

English Literary Terms-01

1. **Allegory:** an allegory is a narrative in which the characters often stand for abstract concepts. An allegory generally teaches a lesson by means of an interesting story. The Tempest by William Shakespeare.
2. **Alliteration:** the repetition at close intervals of consonant sounds for a purpose. For example: wailing in the winter wind. [BCS-37]
3. **Allusion:** a reference to something in literature, history, mythology, religious texts, etc., considered common knowledge.
4. **Ambiguity:** Double or even multiple meaning.
5. **Analogy:** A point by point comparison between two dissimilar things for the purpose of clarifying the less familiar of the two things.
6. **Antagonist:** the character or force that opposes the protagonist. (It can be a character, an animal, a force, or a weakness of the character.)

7. **Apostrophe:** the device, usually in poetry, of calling out to an imaginary, dead, or absent person, or to a place, thing, or personified abstraction either to begin a poem or to make a dramatic break in thought somewhere within the poem.

8. **Assonance:** the repetition at close intervals of vowel sounds for a purpose. For example: mad as a hatter.

9. **Ballad:** a narrative poem that was originally meant to be sung. Ballads are generally about ordinary people who have unusual adventures, with a single tragic incident as the central focus. They contain dialogue and repetition, and imply more than they actually tell.

10. **Cacophony:** Harsh, clashing, or dissonant sounds, often produced by combinations of words that require a clipped, explosive delivery, or words that contain a number of plosive consonants such as b,d, g, k, p, and t; the opposite of EUPHONY.

11. **Catalog:** a long list of anything; an inventory used to emphasize quantity or inclusiveness.

12. **Climax:** the point at which the conflict of the story begins to reach a turning point and begins to be resolved.

13. **Conceit:** an elaborate figure of speech comparing two very dissimilar things.

14. **Conflict:** the struggle between two opposing forces that is the basis of the plot. 1) Internal conflict character struggling with him/her self, 2) external conflicts – character struggling with forces outside of him/her self. For example. Nature, god, society, another person, technology, etc.

15. **Connotation:** the associations, images, or an impression carried by a word, as opposed to the word's literal meaning.

16. **Consonance:** the close repetition of identical consonant sounds before and after differing vowel sounds.

17. **Denotation:** the precise, literal meaning of a word, without emotional associations or overtones.

18. **Denouement:** the final unraveling or outcome of the plot in drama or fiction during which the complications and conflicts of the plot are resolved.

19. **Diction:** Word choice

20. **Enjambment:** The carrying of sense and grammatical structure in a poem beyond the end of one line, COUPLET, or STANZA and into the next.

21. Epigram: Any witty, pointed saying. Originally an epigram meant an inscription, or epitaph usually in verse, on a tomb. Later it came to mean a short poem that compressed meaning and expression in the manner of an inscription.

22. Epigraph: a motto or quotation that appears at the beginning of a book, play, chapter, or poem. Occasionally, an epigraph shows the source for the title of a work. Because the epigraph usually relates to the theme of a piece of literature, it can give the reader insight into the work.

23. Epitaph: the inscription on a tombstone or monument in memory of the person or people buried there. Epitaph also refers to a brief literary piece that sums up the life of a dead person.

24. Euphony: A succession of sweetly melodious sounds; the opposite of CACOPHONY. The term is applied to smoothly flowing POETRY or PROSE.

25. Exposition: background information at the beginning of the story, such as setting, characters and conflicts. In a short story the exposition appears in the opening paragraphs; in a novel the exposition is usually part of the first chapter.