

Main Literary Terms Review



English I and English I Honors
Yimali Gonzalez

- **Setting**: the time and place, or where and when, the action occurs. Types of setting:

1. **Physical**: the physical environment in which the story takes place; this includes the city or town, the social and political environment, and the mood or atmosphere.

2. **Chronological**: clock time; the time in which a story takes place; this includes the era, season, date, time of day, etc.).

3. **Psychological**: mental time; examples of psychological time include:

- flashback (past);

- prolepsis or flash-forward (future);

- dreams;

- stream of consciousness (continuous flow of thoughts, feelings, and reactions in no logical order).

- trances or altered states

- **Plot**: a blueprint of what happens, when it happens, and how it happens; the related series of events that make up a story; storyline. Parts of plot:
 1. **Exposition**- the beginning of a story in which the main characters, conflicts, and setting are introduced.
 2. **Rising Action**- the actions that cause the plot to become more complicated through conflict, leading to the climax.
 3. **Climax**- the turning point of the story; emotional high point for the protagonist.
 4. **Falling Action**- the actions whereby conflicts begin to lessen or to resolve, leading to the resolution.
 5. **Resolution**- the end of the story; problems are solved and the characters' futures are foreshadowed.

- **Conflict**: the struggle(s) between opposing forces, usually characters. Plots are almost always built around conflict. Types of conflict:
 1. **Internal Conflict**: a character's struggle with himself/herself or his/her conscious.
 - character vs. self
 2. **External Conflict**: a character's struggle with an outside force, such as another character, nature, or his/her environment.
 - character vs. character
 - character vs. nature
 - character vs. society
 - character vs. government
 - character vs. God
 - etc.

- **Characters**: the individuals involved (either directly or indirectly) in the action of the story.
1. **Protagonist**: the central character in a story; struggles against the antagonist.
 2. **Antagonist**: the conflicting force against the protagonist; can be another character, a force of nature, or the protagonist's own mind.
 3. **Major**: major characters, including the protagonist, play a big or important role in the plot of a story.
 4. **Minor**: minor characters do not have great influence on the plot and might appear only once; they do, nevertheless, play a supportive role.

Characters (continued) :

5. **Dynamic**: dynamic characters change or develop throughout the story; they learn through experience.
6. **Static**: static characters remain unchanged throughout the story; they do not learn or grow from experience.
7. **Round**: round characters are well-developed so that the reader is able to see different sides of their personalities.
8. **Flat**: flat characters are one-sided or not fully developed so that the reader does not get to know them very well.

- Methods of Characterization: refers to the ways in which the author develops and reveals a character's personality and appearance.
1. Direct: the narrator directly describes the character's 1) personality and/or 2) appearance.
 2. Indirect: the reader deduces 1) the character's personality through observing the character's actions, thoughts, reactions to situations, speech, and interactions with other characters as well as 2) other characters' reactions, actions, words, and thoughts.

- **Point of View or Narrative Viewpoint:** the perspective from which a story is told. The narrator is the voice that tells the story. Main types of point of view:
 1. **First-person:** a narrator that takes part in the action of the story and uses the first person pronouns I, me, my, myself, etc.
 2. **Third-person limited:** a narrator who is not part of the story and uses the third person pronouns he, she, it, they, etc. This narrator reveals the thoughts, feelings, and opinions of only one character.
 3. **Third-person omniscient:** a narrator who is just like the previous but reveals the thoughts, feelings, and opinions of all or several characters.
 4. **Third-person dramatic:** a camera-like narrator who is outside the story and reveals only speech and behavior.

- **Theme**: The main idea behind a literary work; the message in a story; a perception about life or human nature that the writer shares with the reader; a universal idea that pervades the work of literature. In most cases, the theme(s) is implied, not directly stated. Example: Innocence is the most valuable thing in life, yet it is lost in adulthood. (*Catcher in the Rye*)

- **Symbol:** a person, place, or object that stands for something else; a physical thing that represents something abstract, such as an idea or a feeling.

Example: Holden's red hunting hat represents individuality and authenticity.

COMMON TYPES OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE:

- **Simile:** A 'simile' compares two things that are akin, with the help of connecting words such as 'like' and 'as.' Example: "You are as beautiful as a blooming flower."
- **Metaphor:** A metaphor is a direct comparison of two unlike things without the use of connecting words such as 'like' or 'as.' Example: You are a blooming flower."
- **Personification:** Personification is a literary device that gives human attributes or qualities to a non-human entity. Example: "The sun smiled at us."
- **Hyperbole:** A hyperbole is an overstatement or exaggeration, a literary device that helps create more emphasis. Example: "I'm p-paralyzed with happiness" (Daisy from *The Great Gatsby*, Chapter 1, pg. 8).

SENSORY IMAGERY:

Sensory imagery refers to descriptive language that appeals to the reader's senses and helps the reader to visualize the text.

TYPE OF SENSORY IMAGERY	SENSE
1. Visual	Sight
2. Auditory	Hearing
3. Olfactory	Smell
4. Gustatory	Taste
5. Tactile	Touch
6. Kinesthetic	Multiple + Movement