

GLOSSARY OF TERMS YOU MAY COME
ACROSS IN YOUR ENGLISH COURSE

ACRONYM: A word formed from the initials or syllables of other words.

AD HOC: A term used when something is done for a specific purpose and not as a general rule.

ALLEGORY: A story in prose or poetry where the characters and events illustrate a truth e.g. social, moral, religious or political.

ALLITERATION: The repetition of the same consonant sound at the beginning of a number of successive words to achieve a particular effect.

ALLUSION: A brief reference to a famous historical, biblical, classical, literary figure or event.

ANACHRONISM: A mistake in placing something into a wrong historical period. Sometimes used as a comic or satiric device.

ANALOGY: A comparison of two things that can be similar in some ways and different in others. It is used to clarify one or both of the things.

ANECDOTAL: Evidence based on an unsubstantiated claim centred upon hearsay.

ANECDOTE: A short personal narrative of an episode in a person's life. Often used to illustrate a point being made.

ANTAGONIST: The chief opponent or rival of the protagonist.

ANTI-CLIMAX: Used to provide a disappointing or outcome when a climax was expected.

ANTI-HERO: The anti-hero lacks the traditional heroic qualities of the 'good guy'. Often portrayed as an observer of modern society rather than a 'good doer'.

ARCHETYPE: An original image, storyline, character from which others are modelled.

ASSONANCE: The repetition of a vowel sound in successive words.

ATMOSPHERE: The prevailing mood or emotional feel of the piece which helps create reader's expectations.

BALLAD: A song/poem that tells a story. Often passed on by word of mouth thus a strong rhyme and rhythm pattern so it could easily be remembered.

BATHOS: An anti-climax where the writer descends from attempting to achieve something important to something ridiculous.

CATHARSIS: The feelings that are released by the reader/audience by a tragic hero and in turn this resolves (purges) those feelings within the reader/audience.

CHARACTERISATION: A technique used by an author in presenting their character(s) to the reader/viewer/audience. It includes what they say, what they do, what they look like and what others think about them.

CLICHÉ: An overused expression that has become meaningless due to its overuse.

CLIMAX: The most exciting or turning point of the action. It is the point when the plot begins to resolve itself.

COUPLET: Two lines of verse that rhyme.

DRAMATIC IRONY: When the reader/viewer/audience are aware of the greater significance of the situation than the character.

DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE: A one-sided conversation can be presented in lyrical form.

ELEGY: A solemn, sorrowful poem used to mourn the death of someone.

EPI C: A long narrative poem told in oral form. The subject matter is often a series of adventures involving a hero. It can be used to describe a text that resembles a long narrative.

EPI TAPH: The inscription on a tombstone, written to commemorate their death.

EULOGY: A speech or a piece of writing praising a person or thing.

EUPHEMISM: The use of a pleasant form of words to describe something less than pleasant. It is used to hide facts or create/present a false picture e.g. friendly fire-kill own soldiers.

FABLE: A story not based on fact usually involving animals as characters and providing a moral lesson for the reader/viewer.

FARCE: A comedy that uses outrageous situations to create humour. The characters are often stereotypes and the humour slapstick.

FICTION: Narrative writing developed from the imagination rather than history or facts. The writer can use factual information to stimulate their plot, characters, setting, theme and even their form of narration.

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE: Describes the effect created by a writer using language in an original way in their writing. To achieve this effect they use figures of speech.

FIGURES OF SPEECH: Techniques used to create imagery. These include; simile, metaphor, personification, alliteration, onomatopoeia, assonance, consonance, hyperbole and irony.

FLASHBACK: A technique that varies the chronological order of the narrative. The story can often start near the climax and then go back to show events leading up to the climax.

FREE VERSE: A poem that does not contain any set rhyme or pattern.

GENRE: A term which shows the type of form e.g. poetry, film, prose, drama and then categories

within these sets e.g. romance, science fiction, the western.

HUBRIS: When the protagonist has an arrogant pride that over rides any warnings and thus leads to their downfall.

HYPERBOLE: I've told you a million times before this the deliberate exaggeration used for expressive or comic effect.

IDIOM: A phrase that must be read as a whole because the meaning is not clear when the words are look at individually. Often these phrases are difficult to translate the meaning into other languages e.g. It's your shout.

IMAGERY: The collection of images within a text that provoke an emotional reaction in the reader/viewer. Certain images can often be repeated throughout a text or texts by certain writers/directors.

INTERIOR MONOLOGUE: Often occurs as stream of consciousness writing. In drama the same effect occurs with a soliloquy.

INTERTEXTUALITY: The focus of your course. Any text read/viewed is always considered in relation to the other shared texts. The concept is that you bring to bear your whole range of knowledge and understandings of other texts to understand the new one being read.

IRONY OF THE SITUATION: Basically this occurs when one person's misfortune is a source of amusement for another person who don't realising they are facing the same misfortune.

JUXTAPOSITION: A technique of placing side by side two things in order to emphasise or highlight some particular aspect.

LEGEND: Is a story, often passed on in an oral tradition and focuses on the exploits of an individual folk hero.

MALAPROPI SM: When words are confused causing a comical effect e.g. "I'm not under the affluence of alcohol".

MOOD: A term used to describe the emotional mood/atmosphere/feeling conveyed by the text.

MOTIF: A reoccurring pattern in a text. The pattern may form part of an underlying theme e.g. darkness, blood, etc.

MYTH: One of the earliest forms of story telling. Myths often form the basis of a society's culture and can influence the way people behave in that society.

NARRATIVE: Any form of prose, poetry, drama, visual text that tells a story.

NARRATOR: The name given to the person telling the story.

NOVELLA: A short novel.

ODE: A lyric poem that addresses someone or thing using dignified and sincere language.

ONOMATOPOEIA: The term used to describe words whose sound and meaning are closely related e.g. hiss, crackle, etc.

OXYMORON: The combination of two words that have opposite meanings for an effect through comparison.

PARABLE: A short story containing a moral or lesson.

PARADOX: A rhetorical statement designed to attract the attention of the reader and while appearing contradict itself or is contrary to commonsense, contains an element of truth.

PARAPHRASE: To recount a topic/issue/story using your own words and ensuring original meaning remains intact.

PARODY: A comic imitation of a particular writer's style. It is funny because it presents elements of the original in a humorous way.

PERSONA: It is a mask the writer puts on to narrate the story. It does not apply to a

character that tells the story, neither does it apply to the author in real life.

PERSONIFICATION: This is giving nonhuman things, human characteristics.

PLAGIARISM: This is passing off someone else's work as your own.

PLOT: The sequence of events that unfold during the narrative. It consists of characters .v. characters, characters .v. their environment, characters .v. themselves.

PROLOGUE: This is the introduction, most often used in drama.

PROTAGONIST: In a narrative this is the most important character, more often than not the hero.

PURPOSE: This also includes the audience. It is the reason why the text was constructed in the first place and for whom it was written. When looking at the purpose and audience, you need to look at style, tone, form and structure because these are influenced by the writer's intended audience.

REGISTER: See TONE but it is also the purpose and audience that will dictate the register.

REPETITION: A technique of repeating words and phrases to create specific effects such as force and emphasis. Not to be confused with TAUTOLOGY.

RESOLUTION: The conclusion to the conflict, the outcome of the climax.

RHETORIC: A way of presenting ideas to appeal to the audience's intellect.

RHETORICAL QUESTION: A technique that allows a question to be asked for making an impression on the reader and not to be answered because the answer is obvious and is usually the only one possible.

RHYME: The similarity of a sound with two or more lines of verse. It provides the reader with a positive experience when reading or reciting the poem.

RHYTHM: Is the movement created by the rise and fall of the language used in the verse.

SATIRE: A genre that is used to highlight the shortcomings of people, societies and nations by exposing them to ridicule.

SETTING: The time and place in which the action of the text occurs.

SLANG: The name given to informal language that is often of the moment and then becomes redundant as new slang words appear and are used.

SOLI LOQUY: A technique used to allow an actor to reveal the character's thoughts aloud on stage being unheard by any other characters who may be on stage.

SONNET: A 14 line patterned form of poetry. Shakespeare wrote quite a number of these and their structure is known as either an Elizabethan or Shakespearean sonnet.

STEREOTYPE: A term used to describe a standard image of a group of people. Stereotypes have a preconceived image in the minds of the reader/viewer.

STYLE: Refers to the way writers/filmmakers choose to construct their writing/films. A writer/filmmaker can be recognised by their style across several pieces of work.

SUB-PLOT: Either of the two remaining plot lines.

SYMBOL: A thing that suggest something or embodies certain characteristics belonging to that culture.

TAUTOLOGY: Saying the same thing twice e.g. 'My own personal opinion', 'They arrived together, simultaneously'.

THEME: The central idea or message behind the events in the story, play, poem. It is the writer's purpose for producing the work.

TONE: The attitude of the writer/filmmaker towards the subject they are writing about. Remember the writer sends the tone and the mood, created by the audience.

TRAGEDY: A genre where a person has a character flaw that brings about their downfall. The more important the character, the more significant is the tragedy surrounding their downfall.

TRAGIC FLAW: The weakness or character defect that brings about the person's downfall.

TRAGIC IRONY: This refers to the contrast between the character's early hopes and dreams, with their final situation where none of these are achieved.

VALUES and ATTITUDES: Values are the set of beliefs, interests common to a group of people and they provide standards for people to lead their lives. Attitudes are particular opinions and views, a person or a group of people have towards a set of values.

VERBAL IRONY: When a writer or speaker implies a different meaning to the one of the original wording.

