

ELA 9

Novel Study

Literary Devices, Elements, Techniques, and Terms

- A literary device is any tool used in literature to help the reader understand the story and its character(s).
- There are two types of literary devices used by authors, **literary elements** and **literary techniques**.
- **Literary elements** provide structure to the literature. All literary elements are evident in all literature that creates a story.
- **Literary techniques** are specific to each author. Authors choose which of the techniques to employ.
- **Literary terms** are not devices. They are simply terms used to understand literature.

Literary Elements

- Point of view
- Setting
- Character/Characterization
- Theme
- Plot
- Conflict

Point of View

- *Point of view is the vantage point from which a story is told.*

First Person: The narrator is a character, often the main character, of the story. This character reveals personal thoughts and feelings but is unable to tell the feelings of others unless he or she is told by another character. The first person narrator refers to him or herself as “I.”

Third Person Objective: The narrator is an outsider, not a character. The third person objective reports what is happening (seen and heard), but cannot tell the reader what characters are thinking.

Third Person Limited: The narrator is an outsider, not a character. The third person objective reports what is happening as well as the thoughts of one specific character.

Omniscient: This is the all-knowing narrator. The omniscient point of view sees everything and hears everything, and is able to see into the minds of multiple characters.

Setting

- Setting generally provides the time and place of a specific scene or chapter, the entire story, a play or a narrative poem.
- Setting can also include the mood of the time period, situation or event.
- Setting can also be the social, political, environmental or emotional climate.
- Setting can also include the emotional state of a character.

Character

- *The term character refers to a person or an animal in a story, play or other literary work.*
- A **Dynamic Character** changes as a result of the events of the story.
- A **Static Character** changes very little or not at all through the literary work.
- A character's **motivation** is any force (i.e.: love, fear, jealousy) that drives the character to behave in a particular way.

Characterization

- *Characterization is the way a writer reveals the personality of a character.*
- Characterization is how the author develops and uses the characters to tell a story.
- Characterization is often the most important aspect of a story.
- The protagonist is the main character in a story. The story often revolves around this character.
- The antagonist is the force that or character who opposes the protagonist.
- Minor characters are present, generally named and have a role that in some way.

Theme

- *Theme is the general idea or insight about life that a work of literature reveals.*
- Theme is a main idea or strong message tied to life.
- Theme threads itself through a story, chapter or scene to make a point about life, society or human nature.
- Theme is typically implied rather than blatant. The reader has to think about it.
- Generally, there is one major theme in a piece of literature.
- Additional themes can often be found in a piece of literature.

Conflict

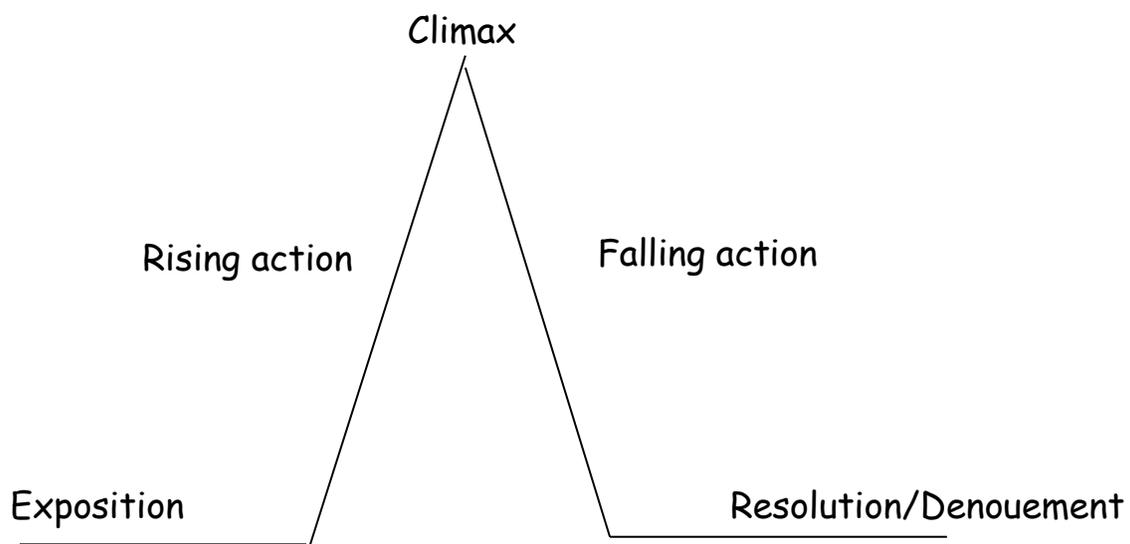
- *Conflict is a struggle between opposing characters or opposing forces.*
- Conflict creates the plot of a story.
- The **inciting incident** introduces the major conflict of a story.
- Conflict is the problem or struggle in a story.

- There are four general types of conflict in literature:
- **Person versus Person** is the conflict of one person against another person.
- **Person versus Nature** is the conflict a person encounters with the forces of nature, and shows how insignificant one person can be when compared to the *cosmic* scheme of things.
- **Person versus Society** is the conflict of a person/people and the views of society. Prejudice/Racism is a good example.
- **Person versus Self** is internal conflict. It is those conflicts an individual has with his or her conscience.

Plot

- Plot is the map of a story. It is the sequence of events that happen in a story.
- Plot provides a story with structure.
- Plot has five basic points.
- **Exposition** is the beginning of the story.
- **Rising action** is when something starts to happen.
- **Climax** is the high point of the action.
- **Falling action** is the action following the climax, a cool down.
- **Resolution/Denouement** is the conclusion of the action when everything comes together.

Plot Diagram



Literary Techniques

- Literary techniques are used to produce a specific effect on the reader.
- Authors often use a variety of techniques throughout a piece of literature.

Alliteration

- Alliteration is the repetition of consonant sounds generally at the beginning of words, or, within neighboring words in a sentence.
- Alliteration is used to create a melody or mood, call attention to specific words, point out similarities and contrasts.
- **Examples:**
Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.
Wide-eyed and wondering while we wait for others to waken.

Allusion

- *A reference to a statement, a person, a place, or an event from literature, the arts, history, religion, mythology, politics, sports or science.*
- Author's expect a reader to understand the allusion, think about the allusion and the literature to make connections.
- **Example:** In *The Giver*, Lois Lowry uses the names Jonas and Gabriel from the Bible.

Connotation

- *A meaning, association, or emotion suggested by a word, in addition to its dictionary definition, or denotation.*
- **Example:** Reference to a character as *determined* has a positive connotation while using *pigheaded* to refer to a character carries a negative connotation.

Dialogue

- *Dialogue is conversation between two or more characters.*
- Dialogue is when a character speaks to another character.
- Dialogue is conversation.
- Dialogue can include when a character speaks out loud to an animal, an inanimate object or him or herself.
- Dialogue can be used to explain something to the reader/audience.

Dialect

- *Dialect is the way of speaking that is characteristic (specific to) of a certain geographical area or a certain group of people.*

- Commonly brought to mind to New Yorkers are the Bostonian Dialect and the Southern Dialect.

Figurative Language

- “Whenever you describe something by comparing it with something else, you are using figurative language.” (orange.usd)
- Types of figurative language include: alliteration, allusion, hyperbole, idioms, imagery, metaphor, onomatopoeia, oxymoron, personification, simile, and symbolism. Others include anagrams, clichés, paradox, and puns.

Flashback

- *Flashback is an interruption in the present action of a plot to show events that happened at an earlier time.*
- Flashback is when the story returns or goes back in time to a past event.
- Flashback is used to tell a past story.
- Flashback can be the memory of a single character or the narrator.

Foreshadowing

- *Foreshadowing is the use of clues or hints to suggest events that will occur later in the plot.*
- Foreshadowing is when you are given hints or clues about something that will happen in the future of the story.
- A good examples of foreshadowing are in Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*: Romeo dreams of problems to come if they attend the Capulet banquet. Friar Laurence speaks of the use of herbs for poison or medicine.

Hyperbole

- Hyperbole is an exaggerated statement.
- Hyperbole is used to emphasize a point.
- Examples:
She’s said so on several million occasions.
It must’ve weighed a ton.

Idiom

- *An idiom is an expression peculiar to a particular language that means something different from the literal meaning of the words.*
- Hold your tongue is an idiom for don’t speak.
- Bury your head in the sand is an idiom for ignore a difficult situation.

Imagery

- *Imagery is language that appeals to the senses.*
- Imagery is when words or language is used to appeal to one or all of the five senses – sight, touch, taste, smell or sound.
- The words used by the author help you to experience what the author is trying to express so you can almost see, touch, taste, smell or hear it.

Irony and Dramatic Irony

- **Irony** is the contrast between expectation (what is expected) and reality (what actually occurs).
- **Dramatic Irony** occurs when the audience or reader knows something a character does not know.
- In *Romeo and Juliet*, the audience knows the fate of its characters. The characters, however, continue to act as if they do not know what we know. Our knowledge that this will not occur is **dramatic irony**. A good example is at the end when Romeo goes to the tomb and believing Juliet is dead, he commits suicide. We, the audience, know all the time that she is just in a deep sleep.

Metaphor

- *Metaphor is an imaginative comparison between two unlike things in which one thing is said to be the other thing.*
- Metaphors are *implied* comparisons between two unlike things without using the words like or as.
- Examples:
The road was a ribbon of moonlight.
She was a flower among women.
My mother is a lion. She roars when she's angry.

Extended Metaphor

- Extended metaphor is exactly that. It is a metaphor that is extended or developed over several lines of writing or even throughout the entire work.

Mood/Atmosphere

- Mood and Atmosphere are used interchangeably to refer to the “emotional feeling the reader receives from the literature.
- The Mood or Atmosphere might be scary, happy, sad, romantic, nostalgic, or exciting.

Motif

- Motifs are similar to themes in many aspects.
- Motifs provide a recurrent feeling, image, message or criterion throughout a piece of literature.

Oxymoron

- An oxymoron is a figure of speech that combines two contradictory words, typically an adjective and a noun.
- An oxymoron is an example of verbal irony (sarcasm), which emphasizes the opposing sides of a situation, a character, or conflicting emotions.
- Examples: Jumbo shrimp. In Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, Romeo uses oxymoron to talk about feelings towards Rosaline with "brawling love" and "loving hate".

Onomatopoeia

- Onomatopoeia is the use of words that imitate or suggest their meaning.
- When you read the word, it makes a sound
- Examples:
Buzz!
Coarackle!
Swoosh!

Personification

- *Personification is when an object or animal is spoken of as if it had human feelings, thoughts or attitudes.*
- Personification is when human qualities are given to an animal, an object or an idea.
- Examples:
The little dog laughed.
The cow winked at the little girl.

Refrain/Repetition

- Repetition is when a word, phrase or line is repeated within the text in close proximity.
- Repetition is used to emphasize or add special meaning to what is being said.
- Repetition makes the reader consciously aware of a point being made by the author or the character.

Rhyme

- **Rhyme** is when two or more words have the same sound.
- **End rhyme** is when the words at the end of two or more lines rhyme.
- **Internal rhyme** is when two or more words within the same line, rhyme.

Rhyming Couplet

- Couplet refers to a pair or two. The rhyming refers to similar sounds.
- A rhyming couplet is when there is end rhyme with two and only two consecutive lines. This can be used in poems, songs, and in plays such as Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*.

Simile

- *Simile is when a comparison is made between two unlike things, using a word such as like, as, than or resembles.*
- Similes are most often direct comparisons between two unlike things using the words like and as.
- **Examples:**
Timothy's arms were like iron.
My love is like a red, red rose.
Her face was as round as a pumpkin.

Soliloquy

- A soliloquy occurs when an actor speak their thoughts out loud to the audience. No other character is typically in the scene.
- A soliloquy is used to help the audience understand what an actor is thinking and/or why they are doing what they are doing.
- Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* is filled with soliloquy's. The most famous is Juliet's soliloquy from her bedroom balcony as she speaks of her love for Romeo and her concern about their families. Another example of soliloquy is towards the end of the play when Romeo is in the tomb with the dead Paris and the presumably dead Juliet.

Symbol/Symbolism

- *A symbol is a person, a place, a thing, or an event that has meaning in itself and stands for something beyond itself as well.*
- Symbols are commonly known as representing the other item.
- Examples:
The bed of Odysseus and Penelope in *The Odyssey* is a symbol of their love.
The loud speaker in *The Giver* is a symbol of the communities control over its citizens.

Tone

- *Tone is the attitude a writer/author takes towards his or her subject, characters and audience.*
- Examples of an author's tone include, but are not limited to: humorous, passionate, sincere, solemn, and anger.

Literary Terms

- Literary terms help the reader identify the author's style of presentation.
- Literary terms assist the reader in identifying various aspects of literature.
- Literary terms include: autobiography, biography, fiction, footnotes, nonfiction and plagiarism.

Autobiography

- *An autobiography is a person's account of his or her own life or part of it.*
- Autobiography is a story about a person's life written by that person
- When Derek Jeter writes a book about himself, it is an autobiography.

Biography

- *A biography is an account of a person's life or of part of it, written or told by another person.*
- A biography is a story about a person's life written by another person.
- If you wrote a true story about the life of Derek Jeter, it would be a biography.

Fiction

- *Fiction is a prose account that is made up rather than true.*
- *Fiction refers to novels and short stories.*
- Fiction is a made up story.
- Fiction is a story that is not true.
- The short stories you wrote are fiction.

Footnotes

- Footnotes are typically numbered in a literary piece.
- Footnotes are then typically found at the bottom of the page and identified by the same number as in the text.

- Footnotes are used to define words and terms that may be unfamiliar to the reader.

Genre

- The category a piece of literature falls into.
- This includes, but is not limited to such categories as action, adventure, comedy, detective, historical, horror, thriller, romance, romantic comedy, or science fiction,

Nonfiction

- *Nonfiction is prose writing that deals with real people, things, events and places.*
- Nonfiction is a true story.
- Nonfiction stories tell a story about someone or something that actually happened or is happening.

Parenthetical Documentation

- Parenthetical documentation is when you give credit (in a document) to someone whose words or ideas you have copied.
- Parenthetical documentation is done inside parenthesis and includes the author's last name and the page number.
- When the documentation is at the end of the sentence, the period goes outside the ending parenthesis.
- Example: (Brown 334).

Plagiarism

- Plagiarism is copying another person's idea without giving them credit.
- If you copy someone else's words or ideas, but you give them credit with parenthetical documentation, it is not plagiarism.