

Struggle between opposing forces english literature essay

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**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

A few general terms

Term

Definition

Examples

Plot

The order of arrangement of ideas and/or incidents that make up a story in a play or a novel. A plot can be Complex or Simple. Form: Structural design and patterning of a work.

Conflict: Struggle between opposing forces (characters, groups or ideas) in a poem, play, novel...

Causality: one event occurs because of the other event
Foreshadowing: A suggestion of what is going to happen. Plot is generally divided into three parts. The first part is the rising action, in which complication creates some sort of conflict. The second part is the climax, the moment of greatest emotional tension in a narrative, usually marking a turning point in the plot at which the rising action reverses to become the falling action. Complication or Rising Action--Intensification of conflict. Resolution/Denouement--The clearing up or ' untying' of the complications of the plot; the falling action. Suspense: A sense of worry established by the author due to a lack of certainty about what is going to happen. Exposition: 1. Background information regarding the setting, characters, plot. 2. Opening part of a play or story, in which we are introduced to the characters and their situation, often by reference to preceding events.

Complex, simple

Form: Tightly organized, irregular...

Protagonist and antagonist; hero and villain; good and evil; war and peace

Sub-plot

A secondary sequence of actions in a dramatic or narrative work. It may either parallel or contrast the main plot.

Theme

A salient abstract idea that emerges from a literary work's treatment of its subject matter. Love, war, revenge, betrayal, fate...

Motif

A situation, incident, idea image or character-type found in different literary works of the same era, like archetype and stock characters. Leitmotif: If an image, incident, or other element is repeated significantly within a single work. The fever that purges away a character's false identity is a recurrent motif in Victorian fiction. carpe diem (seize the day) motif in European lyric poetry

Setting

The place or location of the action, the setting provides the historical and cultural context for characters. It often can symbolize the emotional state of characters (pathetic fallacy).

Tension

An equilibrium of the serious and the ironic in a poem or a harmony of opponent tendencies in a literary text.

Tone

A very vague critical term designating the mood or atmosphere of a work; writer's mood or moral view. Formal, intimate, pompous, ironic, light, solemn, satiric, tender, harsh, sentimental...

Mood /

Atmosphere / Ambience

Emotional tonality in a work, which fosters in the reader expectations as to the course of events, whether happy or disastrous.

Tense, fearful, comical...

Style

The manner of expression of a particular writer, produced by choice of words, grammatical structures, use of literary devices, and all the possible parts of language use. Most writers have their own particular styles.

Scientific, ornate, plain, emotive...

Rhythm

A recognizable and variable pattern in the beat of the stresses in the stream of sound. The regular reoccurrence of stresses and pauses. Rhythm helps determine a poem's mood and, along with other elements, the poem's meaning.

Steady, irregular...

Tempo

Pace of the poem

Quick, moderate, slow...

Impact

The intended effect on the reader. Dramatic, understated, impersonal...

Texture

1. The 'concrete' forms of a literary work, which cannot be paraphrased (pattern of sounds like assonance, consonance, alliteration, euphony) unlike the 'paraphrasable' structure (stanza, paragraph, chapter) or abstract argument. 2. Use of pleasant and unpleasant ideas, words, terms. Smooth, coarse...

Paraphrase

A restatement of a text's meaning in different words, usually in order to clarify the sense of the original.

Character

A personage in a narrative or dramatic work. Protagonist--Major character at the centre of the story. Antagonist--A character or force that opposes the protagonist. Hero or heroine – The main noble character in a narrative or drama. Anti-hero or anti-heroine – A central character in a dramatic or narrative work who lacks the qualities of nobility and magnanimity expected of traditional heroes and heroines. Minor character--Often provides support

and illuminates the protagonist. Static/Flat character--A character who remains the same throughout the plot. Dynamic/Round character--A character who undergoes change/s in some important way in the narrative. In literature, the tritagonist is the third most important character of a narrative. As a character, a tritagonist may act as the instigator or cause of the sufferings of the protagonist. In literature, the deuteragonist (from Greek: δευτεραγωνιστής, deuteragonistes, second actor) is the second most important character, after the protagonist and before the tritagonist.[1] The deuteragonist may switch from being with or against the protagonist depending on the deuteragonist's own conflict/plot.

Characterisation

The means by which writers reveal character, the representation of persons.

Narrator /

Point of view

The voice of the person telling the story, not to be confused with the author's voice. With a first-person narrator, the I in the story, presents the point of view of only one character. The narrator may play a major or a minor role in the work. The reader is restricted to the perceptions, thoughts, and feelings of that single character. Third-person narrator stands outside the events and is not a character in the novel. Omniscient narrator stands outside the events but has special privileges such as access to characters' unspoken thoughts, and knowledge of events happening. Intrusive narrator, in addition to reporting the events, offers further comments on characters and events. Editorial omniscience refers to an intrusion by the narrator in order to

evaluate a character for a reader Covert narrator is identified by no more than a 'voice' Reliable narrators whose accounts of events we are obliged to trust. Unreliable narrators, whose accounts may be partial, ill-informed, or otherwise misleading. Use of 'I' or 'We' Use of 'he', 'she', 'they'... Realist fiction Most third-person narrators. Some first person narrators.

Persona

The speaker in a lyrical poem or the narrator in a fictional narrative (who expresses attitudes both toward the characters and material within the work and toward the audience or readers). Modern critics ask us to distinguish the persona from the real poet or writer as the writer's voice may change from work to work.

Similarities & Opposites

Term

Definition

Examples

Simile

A common figure of speech that makes an explicit comparison between two things by using words such as "like and as". Some critics consider "than, appears, and seems" to play the same role." I wandered lonely as a cloud"

Metaphor

Metaphor refers one thing, idea or action by a word or expression normally denoting another thing, idea or action, so as to suggest some common quality shared by the two. This resemblance is assumed as an imaginary

identity than directly stated as a comparison.(i) Metaphors may appear as verbs. as (ii) idiomatic phrases(iii) Dead metaphors are normally unnoticed as we frequently use them(iv) Mixed metaphor is one in which the combination of qualities suggested is normally illogical or ridiculous, usually as a result of trying to apply two metaphors to one thing.(v) An implicit metaphor is a more subtle comparison.(vi) An explicit metaphor is very precisely and clearly expressed.(vii) Tenor is the primary literal term in a metaphor, whereas Vehicle is the secondary figurative term" He is a pig"(i)" a talent may blossom"(ii)" to throw a baby out with the bath water"(iii)" leg of a table"" branch of an organisation"(iv) " those vipers stabbed us in the back"(v) " that reed was too frail to survive the storm of its sorrows"" he brayed his refusal to leave"(vi) " he was a mule standing his ground."(vii) in " the road of life", ' life' is the tenor and ' road' is the vehicle.

Metonymy

Metonymy is a type of metaphor in which something closely associated with a subject is substituted for it. Metonymy replaces the name of one thing with the name of something else closely associated with it." silver screen" to mean motion pictures, " the crown" for the king, " Mozart" for Mozart's music. A metonymic saying is " the pen is mightier than the sword"

Synecdoche

A kind of metonymy in which the name of a part is substituted for that of a whole. Sometimes it names a comprehensive entity of which it is a part." hand" for worker." the law" for the police officer." Liverpool" for one of that city's football team.

Conceit

An unusually far-fetched or elaborate metaphor or simile presenting a surprisingly apt parallel between two apparently dissimilar things or feelings. Not the same as an extended metaphor, which runs throughout the passage/poem." Grief is a puddle and reflects not clearYour beauty's rays""... they are two soAs stiff twin compasses are two, Thy soul the fixed foot, makes no showTo move, but doth, if the other do."

Symbol

Symbol, in the simplest sense, is anything that stands for or represents something else beyond it. Objects like flags and crosses can function symbolically; and words are also symbols. In semiotics (the systematic study of the production of meanings from sign-systems, linguistic or non-linguistic), symbol denotes a kind of sign that has a conventional relation with its referent. In literary usage, however, a symbol is a specially evocative kind of image; that is, a word or phrase referring to a concrete object, scene, or action: roses, birds, voyages...A symbol differs from metaphor in that it may not always have a fixed meaning It is usually a substantial image in its own right, around which further significances may gather according to differing interpretations.' Universal' symbols – " Light" for knowledge," White" for purity and truth," Red" for murder," Green" for stop or prosperity.

Imagery

Word, phrase or lines that evoke concrete sense-impressions by literal or figurative reference to objects, scenes, actions, or states. A set of images constitutes imagery and suggests further meanings and associations than the metaphors and similes. (continued...)

Sensory imagery

Visual imagery – sight Auditory imagery – sound Olfactory imagery –

smell Gustatory imagery – taste Tactile imagery – touch Kinesthetic imagery –

movement 1. " The gray sea and the long black land;/ And the yellow half-

moon large and low." 2. " only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle." 3. Smell the

bad breath that" reeks." 4. " Come to the window, sweet is the night air!" 5. "

he holds him with his skinny hand." 6. " Of pebbles which the waves draw

back, and fling."

Personification

A form of metaphor in which human characteristics are attributed to nonhuman things." Invention, nature's child"

Apostrophe

A rhetorical device in which the speaker addresses a dead or absent person, or an absent or inanimate object." Pity, you ancient stones, those tender babes Whom envy hath immured within your walls."

Prosopopoeia

The Greek rhetorical term for a trope (words beyond literal meaning)

consisting either of the personification of some non-human being or idea, or

of the representation of an imaginary, dead or absent person as alive and capable of speech and hearing, as in an apostrophe.

Epithet

An adjective or adjectival phrase used to define a characteristic quality or attribute of some person or thing. In the transferred epithet (or hypallage), an adjective appropriate to one noun is attached to another by association. Stock epithets in Historical titles: " Alexander the Great" In the phrase sick room it is not the room that is sick but the person in it.

Allusion

An indirect or passing reference to some event, person, place, or artistic work, the nature and relevance of which is not explained by the writer but relies on the reader's familiarity with what is thus mentioned. Some poet's use personal allusions. Other types of allusions include the imitative (as in parody) and the structural, in which one work reminds us the structure of another. Normally satires are topical allusions.

Juxtaposition

In literature, a juxtaposition occurs when two images that are otherwise not commonly brought together appear side by side or structurally close together, thereby forcing the reader to stop and reconsider the meaning of the text through the contrasting images, ideas, motifs, etc. For example, " He was slouched alertly" is a juxtaposition within a sentence. Juxtaposition can be within a phrase, sentence or a short stanza or paragraph.

Antithesis

A contrast or opposition which emphasises a contrast or opposition of ideas, usually by the balancing of connecting clauses." He for God only, she for God in him."" Government and cooperation are in all things the laws of life: anarchy and competition the laws of death.'

Paradox

A statement or expression so self-contradictory as to provoke us into seeking another sense or context in which it would be true. Paradoxes are inherent in oxymoron and epigrams. An epigram is a brief, clever, and usually memorable statement. Some paradoxes remain flatly self-contradictory.' The child is father of man'' Everything I say is a lie'

Oxymoron

Oxymoron combines two usually contradictory terms in a compressed paradox.' bitter sweet', ' living death', ' visible darkness', ' true lies'

Language & Sound

Term

Definition

Examples

Alliteration

Alliteration is the repetition of identical sounds, most often the sounds at the beginning of words in close proximity. Alliteration is also a means of highlighting ideas through the repetition of similar sounds." descending dew drops"; " luscious lemons."" Your never-failing sword made war to cease";

Consonance

Consonance is the repetition of a consonant sound. This repetition can occur at the beginning (initial consonance) or in the middle of words (internal consonance)1. Betty bought some butter2. Struts and frets his hour upon the stage.

Assonance

Assonance is the repetition of a vowel sound. As with consonance, the repetition can occur either initially or internally. 1. " all the awful auguries" or " apt alliteration's artful aid." 2. " Her goodly eyes like sapphires shining bright."

Dissonance or cacophony

Harshness of sound and/or rhythm, either inadvertent or deliberate. It denotes a lack of harmony between sounds rather than the harshness of a particular sound in isolation (cacophony). It is normally constituted by a deliberate avoidance of patterns of repeated vowel soundsRobert Browning's " Pied Piper..." Rats! They fought the dogs and killed the cats...Split open the kegs of salted sprats, Made nests inside men's Sunday hats;

Euphony

When the sound echoes the sense of the line, it contributes to the euphony, or pleasant sound, of poetry. Cacophony is the contrasting term." Calm is the sea, the waves work less and less."

Anaphora

A rhetorical figure of repetition in which the same word or phrase is repeated (usually at the beginning of) in successive lines, clauses or sentences. Mine – by the Right of the White Election! Mine – by the Royal Seal! Mine – by the Sign in the Scarlet prison

Bars – cannot conceal!

Epistrophe

A rhetorical figure by which the same word is repeated at the end of successive clauses, sentences, or lines. The moth and the fish-eggs are in their place The bright suns I see and the dark suns I cannot see are in their place The palpable is in its place and the impalpable is in its place.

Parallelism

The arrangement of similarly constructed clauses, sentences, or verse lines in a pairing or other sequence suggesting some correspondence between them. I'll give my jewel for a set of beads, My gorgeous palace for a hermitage, My gay apparel for an almsman's gown, My figured goblets for a dish of wood...

Epizeuxis

A rhetorical figure by which a word is repeated for emphasis, with no other words interfering. sick, sick, sick! Close, close, close.

Asyndeton

A form of verbal compression which consists of the omission of connecting words (usually conjunctions) between clauses. 'An empty stream, a great

silence, an impenetrable forest. The air was thick, warm, heavy, sluggish.”

Veni, vidi, vici’

Hyperbaton

A figure of speech in which the normal order of words in a sentence is significantly altered. It is a very common form of poetic license. Also known as inversion. ‘ Cheese I love’” Size matters not! Judge me by my size, do you?”

Inversion

The reversal of the normally expected order of words normally to emphasise particular word/s or to achieve rhyme scheme. ‘ the body electric’” said she” sweetly blew the breeze’

Palindrome

A word that remains the same if read backwards; or a sentence or verse in which the order of letters is the same reading backwards or forwards, disregarding punctuation and spaces between words. Malayalam, eye, tenet, deed.

‘ Madam, I’m Adam’

Ellipsis

The omission from a sentence of a word or words that would be required for complete clarity but which can be easily understood from the context. ‘ I will (go) to Ireland.’”...’ to indicate the omission of some matter.

Elision

The slurring or suppression of a vowel sound or syllable , usually by fusing a final unstressed vowel with a following word beginning with a vowel.'

Th'expense of spirit'.

Syncope

Another form of contraction in which a letter or syllable within a word is omitted. o'er for over, heav'n for heaven

Pun

An expression that achieves emphasis or humour by contriving an ambiguity, two distinct meanings being suggested either by the same word (polysemy) or by two similar sounding words (homophone). Paronomasia is the rhetorical term for pun." Ask for me tomorrow and you shall find me a grave man."

Polysemy

A linguistic term for a word's capacity to carry two or more distinct meanings
Bank: ' financial institution', ' rely upon' or ' river bank'
The first two banks are polysemes as they share common origin (etymology).

Homonym

A word that is identical in form with another word, either in sound (homophone) or in spelling (homograph), or in both, but differs from it in meaning. Identity of form between two or more words is known as homonymy.
maid / made (same sound) left / left (same sound and spelling) moped / Moped (same spelling)

Portmanteau word

A word concocted by fusing two different words together into one. brunch from ' breakfast' and ' lunch'

Onomatopoeia

The sound of a word echoing the sense of the word. Hiss

Spoonerism

A phrase in which the initial consonants of two words have been swapped over, creating a new expression. ' The hissed the mystery lectures' for ' They missed my history lectures'' tease my ears'; ' hush my brat'; ' A lack of pies'

Malapropism

A confused, comically inaccurate use of a long word or words. ' the very pineapple of politeness' instead of pinnacle

Rhetoric**Term****Definition****Examples****Litotes**

A figure of speech by which an affirmation is made indirectly by denying its opposite, usually with an effect of understatement.

not seldom for ‘ fairly often’

no mean feat; not averse to a drink; not uncommon

Periphrasis / Circumlocution The roundabout manner of referring to something at length rather than naming it briefly and directly. It is a rhetorical device in literature. In a general sense, circumlocution and periphrasis mean describing a word with other words, General sense: " scissors" = " a thing you use to cut other things".

Hyperbole

Exaggeration for the sake of emphasis in a figure of speech not meant literally. Hyperbolic expressions are common in romance, where the beloved is glorified and in tragedies where the dead person is praised. The common complaint: I’ve been waiting here for ages. Cleopatra says, " His legs bestrid the Ocean: his reared arm crested the world."

Rhetorical Question

A question asked for the sake of persuasive effect rather than a genuine request for information, the speaker implying that the answer is too obvious to require a reply. Milton says, " For what can war but endless war still breed?"

Anachronism

The misplacing of any person, thing, custom or event outside its proper historical time. The clock in Shakespeare’s Julius Caesar.

Euphemism

An inoffensive expression used in place of a blunt one that is felt to be disagreeable or embarrassing. Pass away instead of 'die'

Euphuism

An elaborately ornate prose style richly decorated with rhetorical figures. Ah Euphues, into what misfortune art thou brought! In what sudden misery art thou wrought! It is like to fare with thee as with the eagle, which dieth neither for age nor with sickness but with famine, for...

Fustian / Pompous

Pretentiously inflated or pompous language. Bombast is extravagantly inflated and grandiloquent diction, disproportionate to its subject. A blusteringly boastful speech, or any arrogantly inflated manner of speaking or writing. Our quivering lances, shaking in the air, And bullets, like Jove's dreadful thunderbolts...

Tautology

The use of words that merely repeat something already stated. The opposite of a tautology is a contradiction, which is a statement that is always false regardless of the truth values of its parts. reverse back; Either it will rain tomorrow or it will not rain tomorrow.

Epiphany

In fiction, when a character suddenly experiences a deep realization about himself or herself; a truth which is grasped in an ordinary rather than a melodramatic moment. From Wordsworth's poem The Prelude: 'twas a

moment's pause, -All that took place within me came and wentAs in a moment; yet with Time it dwells, And grateful memory, as a thing divine.

Some Genre Specific Terms: Poetry

Term

Definition and examples

Narrative

A narrative poem is in some ways like narrative prose. It describes events and characters, real or imaginary, in story form. Forms of narrative poetry include the epic, the ballad, and the allegory.

Ode

An ode is a lyric poem that celebrates its subject. It can treat its subject as a symbol for universal ideas, or simply commemorate a notable event or person. Odes originated with Pindar, a fifth century BC Greek poet. Famous odes include Shelley's " Ode to the West Wind" and Keats's " Ode on a Grecian Urn."

Lyric

The term lyric is used to classify poems that aren't clearly narrative. In a lyrical poem, a single speaker conveys a thought, emotion, or sensory impression. Originally meant to be sung, a lyric poem can be of any length. Lyric poetry has been used widely by early poets (like John Donne) and modern ones (like Allen Ginsberg and Adrienne Rich.) Many forms of lyric poetry exist including the aubade, sonnet, ode, elegy, and dramatic monologue.

Ballad

Ballad: The ballad was originally a narrative song, and many early English ballads we think of as poems are actually song lyrics. The speaker of a ballad relates a story in stanza form, usually in quatrains-stanzas of four lines each. Ballads often have a consistent meter (same rhythm pattern in each stanza) and repeat key phrases. Any story set to music as a single song can arguably be called a ballad.

Sonnet

The sonnet remains one of the most persistent, best-loved, and best-known forms of fixed poetry. The word sonnet comes from the Italian word sonnetto meaning little song. Sonnets are lyric poems of 14 lines and fall into two main types: English (Shakespearean) or Italian (Petrarchan). The Shakespearean (or English) sonnet has three quatrains (stanzas of four lines of verse) followed by a rhymed couplet. This follows the rhyme scheme of abab, cdcd, efef, gg. The Petrarchan or Italian sonnet is divided into one octave (stanzas with eight lines), with a rhyme scheme of abbaabba, and one sestet (with six lines), with a rhyme scheme of cdecde, cdccdc, or cdedce. The Spenserian sonnet, named after the sixteenth-century English poet, Edmund Spenser, is characterized by three linked quatrains, abab/bcbc/cdcd, and ends with a rhymed couplet, ee.

Free Verse

Free verse isn't constrained by a rhythm or rhyme scheme. Instead, poets rely on imagery, figurative language, assonance, repetition, and alliteration to infuse music into the poem. Robert Frost likened free verse to playing

tennis without a net. Walt Whitman, e. e. cummings, and William Carlos Williams all used this technique. Free verse is the predominate form for poetry now being written.

Visual/Concrete poetry

This is poetry written in a shape resembling an object, which enriches its meaning. For example, William Burford's poem " A Christmas Tree" is shaped in the form of a tree.

Didactic

Didactic poems try to persuade the reader of a particular argument or teach a moral truth, rather than examining complexities in that argument or idea. For this reason, many literary critics consider didactic poems simplistic. Poetry, of course, teaches in subtle ways, but when the preaching purpose supersedes everything else, it's didactic. A classic example of didactic verse is Franklin's " early to bed early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise."

Allegory

In an allegory, the characters often symbolize something beyond themselves. Edmund Spenser's " Fairy Queen," for example, is a long poem about more than just the characters in the nine-line iambic stanzas. The Red Cross Knight represents both mankind and England as he fights dragons and evil for Una, the daughter of Adam and Eve, who stands for truth and of course, the Christian church.

Epic poetry

An epic is a long narrative poem on a momentous subject in which divine, semi-divine, or human characters perform heroic actions. Familiar examples of Western epics are Homer's Iliad and Odyssey, Virgil's Aeneid, and the old English poem, Beowulf. Milton's Paradise Lost and Dante's Divine Comedy are examples of classical epics. Metaphysical poetry Refers to a diverse group of 17th century English poets (John Donne, Andrew Marvell, Abraham Cowley, George Herbert...) whose work is notable for its ingenious use of intellectual and theological concepts in surprising conceits, strange paradoxes, and far-fetched imagery.

Elegy

An elegy is a lyric poem that praises a dead person or people. It may focus on the subject's significance as an individual, or treat the subject as a symbol of larger themes such as sorrow or human mortality. The subject may or may not be personally known to the poet. For example, Shelley's "Adonais" eulogizes his friend Keats; Walt Whitman, on the other hand, writes about Abraham Lincoln (whom he didn't know personally) in "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd."

Dirge

A public song of lament. Ariel's Song ' Full fathom five thy father lies' in Shakespeare's The Tempest.

Dramatic monologue

Dramatic monologues are poems delivered by speakers who describe themselves or relate events they saw or participated in. Speakers of dramatic monologues are viable, psychologically substantive characters, not just narrators of events they've witnessed. This characteristic of the speaker distinguishes a dramatic monologue from a narrative poem. Robert Browning is known for his poetic dramatic monologues.

Rhyme

The identity of sound between syllables or paired groups of syllables, usually at the ends of verse lines; also a poem employing this device. Normally the last stressed vowel in the line and all sounds following it make up the rhyming element. This can be a monosyllable (love / above - known as 'masculine rhyme'), or two syllables (whether / together - known as 'feminine rhyme') or 'double rhyme' or even three syllables (glamorous / amorous - known as 'triple rhyme'). If a feminine or triple rhyme uses more than one word (famous / shame us) it is known as a mosaic rhyme. 1. rhyme riche - consonants before the rhyming elements are also similar though the spellings are different. (made / maid) 2. eye rhyme - spellings of the eye rhyme match but the sounds do not (love / prove). 3. half-rhyme, imperfect rhyme or slant rhyme - where the vowel sounds do not match (love / have, or, with rich consonance, love / leave). Although rhyme is most often used at the ends of verse lines, internal rhyme between syllables within the same line is also found.

Stress

The relative emphasis given in pronunciation to a syllable, in loudness, pitch, or duration. The metre of a line, in the English language is determined by the number of stresses in a sequence composed of stressed and unstressed syllables.

Enjambment

In poetry, when one line ends without a pause and continues into the next line for its meaning. This is also called a run-on line. The transition between the first two lines of Wordsworth's poem "My Heart Leaps Up" demonstrates enjambment: My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky:

Diction

A choice of words used in a literary work. Poetic diction is the choice of words and figures in poetry. It also refers to words and figures not normally found in common speech or prose. Modern poets rejected this as gaudy and employ plainer diction.

Metre

The regular rhythmic pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables.

Foot

The basic unit of meter consisting of a group of two or three syllables with a fixed metrical pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables. Scanning or scansion is the process of determining the prevailing foot in a line of poetry, of determining the types and sequence of different feet. Types of feet: U

(unstressed); / (stressed syllable) Iamb: U / Trochee: / U Anapest: U U / Dactyl: / U U Spondee: / / Pyrrhic: U U

Metric line

A metric line is named according to the number of feet composing it. 1 foot:

Monometer 2 feet: dimeter 3 feet: trimeter 4 feet: tetrameter 5 feet:

pentameter 6 feet: hexameter 7 feet: heptameter 8 feet: octameter

Iambic Pentameter

The most natural metrical pattern or organization in the English language is called iambic pentameter. It consists of an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable, repeated five times in a row.

Blank verse

Unrhymed lines of iambic pentameter, as in these final lines of Tennyson's 'Ulysses': "One equal temper of heroic hearts, Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield." Since 1540 it became the standard metre for dramatic poetry and widely used form for narrative and meditative poems in English poetry.

Couplet

A pair of rhyming verse lines, usually of the same length." A grave's a fine and private place, But none, I think, do there embrace"

Triplet/ Tercet

It is a stanza of three lines, usually with a single rhyme." Who e'er she be That not impossible she That shall command my heart and me"

Caesura

Latin for cutting. This is a pause in the rhythm. Any punctuation mark in the middle of a line of verse.

Enjambment

Or enjambement, the running over of the sense and grammatical structure from one verse line or couplet to the next without a punctuated pause. In an enjambed line (also called a 'run-on line'), the completion of a phrase, clause, or sentence is held over to the following line so that the line ending is not emphasised as it is in an end-stopped line." A thing of beauty is a joy for ever: Its loveliness increases; it will neverPass into nothingness; but still will keepA bower quiet for us, and a sleepFull of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing."

Pathetic Fallacy

The poetic convention whereby natural phenomena which cannot feel as humans do are described as if they could: thus rain clouds may 'weep', or flowers may be 'joyful' in sympathy with the poet's mood. Intentional FallacyThe widespread assumption that an author's declared or supposed intention in writing a work is the proper basis for deciding on the meaning and value of that work. The term believes that a literary work, once published, belongs to the public domain and understanding. " Trust the tale, not the teller."

Some Genre Specific Terms: Drama

Term

Definition and examples

Freytag's Pyramid

Freytag is known for his analysis of the structure of ancient Greek and Shakespearean drama. According to Freytag, a drama is divided into five parts, or acts: exposition; rising action, climax (or turning point); falling action; and (depending upon whether the drama is a comedy or tragedy) either a deouement or a catastrophe.

Exposition

In the exposition, the background information that is needed to understand the story properly is provided. Such information includes the protagonist, the antagonist, the basic conflict, the setting, and so forth. The exposition ends with the inciting moment, which is the single incident in the story's action without which there would be no story. The inciting moment sets the remainder of the story in motion, beginning with the second act, the rising action.

Rising Action

During the rising action, the basic conflict is complicated by the introduction of related secondary conflicts, including various obstacles that frustrate the protagonist's attempt to reach his or her goal. Secondary conflicts can include adversaries of lesser importance than the story's antagonist, who may work with the antagonist or separately, by and for themselves.

Climax

The third act is that of the climax, or turning point, which marks a change, for the better or the worse, in the protagonist's affairs. If the story is a comedy, things will have gone badly for the protagonist up to this point; now, the tide, so to speak, will turn, and things will begin to go well for him or her. If the story is a tragedy, the opposite state of affairs will ensue, with things going from good to bad for the protagonist.

Falling Action

During the falling action, the conflict between the protagonist and the antagonist unravels, with the protagonist winning or losing against the antagonist. The falling action may contain a moment of final suspense, during which the final outcome of the conflict is in doubt. The falling action should not be mistaken for anticlimax (an abrupt lapse from growing intensity to triviality with the effect of dissapointed expectation or deflated suspense).

Denouement

The comedy ends with a denouement in which the protagonist is better off than he or she was at the story's outset. The tragedy ends with a catastrophe in which the protagonist is worse off than he or she was at the beginning of the narrative.

Comedy

A play written chiefly to amuse its audience by appealing to a sense of superiority over the characters depicted. A comedy will normally be closer to

the representation of everyday life than a tragedy, and will explore human failings rather than tragedy's disastrous crimes. Its ending will usually be happy for the leading characters. There are several types of comedies: Old Comedy, New Comedy, Romantic Comedy, Restoration comedy, Sentimental Comedy, Comedy of manners, Comedy of Ideas,

Black Comedy

A kind of drama in which disturbing or sinister subjects like death, disease, or warfare, are treated with bitter amusement, usually in a manner calculated to offend and shock.

Tragicomedy

A play that combines elements of tragedy and comedy, either by providing a happy ending to a potentially tragic story or by some more complex blending of serious and light moods.

Farce

Comedy that inspires hilarity mixed with panic and cruelty in its audience through an increasingly rapid and improbable series of ludicrous confusions, physical disasters, sexual innuendos and buffoonery among its stock characters.

Parody

A mocking imitation of the style of a literary work or works, ridiculing the stylistic habits of an author or school by exaggerated mimicry. Parody is related to burlesque in its application of serious styles to ridiculous subjects,

to satire in its punishment of eccentricities, and even to criticism in its analysis of style.

Satire

A mode of writing that exposes the failings of individuals, institutions or societies to ridicule and scorn. Its tone may vary from tolerant amusement to bitter indignation. They can be direct (author addresses the readers) or indirect (the readers or the audience infer)

Burlesque

A kind of parody that ridicules some serious literary work either by treating its solemn subject in an undignified style or by applying its elevated style to a trivial subject. Alexander Popes' mock epic *The Rape of the Lock*, Shakespeare's play within the play "The Mouse Trap" in *Hamlet* and John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera*.

Humours

The bodily fluids to which medieval medicine attributed the various types of human temperament, according to the predominance of each within a body. So excess blood would make one 'sanguine', phlegm – 'phlegmatic', choler – 'choleric', black bile – a 'melancholic' one. The comedy of humours would be based on the eccentricities of characters whose temperaments are distorted in ways similar to an imbalance among the bodily humours.

Comic relief

The interruption of a serious work, especially a tragedy, by a short humorous episode. The inclusion of such comic scenes can have various and complex

effects, ranging from relaxation after moments of high tension to sinister brooding.

Irony

A subtly humorous perception of inconsistency, in which an apparently straightforward statement or event is undermined by its context so as to give it a very different significance. Irony, therefore, is the dissembling or hiding what is actually the case to achieve special rhetorical or artistic effects. Irony is used in all genres, but mainly in a Satire. Verbal irony is a statement in which the meaning that a speaker implies differs drastically from the meaning that is ostensibly expressed, as in its crude form sarcasm. Structural irony in literature involves the use of a naïve or deluded hero or unreliable narrator whose view of the world differs widely from the true circumstances recognised by the author and readers. Structural irony is used to flatter its readers' intelligence at the expense of a character (or fictional narrator). Dramatic irony achieves similar sort of detached superiority in which the audience knows more about a character's situation than the character does, foreseeing an outcome contrary to the character's expectations. Tragic irony is achieved, in a tragedy, when the character unknowingly acts in a way we recognise to be grossly inappropriate to the actual circumstances, or expects the opposite of what we know that fate/future holds in store. Cosmic irony is attributed to literary works in which a deity, or destiny, or the course of the universe, is represented as though deliberately manipulating events so as to lead the protagonist to false hopes, only to frustrate or mock them. Romantic irony designates a mode of

dramatic or narrative writing in which the author builds up the illusion of representing reality, only to shatter it by revealing that the author, as artist, is the arbitrary creator and manipulator of the characters and their actions. This type of irony, involving a self-conscious narrator, is quite a common feature in modern fiction. Socratic irony: Philosopher Socrates usually assumed a pose of ignorance and an eagerness to be instructed and a modest readiness to entertain adverse opinions proposed by others; although these, upon his continued questioning, always turn out to be ill-grounded or to lead to absurd consequences.

Sarcasm

Sarcasm in ordinary parlance is sometimes used as an equivalent for irony, but it is better to restrict it to the crude and taunting use of apparent praise for dispraise: " Oh, you're God's great gift to women, you are!" An added clue for sarcasm is an exaggerated inflection of the speaker's voice in Drama.

Tragedy

A serious play (or, by extension, a play), representing the disastrous downfall of a central character, the protagonist. Based on ancient Greek tragedies, Aristotle defined tragedy as " the imitation of an action that is of serious magnitude, complete" and incorporating " incidents arousing pity and fear, to accomplish the catharsis of such emotions."

Sophocles' King Oedipus. Tragedies then followed the unities of time, action and place.

Medieval tragedies are simply the story of a person of high status who, whether deservedly or not, is brought from prosperity to wretchedness by an unpredictable turn of the wheel of fortune. " The Monk's Tale" of The Canterbury Tales.

In the sixteenth century, influenced by the Senecan tragedy (Roman writer Seneca of the first century), English playwrights developed an organized five-act play with a complex plot and an elaborately formal style of dialogue. In revenge tragedy (the tragedy of blood), murder, revenge, ghosts, mutilation, and carnage, were represented to satisfy the appetite of the contemporary audience for violence and horror.

Modern tragedies are mainly domestic tragedies and social tragedies wherein the protagonist, an ordinary man (or an idealist), normally belongs to the lower rung of the social strata and is defeated or deceived by the by society due its false social, economic or political values. Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman. In a black comedy, baleful, naïve, or inept characters play out their roles of " tragic farce" in a fantastic or nightmarish modern world, in

which the events are simultaneously comic, horrifying, and absurd. Absurd plays, normally use humour and comedy as a means to attain the tragic sense of the absurdity of human life.

Hamartia

The Greek word for error or failure, used by Aristotle (4th century BC) to designate the false step that leads the protagonist in a tragedy to his or her downfall. The term has often been translated as ‘tragic flaw’. Aristotle didn’t intend hamartia as some personal defect of character, but the emphasis was rather upon the protagonist’s action, which could be brought about by misjudgement, ignorance, or some other cause.

Hubris

[hew-bris] or hybris, the Greek word for ‘insolence’ or ‘affront’, applied to the arrogance or pride of the protagonist in a tragedy in which he or she defies moral laws or the prohibitions of the gods.

Peripetia

[pe-ri-pe-tee-a], a sudden reversal of a character’s circumstances and fortunes, usually involving the downfall of the protagonist in a tragedy, and often coinciding with the ‘recognition’ (Anagnorisis). In a comedy, however, peripetia abruptly restores the prosperity of the main character(s).

Catharsis

The effect of ‘purgation’ or ‘purification’ achieved by tragic drama, according to Aristotle. According to him, a tragedy should succeed in ‘

arousing pity and fear in such a way as to accomplish a catharsis of such emotions. Aristotle's metaphor of emotional cleansing is has been read as a solution to the puzzle of audience's pleasure or relief in witnessing the disturbing events enacted in tragedies.

Tragic Hero

According to Aristotle the tragic hero can evoke pity and fear most effectively if he is neither thoroughly good nor thoroughly evil but a mixture of both. His misfortune has to be more than he deserves to evoke pity and the similar possibilities of error in our own lesser and fallible selves should evoke fear.

Prologue

An introductory section of a play, speech, or other literary work. The term is also applied to the performer who makes an introductory speech in a play.

Epilogue

A concluding section of a written work. At the end of some plays in the age of Shakespeare, a single character would address the audience directly, begging indulgence and applause. G. B. Shaw used it mainly to reinforce the social issues in his play.

Soliloquy

A dramatic speech uttered by one character speaking aloud while on stage (or while under the impression of being alone). The soliloquist thus reveals his or her inner thoughts and feelings to the audience, either in supposed self-communion or in a consciously direct address.

Aside

A short speech or remark spoken by a character in a drama, directed either to the audience or to another character, which by convention is supposed to be inaudible to the other characters on stage.

Stichomythia

[stik-oh-mith-ia], a form of dramatic dialogue (or verbal dual) in which two disputing characters answer each other rapidly in alternating single lines, with one character's replies balancing the other's utterances.

Some Genre Specific Terms: Fiction and Prose

Term

Definition and examples

Utopia

An imagined form of ideal or superior human society; or a written work of fiction or philosophical speculation describing such a society. William Morris's *News from Nowhere*.

Dystopia

The inverted or undesirable equivalent of utopia is dystopia, as it is for works describing such a bad place. George Orwell's 1984.

Epistolary novel

A novel written in the form of a series of letters exchanged among the characters of the story, with extracts from their journals sometimes included. Alice Walker's *The Colour Purple*.

Existentialist novel

An ideological current in European philosophy in the mid 20th century distinguished by its emphasis on lived human existence than the values we attach to the world. Sartre's *Nausea*.

Gothic novel

A story of terror and suspense usually set in a gloomy old castle or monastery. Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*.

Picaresque

A novel with a rogue as its hero or heroine, usually recounting his or her escapades in a first-person narrative marked by its episodic structure and realistic low-life descriptions.

Realism

A mode of writing that gives the impression of recording or 'reflecting' faithfully an active way of life. The term refers both to 1. a literary method based on detailed accuracy of description (verisimilitude) and to a more

general attitude that rejects idealization, escapism, and other extravagant qualities of romance in favour of recognising soberly the actual problems of life.

Surrealism

An anti-rational movement of imaginative liberation in art and literature which seeks to break down the boundaries between rationality and irrationality, exploring the resources and revolutionary energies of dreams, hallucinations and fantasies.

Stream of consciousness

The continuous flow of sense-perceptions, thoughts, feelings, and memories in the human mind; or a literary method of representing such a blending of mental processes in fictional characters.

Invective

The harsh denunciation of some person or thing in abusive speech or writing, usually by a succession of insulting epithets.

Panegyric

A public speech or written composition devoted to the prolonged, effusive praise of some person, group of people, or public body.

Aphorism

Condensed wisdom. A statement of general principle, expressed memorably by condensing much wisdom into few words: 'Give a man a mask and he will tell you the truth'.

Bildungsroman

A kind of novel that follows the development of the hero or heroine from childhood or adolescence into adulthood, through a troubled quest for identity. Charles Dickens's David Copperfield.

Kunstlerroman

When the novel describes the formation of a young artist it may be called Kunstlerroman.

Criticism

The reasoned discussion of literary works, an activity which may include some or all of the following procedure, in varying proportions: the defence of literature against moralists and censors; classification of a work according to its genre; interpretation of its meaning, analysis of its structure and style; judgement of its worth by comparison with other works; estimation of its likely effect on readers; the establishment of general principles by which literary works can be evaluated and understood. ConnotationThe emotional implications and associations that a word may carry. DenotationThe direct or dictionary meaning of a word, in contrast to its figurative or associated meanings. ParaprosdokianThe latter part of a sentence or phrase is surprising or unexpected in a way that causes the reader or listener to re-frame or re-interpret the first part. It is frequently used for humorous or dramatic effect. I want to die peacefully in my sleep, like my grandfather, not screaming and yelling like the passengers in his car. PathosThe means of persuasion that appeals to the audience's emotions. BathosA ludicrous descent from the exalted or lofty to the commonplace; anticlimaxSyntaxThe

arrangement of words in a sentence. Pastiche a literary, musical, or artistic piece consisting wholly or chiefly of motifs or techniques borrowed from one or more sources

Sibilance The repeated sound of 's' (which is a sibilant) to create a hissing or a calming effect. Slowly, silently...

Vocative Noun identifying the person, thing being addressed. I don't know, John.

Zeugma Describes the joining of two or more parts of a sentence with a single common verb or noun. A zeugma employs both ellipsis, the omission of words which are easily understood, and parallelism, the balance of several words or phrases. The result is a series of similar phrases joined or yoked together by a common and implied noun or verb. He took his coat and his leave. She took tea and umbrage. He carried a strobe light and the

responsibility for the lives of his men. She arrived in a taxi and a flaming rage. Anastrophe (Inversion) A figure of speech in which the usual word order is inverted to emphasize the displaced word. 'This is the forest primeval.'

Here, 'primeval' is emphasized more than in the usual word order: 'This is a primeval forest.'

Aporia 1. An expression of doubt (often feigned). 2. An insoluble contradiction or paradox in a text's meanings. Then the steward

said within himself: What shall I do? (Luke 16) Hendiadys A figure of speech in which two words joined by and express an idea that is more commonly expressed by an adjective and a noun. Aim: to break things down into more

elementary units; for emphasis 'his voracity and appetite' rather than 'his voracious appetite' 'by length of time and siege' rather than 'a long

siege' Deus ex machina (literally "god out of a machine") is an improbable contrivance in a story; an artificial, or improbable, character, device, or

event introduced suddenly in a work of fiction or drama to resolve a situation

or untangle a plot (such as an angel suddenly appearing to solve problems). The term is a negative one, and it often implies a lack of skill on the part of the writer.[]