

Figures of speech

Allusion

An allusion is a reference (explicit or indirect) to some fairly well-known event, thing, place, or person. An allusion is not explained in the text. It is just made in passing and the writer expects the reader to possess enough knowledge to spot the allusion and grasp its importance in a text. Example : Superman?

Apostrophe

An abstract idea, an inanimate object or a person who is not present or dead is addressed or spoken to as if it were human. By addressing an audience that cannot feel, respond or express emotions, the speaker is instead showing their own inner state.

Metaphor

A metaphor is a comparison between two things. The writer does not say that one thing is like another, but that one thing is another. In other words, this is a comparison that does not use the words "like" or "as" to make the comparison.

Extended metaphor

Extended metaphors are recurring metaphors or analogies. In other words, the metaphor is sustained or extended across multiple lines.

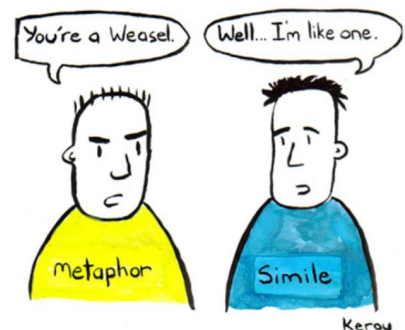
Personification

Personification is when an inanimate object or abstract ideas is given a human quality.



Simile

A simile is a comparison between two things using the words "like" or "as".



Antithesis

Antithesis places opposite or contrasting ideas in a sentence to create a contrasting effect. The contrast is emphasised by the parallel structure of the contrasted phrases or clauses. The similar structure helps to draw in attention. Examples: They speak like saints and act like devils.

Epigram

An epigram is a short but insightful statement, often in verse form, which communicates a thought in a witty, paradoxical, or funny way. Examples: "Every man desires to live long; but no man would be old." (Johnathon Swift)

Innuendo

Innuendo can be defined as an indirect or a subtle observation about a thing or a person. It is generally critical, disparaging or salacious in nature, and its use is almost always derogatory. An innuendo may come across as very innocent; the unsavouriness lies in its subtext.



What do you think of the paintings?



They have very lovely frames.

Irony

Irony expresses the opposite of what is meant.

Verbal irony

Verbal irony is when the literal meaning of a word or statement is the opposite of that intended. Tone and context play an important part in conveying verbal irony.

Situational irony

This is irony involving a situation in which actions have an effect that is opposite from what was intended, so that the outcome is contrary to what was expected.

Dramatic irony

Dramatic irony something is understood or known by the audience but not grasped by the characters in the story.

Oxymoron

An oxymoron is a combination of contradictory or incongruous words. In other words, it combines words that are contraries in their ordinary use. Examples: painful pride.

Paradox

A paradox is a seemingly absurd or contradictory statement that, when analysed, is found to be true. In this way concepts can be understood in interesting and non-traditional ways. Examples: You will kill him with your kindness.

Parody

This is the imitation and/or exaggeration of other text types e.g., poems, in order to satirise or create humour.

Pun

A pun is a clever play on words, alike in sound but different in meaning. The double meaning is used to convey humour.

Satire

Satire is sharp wit, irony, or sarcasm used to highlight, expose or ridicule human, social or political weakness. The aim is to change the situation, educate and entertain through humour.

Sarcasm

Sarcasm, like verbal irony, occurs when one thing is said, but something else is intended or understood. Sarcasm is used with the express purpose of hurting, insulting or humiliating.

Tone and context play important roles when it comes to identifying sarcasm.

Euphemism

Euphemism expresses an unpleasant or uncomfortable situation in a more sensitive, kind and tactful manner. In this way a pleasant word or phrase replaces the unpleasant word or phrase. Examples: The camp forbids any form of chemical stimulants. (drugs)

Hyperbole

Hyperbole is the use of deliberate exaggeration, not to deceive but to heighten the effect. The aim is usually to create humour or to emphasise a point. Examples: The teacher complained that she had had hundreds of interruptions that day.

Litotes

Litotes uses a negative and an opposite to understate what is intended. Examples: He is not at all shy.

Metonymy

Metonymy is a figure of speech in which a thing is called not by its true name but by something associated with it. In this way something associated with the object represents the object. Examples: The pen is mightier than the sword.

Synecdoche

Synecdoche is a figure of speech in which a part is substituted for a whole or a whole for a part. Examples: They are travelling by sail.

Transferred epithet

This is when an adjective or adverb is moved (transferred) from the word it actually qualifies to a different noun in the sentence. Examples: The friends drank a cheerful glass.

Anti-climax

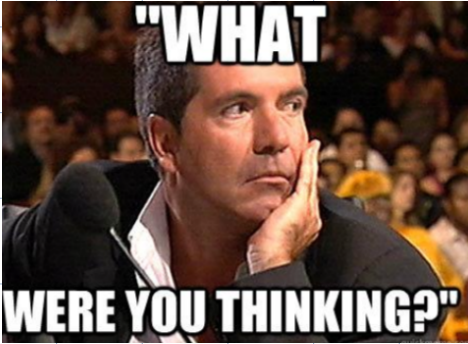
Anti-climax is the arrangement of ideas in descending order of importance. Alternatively, ideas are built up only for the final statement to be flat and unexpected. Its purpose is to create a humorous or ridiculous effect. Examples: I intend to be a great author, to write short stories and to write letters to the newspaper.

Climax

Climax is the arrangement of ideas in ascending order of importance. Examples: I intend to write letters to the newspaper, to write short stories and to be a great author.

Rhetorical questions

A rhetorical question is a question asked not for information but to produce an effect. It strengthens the speaker's point and argument.



Alliteration

Alliteration is the repetition of a consonant sound at the beginning of a number of words. It often highlights the expression of movement. Examples: Football fever fuels fans.

Assonance

Assonance is the repetition of vowel sounds. Examples: Clap your hands and stamp your feet.

Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeia is the use of words that imitate and reproduce real-life sounds and actions. Examples: The sky exploded with a crash, bang and hissing of fireworks.

Sibilance

Sibilance is a figure of speech in which a hissing sound is created within a group of words through the repetition of "s" sounds. Examples: Sally sang sadly.

Literary devices

Who writes what?

A person who writes a novel is an author.

A person who writes a play is a playwright.

A person who writes poems is a poet.

Allegory

An allegory is where every aspect of a story is representative, usually symbolic, of something else, usually a larger abstract concept or important historical/geopolitical event. These symbolic characters and events are used to convey a hidden meaning - one that is usually moral, spiritual or political.

Atmosphere

The general mood or feeling established in a piece of literature. Atmosphere is created through word choice and pacing.

Character

A character is a person, animal, being, creature, or thing in a story. Writers use characters to perform the actions and speak dialogue, moving the story along a plot line

Protagonist

The protagonist is the central person in a story, and is often referred to as the story's main character. He or she is faced with a conflict that must be resolved. The protagonist may not always be admirable or good ; nevertheless, s/he must command involvement on the part of the reader, or better yet, empathy.

Function of the protagonist

A protagonist is a very important tool used in developing a story.

Antagonist

The antagonist is the character(s) (or situation) that represents the opposition the protagonist must face. In other words, the antagonist is an obstacle that the protagonist must overcome. Being the antagonist has nothing to do with how "bad" the character is. In some cases, the protagonist is simply struggling against impersonal forces like nature, circumstance, society, or addiction. If this is the case, the aspects mentioned are considered antagonists.

Function of an antagonist

Conflict is a basic element of any plot. The presence of an antagonist alongside a protagonist is vital for the typical formula of a plot. The antagonist opposes the protagonist in his endeavours and, thus, the conflict ensues. The protagonist struggles against the antagonist who takes the plot to a climax and later the conflict is resolved with the defeat of the antagonist or, as in tragedies, with the downfall of the protagonist.

Hero

A hero is a character who possesses a great talent or ability that separates them from the rest of their peers. This could be a skill, such as the ability to fight, or it could be an internal quality such as bravery or cleverness.

Antihero

An antihero is a main character in a story who lacks typical heroic qualities such as bravery, courage, morality, and the special ability and desire to work for the greater good. The antihero is still the protagonist of a story yet is a foil to the traditional hero.

Major or central characters

Major or central characters are vital to the development and resolution of the conflict. In other words, the plot and resolution of conflict revolves around these characters. This could be an invisible character. They are mentioned but not directly known to the audience.

Minor characters

Minor characters serve to complement the major characters and help move the plot events forward. This could be an invisible character. They are mentioned but not directly known to the audience.

Dynamic characters

A dynamic character is a character who changes over time, usually as a result of resolving a central conflict or facing a major crisis. Most dynamic characters tend to be central rather than peripheral characters, because resolving the conflict is the major role of central characters.

Static character

A static character is a character who does not change over time; his or her personality does not transform or evolve.

Round character

A rounded character is anyone who has a complex personality; he or she is often portrayed as a conflicted and contradictory person.

Flat character

A flat character is the opposite of a round character. This literary personality is notable for one kind of personality trait or characteristic.

Stock character

Stock characters are those types of characters who have become conventional or stereotypical through repeated use in particular types of stories. Stock characters are instantly recognisable to readers or audience members (e.g., the femme fatale, the mad scientist, the geeky boy with glasses, and the faithful sidekick)

Foil

A foil is any character (usually the antagonist or an important supporting character) whose personal qualities contrast with another character (usually the protagonist). By providing this contrast, we get to know more about the other character.

Symbolic

A symbolic character is any major or minor character whose very existence represents some major idea or aspect of society.

Characterisation

This is the personality of a character. It is also the method that an author uses to reveal this personality, life, history, values and physical attributes.

Direct characterisation

Direct characterisation is when the narrator tells us something about the character. You can take this as a fact. The character is revealed through clear statements by the author. Essentially, it is something considered a **FACT** by the reader. The author tells the reader about a character.

Indirect characterisation

Indirect characterisation is when the narrator shows us something about the character through the character's actions, thoughts, relationships and words. The reader must infer what the character is like. Character is revealed through the character's words and actions. This type of characterisation shows readers a characters' traits without explicitly describing them. Indirect characterisation involves **OPINION** or **INFERENCE**.

Direct characterisation	Indirect characterisation
She was rich. - FACT = direct characterisation	She wore a ten-carat diamond necklace everywhere she went. - <i>We form an opinion based on what she wears.</i>
Joe was having fun at the party. - If you can prove he was having fun, it's direct.	Joe couldn't believe it was already two in the morning; he didn't want to leave yet. - <i>We assume Joe is having fun because he doesn't want to leave the party.</i>
Sally is socially awkward. - If a character says this, it is an opinion = indirect. If the narrator says this, it is considered a fact = direct. *	All Sally does when people are around is say weird things that nobody understands. - <i>Sally's behaviour makes us assume she is strange or socially awkward = indirect.</i>
The clothes that John wear are outdated. - Depending on who says this, it can be either direct or indirect. *	John wore bellbottoms, gold chains, platform shoes, and huge sunglasses to the Valentine's dance. - <i>We can assume John is quite flamboyant based on what he wears.</i>
Dylan thought that reading was boring. - Depending on who says this, it can be either direct or indirect. *	No matter what he read, every time Dylan opened a book, he'd be snoring in five minutes. - <i>We make an assumption that Dylan hates reading.</i>
Dee thinks that she is better than everyone else. - Depending on who says this, it can be either direct or indirect. *	Whenever anyone tries to speak to Dee, she says, "You don't know me," rolls her eyes, and walks away. - <i>We make an assumption that Dee has an attitude.</i>

Conflict

Conflict is a struggle between opposing forces. It is a story's driving force, reveals character and advances the plot. Conflict is generally classified as internal or external depending on the nature of the forces.

Internal conflict

Internal conflict is the struggle or clash within the character (mental or psychological). A character who is struggling to do the right thing is an example of internal conflict.

External conflict

External conflict happens between characters, or between a character and some outside force. like nature. Two characters having an argument is an example of external conflict.

Context

Context: conditions, including facts, social/historical background, time and place, etc. surrounding a given situation

Connotation

These are suggestions and associations which surround a word as opposed to its bare, literal meaning. These suggestions and associations implicit and are determined by the context in which the word is used Connotations often elicit emotional responses from the reader.

Denotation

Denotation refers to a word's literal or dictionary meaning.

Dialogue

Dialogue can refer to:

- characters speaking to one another (their conversation);
- a literary work in the form of a conversation; or
- the lines spoken by a character in a play, essay, story, or novel.

Diction

Diction: the writer's choice of words/ vocabulary

Foreshadowing

Foreshadowing is where future events in a story, or perhaps the outcome, are suggested by the author before they happen. It is useful for creating suspense, a feeling of unease, a sense of curiosity, or a mark that things may not be as they seem.

Imagery

Imagery: language which describes something in detail, using words to substitute for and create sensory stimulation, including visual imagery and sound imagery. In other words, it is descriptive language that engages human senses.

Juxtaposition

Juxtaposition: the arrangement of two or more ideas, characters, actions, settings, phrases, or words side-by-side or in similar narrative moments for the purpose of comparison, contrast, rhetorical effect, suspense, or character development. In literature, juxtaposition is a useful device for writers to portray their characters in great detail to create suspense and achieve a rhetorical effect. It is a human quality to comprehend one thing easily by comparing it to another. Therefore, a writer can make readers sense "goodness" in a particular character by placing him or her side by side to a character that is predominantly "evil". Consequently, goodness in one character is highlighted by evil in the other character. Juxtaposition in this case is useful in the development of characters.

Mood

Mood refers to the general sense or feeling which the reader is supposed to get from the text. Mood is created in a number of ways including setting, diction, imagery and figurative language.

Motif

A motif is a recurring important idea, object or image. It can include lines of dialogue, objects, characters, colors and actions. An effective motif is one that supports the literary work's theme and is repeated in the work.

Function:

- a) The repetition of the idea or image illustrates its importance
- b) The recurrence also helps to advance the plot.
- c) Change in the motif helps to reveal theme

Narrator (narration/point of view)

The narrator is the one who tells a story. In a work of fiction, the narrator determines the story's point of view. Point of view signifies the way a story is told - the perspective through which the reader will experience what happens in the literary work.

Plot

Plot is a literary device that writers use to structure what happens in a story. A plot is more than a simple sequence of events. It presents an event, action, or turning point that creates conflict or raises a dramatic question. This conflict or dramatic question spurs several connected events that try to "answer" the dramatic question or conflict.

Exposition

The exposition provides important background information.

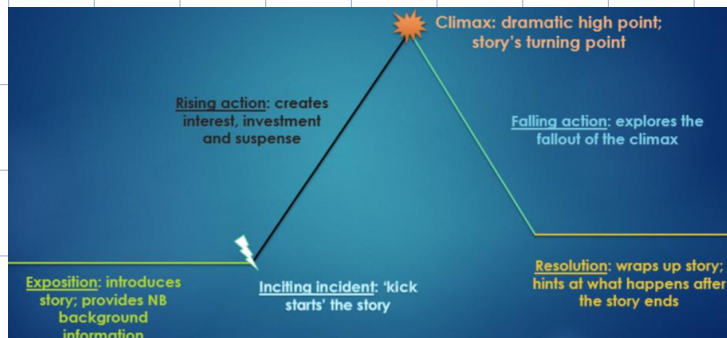
The exposition:

contains the introductory sequence in which the main themes are established:

introduces time and place;

introduces characters; and

introduces the dramatic conflict.



Rising action

The rising action of a story is the section of the plot leading up to the climax, in which the tension stemming from the story's central conflict grows through successive plot developments.

Climax

The climax is the story's turning point, at which the end result becomes inevitable. This is generally the most intense part of the story because this is where all the conflict comes together and erupt like a volcano.

Falling action

The falling action of a story is the section of the plot following the climax, in which the tension stemming from the story's central conflict decreases and the story moves toward its conclusion.

Resolution

The resolution (conclusion or denouement) is the final piece part of the story. Here the conflict is resolved and the story comes to its end.

Anti-climax

Narratives can also have an anti-climax. An anti-climax is similar to a climax in that it occurs at the height of tension in a narrative. However, a climax is a turning point which begins to solve the main conflict in a satisfying way, whereas an anti-climax is a turning point that is unsatisfying.

An anti-climax generally feels unsatisfying because the conclusion does not meet the expectations that the narrative

Repetition

Repetition: where a specific word, phrase, or structure is repeated several times, usually in close proximity, to emphasise a particular idea

Setting

Setting: the time and place where a story occurs. The setting:

- influences the audience's experience;
- forms the backdrop of the action; and
- establishes the mood/atmosphere of the story.

Storyline

Storyline: the sequence of events in a novel in chronological order.

Structure

Structure: the manner in which the various elements of a story are assembled.

Suspense

Suspense is the creation of tension in the characters, and in the audience, in terms of the plot.

Symbolism

Symbolism: the use of specific objects or images to represent abstract ideas

Theme

Theme is a main idea or an underlying meaning of a literary work. It may be stated directly or indirectly.

Major and minor themes are two types of themes that appear in literary works.

A major theme is an idea that a writer repeats in his work, making it the most significant idea in a literary work.

A minor theme, on the other hand, refers to an idea that appears in a work briefly and gives way to another minor

Tone

Tone is the apparent emotional state, or "attitude," of the speaker/narrator/narrative voice, as conveyed through the language of the piece.

Tragedy

Tragedy: where a story ends with a negative or unfortunate outcome which was essentially avoidable, usually caused by a flaw in the central character's personality.

Tragic flaw

Tragic flaw: the single characteristic (usually negative) or personality disorder which causes the downfall of the protagonist

Drama

Action

Internal action: psychological changes within the characters.

External action: the events of the plot.

Audience

An audience is the person for whom a writer writes, or composer composes. A writer uses a particular style of language, tone, and content according to what he knows about his audience. In simple words, audience refers to the spectators, listeners, and intended readers of a writing, performance, or speech.

Blocking

Blocking refers to working out the movements of the action on a floor plan of the set.

Drama/Play

A drama (or play) is:

a composition in prose or verse presenting, in pantomime and dialogue, a narrative involving conflict and usually designed for presentation on a stage. what Aristotle called "imitated human action."

This type of composition needs a theatre, actors, and an audience in order to be fully experienced; reading it is not enough

Monologue

A monologue is:

a solo speech delivered by a character in a play or other literature, an utterance by a single person who is talking to other characters, aware of all hearers present.

Soliloquy

A soliloquy is:

a solo speech delivered by a character in a play or other literature while alone, or an utterance by a person who is talking to him/herself, oblivious to any hearers present.

Stage Directions

Stage directions are instructions written into the script of a play, indicating stage actions, movements of performers, or production requirements. Parts of the script, usually printed in italics, that are not intended to be spoken, but that inform the director and the performers of the writer's intention.

Tableau

Tableau a scene in which a group of people is silent and motionless.

Poetry

INTERNAL RHYME

This occurs when a word within a line rhymes with the one at the end.

*The fair breeze **blew**, the white foam **flew**,
The furrow followed free:
We were the **first** that ever **burst**
Into that silent sea.*

END RHYME

DEFINITION: Rhyming of the final words of lines in a poem.

*Partake the fire divine that **burns**,
In Milton, Pope, and Scottish **Burns**,
Who sang his native braes and **burns**.*

Half rhyme

DEFINITION: Sometimes the rhyme is suggested but fails to conform to the true criteria of rhyme. These have the same final consonants but not the same final vowel.

*Shall I compare thee to a summer's **day**?
Thou art more lovely and more **temperate**.
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of **May**,
And summer's lease hath all too short a **date**.*

Eve (sight) rhymes

DEFINITION: Rhyme on words that look alike but which are actually pronounced differently - for example, "proved" and "loved".

*If this be error, and upon me **proved**,
I never writ, nor no man ever **loved**.*

ALTERNATE RHYME

abab cdcd efef

Function: create integrated messages

B. PAIR RHYME

aabb codd eeff...

Function: create units and isolated ideas

C. ENCLOSED RHYME

abba cod effe

Function: combines isolation with integration

Stanzaic rhymes

Stanzas are the poetic equivalent of a paragraph. They are the basic unit of meaning. They can be visually set apart OR differentiated by a change in the rhyme scheme or meter (or even meaning in free verse).

Couplet 2-line stanza

Tercets 3-line stanza

Quatrain 4-line stanza

Cinquain 5-line stanza

Sestet 6-line stanza

Septet 7-line stanza

Octave 8-line stanza

Pauses

The rhythm of a poem is strongly affected by the use of pauses. These may be indicated by punctuation or by the grammatical structure of sentences and phrases (syntax). A slight pause within the line (which need not be indicated by punctuation) is called a caesura and is usually indicated by the symbol ||. It does not alter the number of feet and thus does not affect the metrical count.

Choice of Diction

We defined rhythm as the sense of movement created by the writer's use of emphasis and tempo. The extensive use of pauses will throw emphasis fairly heavily on certain words. It will also be likely to create a slow tempo.

Blank verse

It is called 'blank' because it does not rhyme.

The rhythm in blank verse can be monotonous (very regular) with no deviations and often very boring; or flexible, thus less regular, with many reversals and additions that surprise the ear and hold the interest of the reader.

Regular rhythm is not inevitably bad or boring

Sonnet

A poet who writes a sonnet is called a sonneteer.

A sonnet is a lyric poem (narrator expresses strong thought and feelings).

Features

- fixed form of fourteen lines
- rhymed iambic pentameter

Italian (Petrarchan) Sonnet

An ITALIAN SONNET is a 14-line poem consisting of 2 QUATRAINS and 2 TERCETS

English (Shakespearean) Sonnet

An ENGLISH SONNET is a 14-line poem consisting of 3 QUATRAINS and 1 COUPLET

Villanelle

A villanelle is a nineteen-line poem that is made up of five tercets (three-line stanzas) and one concluding quatrain (four-line stanza).

Ode

- An ode is a song of praise
- It has a dignified/formal style.
- It often makes use of apostrophe(s).
- It is not very lengthy.

Ballad

- "Ballad" is French and means
- A ballad is a narrative poem dancing song.
- A poem or song which tells a story in simple, colloquial language.
- The subject matter of ballads is usually tragic and often violent.
- The story is told through dialogue and action, with sudden transitions from point to point in the narrative (called leaping and lingering*). Abrupt beginnings, starting with a climactic episode, are common.
- Imagery is sparse and immediate.
- Refrains and incremental repetition (repetition with modification which advances the story) are common features.
- Oral ballads are usually starkly impersonal, with little or no comment on the action, described.
- The outcome of this ballad is often tragic and bloody.

Elegy

- An elegy is a poem of serious reflection, especially one mourning the loss of someone who died.
- Generally, it begins by reminiscing about the dead person; then laments the reason for the death; and and then resolves the grief by concluding that death leads to immortality.
- It often uses 'apostrophes' (calling out to the dead person)
- It has a fairly formal in style.
- It sounds similar to the ode.

Epic

- An epic a narrative poem of great scope.
- It deals with the founding of a nation or some other heroic theme.
- It is a very long poem that tells the story of some hero or his/her deeds.
- It uses an elevated style/ deliberately ceremonial style.
- The theme is dignified.
- It requires: an organic unity; and an orderly progress of the action.
- It always has a heroic figure or figures.
- It involves supernatural forces.

The Heroic Couplet

- The couplet was called 'Heroic' because it was often used for the heroic (epic) poems of the time.
- It has a definite metrical pattern (iambic pentameter) which was often 'closed', that is, it contained a complete thought.
- There is a pause at the end of the first line and a termination of that unit of thought at the end of the second.
- Each couplet brings the poet neatly, incisively and logically to his conclusions

Free Verse

- It has no rhyme.
- It has no fixed structure.
- It relies on its words to create its emotional and aesthetic effect.
- It foregoes rules of grammar, if they inhibit meaning.
- Free verse does not recognise boundaries and is a much more experimental mode of poetry than formal verse.
- Its pattern is often based on: repetition; and parallel grammatical structures
- It has varying rhythm i.e., no fixed metrical patterns.
- It is no coincidence that the great political, artistic, and cultural revolutions of the twentieth century were accompanied by a parallel abandonment of rhyme and structure in poetry.
- Poets broke into new literary territory in order to document the collapsing barriers of the world around them.
- It often experiments with half rhymes.

Shape/Concrete/Visual Poem

- A poem written so the lines form a physical pattern usually related to the subject of the poem; it is also called concrete poem/ visual poem.
- The theme is suggested by its shape.
- Concrete poetry or shape poetry is poetry in which the typographical arrangement of words is as important in conveying the intended effect as the conventional elements of the poem, such as meaning of words, rhythm, rhyme and so on.
- Visual elements are as important as the text
- Poets use this type of poetry to emphasize that language is not only a means of communication, but that language also has a material dimension.