conveyed with a shorter, much simpler sentence.

COLLOQUIALISM – Using language that is exclusive to region, culture, and/or geography.

CONFLICT – Struggle between two opposing forces (Internal = man vs. self; External = man vs. man; man vs. nature; man vs. machine).

CONTRADICTION – Expresses the opposite of a statement.

DICTION – The writer's word choice.

EUPHEMISM – An indirect comment or phrase used to soften harsh comments (“kick the bucket” is a euphemism that describes the death of a person).

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE – Metaphor, simile,

FLASHBACK – Going back in time.

FLASHFORWARD – Expected events in the future, interjected into the main plot, revealing important information to the story that has yet to be brought to light.

FOIL – Another character in a story who contrasts with the main character, usually to highlight one of their attributes.

LITERARY TERMS – P. 2

FORESHADOWING – Clues or hints to prepare readers/viewers for future events.

IDIOM – Word or phrase not meant to be taken literally.

IMAGERY – Descriptive language appealing to one or more of the 5 senses

IRONY – Contrast between what is expected and reality. (Situational = opposite of what is expected; Verbal = person says one thing but means another; Dramatic – Audience/reader knows something that the characters do not know)

JUXTAPOSITION – Highlighting the contrast and comparison between people, concepts, places, ideas or themes that are parallel to another.

LANGUAGE – The stylistic choices of the author and how language is used.

MOTIF – An object or idea that repeats itself throughout a literary work an image, sound, action, or other figure that has a symbolic significance.

ONOMATOPOEIA – A word that imitates the natural sounds of things (boom, zing, ting).

OVERSTATEMENT/HYPERBOLE – An exaggerated statement.

OXYMORON – An adjective followed by a noun with contrasting meanings (cruel kindness).

PARADOX – Illustrate an opinion or statement contrary to accepted traditional ideas (No one goes to that restaurant. It's always too crowded).

PERSONIFICATION – Giving human qualities to non-human things.

PROTAGONIST – Main character.

SARCASM – Use of bitter/ mocking language to point out shortcomings/flaws or to hurt.

SETTING – Where the plot takes place.

SUBTLETY – Not open or direct.

SUSPENSE – Feeling of uncertainty about what is going to happen next.

SYMBOLISM – Using an object or action to signify ideas and qualities that means something more than its literal meaning.

SYNECDOCHE – A part of something that represents the whole or a whole that represents a part.

THEME – The main idea or ideology of a literary work.

TONE – The attitude of the writer toward a subject or the audience which influences the reader's understanding of the story.

UNDERSTATEMENT – Make a situation seem less important than it really is (I'm fine. It's no big deal; just a tiny, little tumor on my brain).