

## 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Literary and Poetry Terms

### A. General Literary Terms – types of genres and terms that apply to all types of writing

**Antagonist** – the character who opposes the protagonist, or main character. Often a villain.

**Aphorism** – a brief memorable saying that expresses a basic truth.

**Atmosphere/Mood** – the feeling created in a reader by a literary work. Ex – joyful, gloomy, sad,

**Characterization** – the act of creating and developing a character.

**Direct characterization** – the author directly states a character's traits

**Indirect Characterization** – shows a character's traits through their actions, thoughts, feelings, words, or other character's observations about them.

**Conflict** – struggle between opposing forces that forms the basis of a story.

Man vs. Man, Man vs. Nature, Man vs. Society, Man vs. Self, Man vs. Supernatural.

**External** – the main character struggles against an outside force.

**Internal** – a character in conflict with himself.

**Connotation** – the set of ideas associated with a word in addition to its explicit meaning.

**Denotation** – the dictionary meaning of a word, independent of other associations that a word may have.

**Denouement** – the resolution of the issue of a complicated plot in fiction.

**Dialect** – the form of language spoken by people in a particular region or group. Used to make characters sound realistic.

**Dialogue** – a conversation between characters.

**Epiphany** – A moment of sudden realization or truth for a character

**Exposition** – writing or speech that explains a process or presents information. In the plot of a story or drama, the exposition introduces characters, setting and basic situation.

**Fiction** – prose writing that tells about imaginary characters and events.

**Flashback** – the insertion of a scene showing an earlier event, often one that took place before the opening scene of a literary work.

**Foreshadowing** - the suggestion or hint about events to come.

**Genre** – a category or type of literature, such as poetry, prose, drama.

**Irony** - a situation or event that is the opposite of what is to be expected. A difference between appearance and reality, expectation and result, or meaning and intention.

**Dramatic Irony** – the audience or reader knows information about the play that the character does not.

**Situational Irony** – an event occurs that directly contradicts the expectations of the characters, reader, or audience.

**Verbal Irony** – words are used to suggest the opposite of what is meant.

**Mood** – The atmosphere of a piece of writing (ex. Cheerful or gloomy) that is built and supported by the author's description of setting and characters as well as his/her choice in how to begin the narration.

**Motivation** – a reason that explains why a character thinks, feels, acts, or behaves in a certain way.

**Narrator/ Speaker** – a speaker or character who tells a story; imaginary voice assumed by the writer of the poem – a person, animal, thing, or abstraction

**Plot** – the sequence of events that takes place in a literary work that includes characters and conflicts. Exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution are parts of the plot.

**Point of View** – the perspective or point from which the story is told.

**First person** – narrator is part of the action. Uses I/my.

**Second person** – choose your own adventure. Uses you/your.

**Third person** – narrator is outside the action. Uses he/she, him/her, they/their.

**Omniscient** – narrator is all knowing about the characters

**Limited** – narrator tells the thoughts and feelings of only one character.

**Prologue** – introductory material before the first chapter, or in Greek theatre, before the first entry of the chorus.

**Protagonist** – main character in a work of fiction, the one readers would like to see succeed.

**Repetition** – use of any element of language, a sound, word, sentence, or phrase, more than once.  
Ex - alliteration, assonance, rhyme, rhythm, refrain.

**Resolution** – end of the central conflict in a literary work. Also called **Denouement**.

**Satire** – A type of writing that uses humor to make fun of a social issue or to point out a greater social/political problem or issue.

**Setting** – the time and place in which event occur in a literary work.

**Stereotype** – A character that is so ordinary or unoriginal that the character seems like an oversimplified representation of a type, gender, class, or occupation.

**Suspense** – feeling of curiosity or uncertainty about the outcome of events in a literary work.

**Symbol** – anything that stands for or represents something else. Has its own meaning, but also represents an abstract idea.

**Theme** – central message or insight into life that revealed through a literary work. A generalization about people or life.

**Tone** – the attitude or viewpoint that an author shows toward his or her subject. Ex- serious, sympathetic, angry, indifferent, respectful...

**B. FIGURES OF SPEECH – can be found in ANY writing. These phrases and expressions make us think because they are not literal, they are imaginative!**

**Allusion** – a reference to a well known person, place, thing, event, literary work, or work of art. Ex- The reference to the lord of the flies being Beelzebub, in the novel *Lord of the Flies*.

**Hyperbole** - exaggeration, an overstatement for the purpose of emphasis. Ex – It is so hot out that you could fry an egg on the sidewalk.

**Imagery** - the use of description of figurative language to create vivid images, or word pictures that appeal to the senses. Ex- the aroma of fresh baked chocolate chip cookies filled the room.

**Metaphor** – comparison between unlike objects that does not use “like” or “as.”

**Oxymoron** – combination of two contradictory words. Ex – deafening silence, jumbo shrimp, definite possibility, permanent substitute.

**Personification** – applies human qualities to objects, ideas, or animals. Ex – The sun smiled down on the village

**Simile** – comparison between two unlike things or ideas, using the words “like” or “as.”

**C. MODES OF WRITING**

**Personal Expression** - Expressing your thoughts, feelings, or experiences in pieces such as: Autobiography, Journal, Webpage/Blog, Anecdote

**Description** - Creating a picture using imagery in written work such as: Observation, Remembrance, Character sketch

**Narration** - Telling a true or fictional story

**Exposition: Giving Information** - Providing information or explaining as in a(n): How to article, News Article or Summary

**Exposition: Making Connections** - Comparing and contrasting, offering solutions to a problem, or explaining an opinion

**Persuasion/Argumentation** - Trying to convince a reader to agree with you often found in: Letter to Editor, Advertisement or Persuasive Speech

**Reports** - Summarizing the results of research including Full Research Paper or Multi-Media Presentation

**Creative Writing** - Expressing your personal views and imagination in pieces including: Poetry, Drama/Skits, Short Stories, Lyrics

**Responses to Literature/Non-Fiction** – These pieces often assess your ability to read deeply and critically and include: Literary Analysis, Thematic Essay, Exposition, Literary Journal, Author Letter, Critical Review

#### **D. DRAMA TERMS.**

**Aside** – a short speech delivered by an actor in a play, expressing the character’s thoughts.

**Monologue** – a speech by one character while others are present

**Soliloquy** – long speech expressing the thoughts of a character alone on stage.

**Tragedy** – a work of literature, especially a play, that results in a catastrophe for the main character and arouses pity and fear in the audience/reader.

**Tragic Hero** – evokes both pity and terror, is neither all good nor all evil, is of high birth, and whose downfall is through a weakness or error in judgment, a tragic flaw - usually hubris.

**Catharsis** – “purgation” or “purification” of emotions of pity and fear which leaves the audience/reader relieved and elated.

**Hubris** – excessive pride that causes the hero’s downfall, a tragic flaw

**Other Terms for Greek Drama:** Prologue, Parados, Paeon, Ode, Strophe, Antistrophe, Choragos

#### **E. SOUND TECHNIQUES**

**Alliteration** – the repetition of an initial, consonant, sound. Ex –Sally sells sea shells...

**Assonance** – the repetition of vowel sounds followed by different consonants in two or more stressed syllables.

**Consonance** – the repetition of similar consonant sounds at the end of accented syllables.

**Onomatopoeia** – the use of words that sound like the things they name. Ex – bang, buzz, crackle, sizzle, hiss, roar, murmur, thud...

## F. POETRY TERMS

**Ballad** – a song, transmitted orally, that tells a story

**Couplet** – a pair of rhyming lines usually of the same length and meter.

**Dramatic Poetry** – verse that presents the speech of one or more characters – like mini-dramas

**Elegy** – a poem written in honor of someone or something upon its death

**Epic** – a long narrative poem about the deeds of a god or hero

**Free Verse** – poetry that lacks organized rhyme and rhythm

**Iambic Pentameter** – a poetic rhythm pattern consisting of FIVE IAMBES (poetic feet of unstressed/stressed syllables). Shakespeare wrote in unrhymed iambic pentameter called **Blank Verse**.

**Lyric Poetry** – highly musical poetry that expresses the thought or observations of a single speaker. These poems rely heavily on sound techniques.

**Narrative Poetry** – a poem that tells a story – often it reads like a mini-story

**Ode** – a long lyric poem, modeled after the songs of the Greek chorus.

**Refrain** – a line, part of a line, or group of lines that is repeated in the course of a poem, sometimes with slight changes, and usually at the end of a stanza.

**Rhyme Scheme** – a regular pattern of rhyming words in a poem. It is indicated by using different letters of the alphabet for each new rhyme.

**Rhyming Couplet** – a pair of rhyming lines, usually of the same length and meter, and expressing a single idea.

**Scansion/Meter** – the process of determining a poem's rhythm pattern. Lines are broken into poetic feet (which all have one stressed syllable). Then the number of poetic feet are counted to determine the pattern (ex. Anapestic Tetrameter)

**Sonnet** – 14 line, lyric poem usually written in rhymed iambic pentameter. Made up of 3 quatrains and a couplet and following the rhyme scheme abab cdcd efef gg.

**Stanza** – formal division of lines in a poem, considered as a unit, often separated by spaces.

**Quatrain** – 4 line stanza

**Sestet** – 6 line stanza

**Octave** – 8 line stanza