

Genre – type of literature (ex: mystery, historical fiction, biography, play)

Autobiography – genre which is a story written about an author's own life

Biography – genre which is a story written by an author about someone else's life

Drama - intense situation or series of events having emotional or striking interest or results; also is used as another word for a *play*, a work performed on stage

Plot – the events (what happens) in a story

Setting – when and where a story occurs

Mood – feeling or atmosphere that a piece of literature arouses in the reader

Climax – the high point in the plot of a story

Resolution or **Denouement** – the conclusion of a plot's conflicts; also known as falling action, the resolution follows the climax in the plot

Theme – the main message(s) in a story

Foreshadowing – the use of hints or clues by a writer to suggest action that will happen later in a story

Suspense – sense of anticipation in a literary work (What will happen next?)

Denotation - the literal meaning of a word (dictionary definition)

Connotation - associations that a word or phrase brings to mind

Symbol - thing which can stand in for something else (flag/country; dove/peace)

Irony - contrast between what is expected or expressed and what actually happens

Paradox - statement that seems absurd but expresses truth (jumbo shrimp)

Idiom - an expression that cannot be understood by the separate meaning of the words because it must be understood in its cultural context

Context - parts of the passage which contribute to the full meaning of the passage or a word

Dialogue – conversation in a story

Characters – the people in a piece of writing

Protagonist – the main character in a literary work

Antagonist – the character opposing (working against) the protagonist in a literary work

Characterization - the ways an author presents a character in a narrative

- **Direct** - information the reader gets by descriptions from narrator
- **Indirect** - information the reader gets by
 - the character's actions, thoughts, dialogue
 - what other characters say or think about the character

Character motivation - the reasons (the why?) behind a character's action; character motivation drives the plot

Conflict – struggle between two opposing forces in a story

- **Internal** - a struggle within the heart or mind of a character
- **External** - a struggle created by outside forces
 - Examples: human vs. human, nature vs. human, individual vs. society

Narrator – the voice that tells the story (see Point of View for more)

Point of View - the vantage point from which a story is told (most common below)

- **First person** - a direct narrative; uses “I, me, my” in telling the story
- **Third person limited** - story is told by an outside narrator who knows one person's thoughts and feelings
- **Third person omniscient** (omniscient means “all-knowing”) - a narrator who is inside the hearts and heads of all the characters

Parody - humorous interpretation or imitation of a serious piece of work

Imagery - words a writer uses to create a mood or give a visual to the reader

Sensory language – written language appealing to the 5 senses used to recreate an experience

Soliloquy - speech delivered by a character when he/she is alone on stage

Personification - literary device in which something non-human is given human characteristics (the wind sighed as it ran through the trees)

Poetry terms

Speaker – the “voice” of a poem; may be the poet but not always

Refrain – a line, a phrase, or a group of lines repeated regularly in a poem

Rhyme Scheme – the pattern of rhyming in a poem

Meter – the rhythm of the language of a poem

Explication – the process of explaining a poem’s content and form

Poetic license – a poet’s freedom with language, made up words, unusual word order, breaks in convention...

Onomatopoeia – the use of words whose sounds imitate their meaning (ex: buzz, wham, gurgle)

Alliteration – the repetition of consonant sounds to create poetic effect (ex: the soft sound of the sea soothed me)

***NOTE:** alliteration ends in a consonant / assonance ends in a vowel – that is how you can keep the two terms straight in your head

Assonance – the repetition of a vowel sound to create poetic effect (ex: the wee people sleep sweetly in tiny beds)

Limerick – a humorous rhyming poem with a specific meter and rhyme scheme of *aabba*

Haiku – a three line Japanese poem; the lines have 5 - 7 – 5 syllables.

Figures of speech – language not intended to be taken literally (similes, metaphors...)

Metaphor – expresses a likeness between two different things by stating directly that _____ is _____ (ex: His anger is a brick wall I can’t get through.)

Simile – comparing two unlike things using the words “like” or “as” to make the comparison (ex: the clouds are like wisps of cotton.)

Ode - formal lyric poem which honors a person or event using dramatic language