

Impressionism

[Linguistics](#), [English](#)



Extended Definition Essay on (Impressionism) One of the most significant art movements which was developed by a group of Paris-based artists in the 19th century, impressionism has influenced various spheres of modern life including art, music, sculpture, and literature. It started as a movement in painting in France in the late 1860s and various artists such as Claude Monet, Camille Pissarro, Auguste Renoir, and Alfred Sisley are associated with the founding of this movement. The main features of impressionism as an art movement includes its emphasis on naturalistic landscape, subjective aspect of art, the topics of modern urban life and other commonplace subject matters, portrayal of light in its varying qualities, etc. Most essentially, this movement influenced and inspired trends in other areas such as sculpture, music, and literature. Specifically, impressionism influenced literature in various ways and helped in the growth of literature considerably. As Marlies Kronegger (1973) maintains, impressionism in literature built up its own style and techniques, although painting dominated all the other art forms during the period 1875-85. From the time it originated, it has been one of the prevailing literary styles existent in world literature today and the impressionist creations in various countries are derived from the same basic idea. (Kronegger, 33) Therefore, it is important to maintain that impressionism is one of the key literary terms today as it refers to the literary styles and techniques based on the general framework of impressionism as an art movement. This paper makes a comprehensive exploration of the term impressionism in order to define and explicate impressionism as an extremely valuable rhetorical tool in literature today. In a reflective investigation of the meaning of the term impressionism in

literature, it is fundamental to realize it as a style or technique of writing used to express the sense impressions created by a few details. In other words, the term impressionism is used to express a significant style or technique of writing in literature which is characterized by the use of a small number of details in order to communicate the sense impressions created by a specific landscape or occurrence. The common definitions of impressionist paintings are useful to understand this literary term as they refer to impressionism as a rejection of the existing formal values, or a non-intellectual vision, or a confusion of the organs of sense perception. Significantly, impressionism has always been a problematic term to define and the term is often contested within art history as well as literature. The term literary impressionism is difficult to define as it is vaguely defined in relation to other literary movements. Interestingly, this literary term can best be realized from its association with other terms as it is often defined by its synonyms. Thus, it is associated with phenomenology, naturalism, and modernism. (Kronegger, 24) As aforementioned, the style of writing known as literary impressionism can be realized as a stylistic development of Naturalism which incorporates the basic principles of Impressionism in painting. Julia van Gunsteren (1990) refers to the term as a stylistic phenomenon and as a new, modern vision of reality as it reflects the inner impressions of the reality and creates sense impressions. (Gunsteren, 38) Significantly, the term impressionism in literature is defined as a countermovement of Naturalism and a secularized symbolism or symbolistic impressionism. According to Eigler (1997), impressionist style in literature emphasizes exact perception which employs the finest nuances possible in

the artistic setting. The major feature of this style of writing is that the writer selects precise words that describe every moment in time and the room for fantasy is minimal. (Eigler, 257) Some other definitions of the term literary impressionism emphasize the subjective nature of human perception as reflected in literature and define it as rooted in the historical as well as cognitive dimension. According to Gasiorek (2004) impressionism refers to the inescapably subjective nature of human perception and offers a crucial technique for the reflecting the socio-cultural changes linked with modernity. (Gasiorek, 206) Therefore, it is essential to realize that impressionism has both historical and cognitive dimensions because it attempts to represent the mental processes of a character which ultimately brings out the complexities and difficulties associated with contemporary life. In other words, literary impressionism as a style of writing relies on characters, scenes, or actions as a means of depicting the external world by way of the sense impressions. In conclusion, it is important to define and understand literary impressionism as a style or technique of writing which is used to create sense impressions in the minds of the readers in order to present the inner as well as outer world of the work. Just like the Impressionist paintings, this literary device makes use of small, thin, yet visible images of reality presented through mental images of characters in order to reveal the complex nature of the contemporary world. This style of writing relies heavily on associations, word pictures, images, and symbols in order to create the exact setting of the plot. Therefore, literary impressionism as a style or technique of writing is an extremely valuable rhetorical tool in literature today. Works Cited Eigler, Friederike Ursula. The feminist encyclopedia of

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