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- Allegory-** A form of extended metaphor in which objects, people, and actions in a narrative are equated with meanings that lie outside the narrative itself. The purpose of an allegory is to teach a moral lesson. Examples of allegory include:
Pilgrim's Progress by John Bunyan in which Vanity Fair represents the world, and the Celestial City symbolizes Heaven.
Watership Down by Richard Adams in which the various warrens can represent different political systems.
- Allusion-** A direct or indirect reference to another work of literature, art work, famous person, or event. Writers use allusions as an appeal to the reader to share common knowledge. Three large classes of allusions are religious (often Biblical), classical (often mythological), and historical, though there are others. For instance, a writer may refer to Job in *The Book of Job* to represent human suffering, to the Sirens in *The Odyssey* to represent danger, or to Hitler to represent despotism. Use of allusions helps a writer layer and expand meaning for knowledgeable readers.
- Analogy-** A stated likeness or comparison between two unlike things or the relationship that exists between them. It also can be an inference that if things are alike in some respects, then they are alike in others. For example, "I will be a mirror for virtue" implies that in all actions, the speaker will reflect to others the most appropriate human conduct. Writers use analogies to make writing more vivid and intellectually challenging. Many analogies are based on likeness, difference, or degree. (See Krieger, *Mastering the Verbal SAT*, and the BCPS Reading Guide.)
- Antagonist-** A person or force that opposes the protagonist (See **Protagonist.**), who is the central character in fiction. The antagonist may be an individual, a group of people, a force of nature, or a social force such as prejudice.
- Apostrophe -** A literary device used when a speaker speaks to:
- a. an inanimate object
Ex. "Come civil night/Thou so be suited matron all in black" from *Romeo and Juliet*
 - b. an absent person
Ex. "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do" from the *Bible*
 - c. a deceased person
Ex. "Farewell, thou child of my right hand" from *On My First Son*, by Ben Johnson

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d. an abstract idea or value

Ex. "Death, be not proud" from *Death be not Proud* by John Donne

Argument-

The establishment of proof for a stated proposition with an emphasis on logic. An argument is designed to demonstrate the truth or falsity of a particular statement. Argument and persuasion contain attempts to convince someone to a position; persuasion often refers to moving someone to action.

Argument: Smoking is bad for one's health.

Persuasion: I want you to stop smoking.

An argument can rely on logic (**logos**), an appeal to reasoning such as deductive and inductive; ethics (**ethos**), an appeal to one's sense of right and wrong or good sense, or to emotions (**pathos**), an appeal to one's patriotism, fears, or sympathies.

In writing argument or persuasion, one should avoid the common logical fallacies (fully explained in most rhetorics):

- a. Nonsequitur- ("it does not follow")
Ex. The President graduated from Harvard. He can't make mistakes.
- b. Begging the Question
Ex. Synthetic vitamins are dangerous to one's health, so all of them should be removed from the store shelves.
The first part of the statement has no proof.
- c. Circular Reasoning- repeats a premise rather than giving a valid reason.
Ex. Martha is a good supervisor because she supervises the company's personnel office effectively.
- d. Straw-man Argument- attributes untrue characteristics to a person and then attacks that person on those characteristics.
Ex. You are a bad driver, so that is why you won't support a bill to raise the driving age to twenty-one.
- e. Ad Hominem (to the man)- attacks the person rather than the issue.
Ex. Sam is divorced, so how can he make sound financial decisions for the city?
- f. Over-generalization- draws a conclusion about an entire group based on insufficient evidence.

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Ex. I know five Italians who like pizza, so all Italians must like pizza.

- g. Post hoc, Ergo Procter Hoc (after this; therefore because of this)- attributes a cause/effect relationship simply because something occurs after something else.

Ex. Our weather patterns have changed since we began launching rockets into space.

- h. Either/or Argument- is based on the assumption that there are only two possibilities.

Ex. Either you are with America's fight against terrorism or you are America's enemy.

- i. Appeal to the Crowd- plays on a group's fears or prejudices.

Ex. We will all go broke if we don't put a stop to welfare fraud.

- j. Faulty Analogy- assumes that two circumstances or things are similar in all respects, when in fact they are not.

Ex. The Ravens won the NFL football championship through player discipline; that is how we will win the high school football championship.

(See **Persuasion**.)

Author's Purpose-

A writer's reasons for creating a literary work; these may include entertaining, informing, or persuading an audience. Sometimes an author's purpose may just be to express a personal opinion or convey a sense impression. For example, Voltaire's main purpose in writing *Candide* was to satirize the widely held 18th century philosophical view that "this is the best of all possible worlds."

Cause/Effect-

A basic mode of thinking that answers the question why, as well as an organizational pattern. **Cause** examines the reasons why certain actions, events, or attitudes exist; while **effect** examines consequences. Since cause/effect are inseparable, the two together create causation. Historical writing relies heavily on cause and effect.

Ex. What were the economic and political causes of the American Revolution (effect)?

Cause/effect is used frequently in such questions as this:
What will be the effects on the student body if a strict dress code is instituted for the school?

Patterns in cause/effect relationships are often complex: single

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cause to multiple effects, multiple causes to multiple effects, multiple causes to single effect, etc. The complexity of a writer's topic will determine the organizational complexity of the cause/effect essay.

- Characterization-** The creation, portrayal, or description of characters in a text. A writer may use a method of direct characterization by making direct statements about a character to the reader, or indirect characterization in which the reader must draw his own conclusions based on what a character says, what others say about him, or his appearance, thoughts and/or actions. Minor characters are usually "thin" or "flat", while main characters are considered "round." Using indirect characterization, authors usually develop main characters by degrees to build a cumulative effect on the reader. Good examples are Buck in Jack London's *The Call of the Wild* and Hester Prynne in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*. Character is one of the four key elements of narration, the other three being plot, setting, and theme. (See **Narration**.)
- Comparison/Contrast-** In comparison, two or more objects or concepts are considered together for their likenesses; in contrast, the objects or concepts are considered together to show their differences. The thought processes are often used together and complement one another. Commonly, both processes are referred to simply as comparison. The two main organizational patterns are block or whole-to-whole (all of "A" and then all of "B"), or point-to-point (A1, B1, A2, B2, etc.). Comparison/contrast is used to point out similarities or differences that are interesting in themselves, to explain the familiar in terms of the unfamiliar, or to evaluate-to show that one idea or object is better than another in its same class. This is a basic thought process that is used daily in judging friends, buying products, making decisions. Teachers often ask students to compare and/or contrast one literary work (a poem, short story, novel, essay) with another to draw a conclusion or make an evaluation.
- Conflict-** A major element of plot, it is a struggle between opposing forces. An external conflict exists when a character is at odds with another character, the rules of society, or another force (as in *Star Wars*). Internal conflict occurs when a character is at war within himself over a moral or ethical problem. Main characters in longer works of fiction often experience both types of conflicts. Another way of looking at conflict is by type: man vs. himself, man vs. society, man vs. nature, or man vs. the universe. The decisive moment in a series of conflicting actions constitutes the climax in the plot.
- Description-** An author's perceptions which are conveyed through words to a reader or listener. Description is an attempt to re-create those perceptions through

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words that relate to our senses (See **Imagery**). Good description also uses action verbs, figurative language, and adverbs to "paint a picture" for the reader. Bit by bit, descriptive details cumulatively create an impression in the mind of the reader or listener. (Also, see **Effect of Details** and **Versimilitude**.)

Diction/

Effect of Diction-

An author's choice of particular words, phrases, figurative language, allusions, etc. to help him achieve his purpose. One can use such terms as *clear, concise, correct*, as well as *formal, informal, slang, colloquial*, etc. When diction is combined with syntax (sentence length, variety, periodicity, or looseness), it creates an author's style. (See **Style**.)

Dramatic Situation-

The interaction of setting, conflict, and character in a literary work. Though "dramatic" would seem to imply that one is referring simply to plays, novels, short stories, and poems also present dramatic situations, which focus on conflicts among characters. (See **Conflict**.) Resolution of these conflicts often points directly to theme in a literary work. (See **Theme**.) An excellent example would be the interchange between Atticus Finch and Mayella Ewell in the trial scene in *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

Effect of Details -

A stylistic hallmark. Effective details are present in classification, comparison/contrast, defining, describing, explaining a process, and explaining with examples and illustrations. An author will choose details for their cumulative effect on a reader. These details often help the writer achieve his/her purpose (See **Author's Purpose**). The ordering of details is often determined by the subject matter and tone (see **Tone**) that the author wishes to achieve.

Epic-

A long narrative poem that celebrates the exploits of a hero. *Beowulf* is a classic example of an epic.

Flashback-

An interruption in the organization of a story as the writer "flashes back" to tell the reader about past thoughts, events, or episodes.

General to Specific/ Specific to General-

Inductive and deductive reasoning, which are major ways of organizing thinking and writing. Induction moves from specific details (a set of examples, statistics, illustrations) to a general statement or principle. In writing, a thesis is an example of induction. Deduction moves in the opposite direction, from an overall generalization or thesis to specific detail or examples for support. Deduction is related to the syllogism-major premise, minor premise, and conclusion (a three part argument). Secondary school students often work deductively when conducting research papers and literary analysis.

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Generalization- Generalization, or summarization, is a method of making sense of large amounts of factual or complex information to condense and simplify so that it is readily grasped by readers or listeners. Textbooks often generalize key points at the beginnings of chapters. Good generalization often calls for careful attention to original material and can be an instrument of active, critical thinking and writing. It is also a key, preliminary step in the research process, prior to formulation of a thesis. Students may be asked to generalize/summarize without being asked explicitly to do so in a question such as this: Choose a major critical approach – archetypal, historical, philosophical, psychological – and analyze the causes of Macbeth’s tragic downfall. However, overgeneralization can be a logical fallacy.

(See **Argument, Inference, General to Specific, and Thesis.**)

Genre- A French word that means class or kind. It is the category into which a literary work fits and aids readers and writers as well because a work in a specific genre will have certain characteristics in common with other works in that class. The three broad classes of writing are prose, poetry, and drama; however, each of these has many subdivisions. For instance, prose can be fiction or nonfiction. Fiction can be further subdivided into novels and short stories. Drama can be classified into tragedy, comedy, melodrama, farce, etc., and poetry has countless subdivisions. A teacher will want to consult a literary handbook for a complete discussion of genre. The important point to keep in mind is that a work in a specific subclass will have structural and content expectations to help students access the work.

Hyperbole- A figure of speech which contains an exaggeration for emphasis.

- a. literary hyperbole
 - Ex.1 “A hundred years should go to praise/Thine eyes...” – “To His Coy Mistress” by Andrew Marvell”

 - Ex. 2 “I live, I die, I burn myself and drown” – “Sonnet 8” by Louise Labe
- b. everyday hyperbolic statements
 - Ex. “I haven’t seen you for ages.” and “...old as the hills.”

Imagery- Descriptive language that specifically deals with one of the five senses: sight, touch, hearing, taste, and smell. Imagery occurs in all forms of writing, but is particularly important in poetry. Also, a single image can often have multiple meanings (complex imagery), while working with other figures of speech. For instance, the bird imagery in Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House* (skylark, songbird, lark) becomes symbolic of Nora’s vulnerability

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(caged existence, desire for flight, etc.) and contributes to the development of Ibsen's style and theme(s). (See **Diction**, **Style** and **Theme**.)

Inference-

To draw reasonable conclusions from material being presented. It is often referred to as “reading between the lines,” and it depends on one's ability to make connections between prior reading or experience and information presented in a text. From details in a literary work, one infers that a generalization is plausible. For instance, a reader can infer from the details that Poe gives about Roderick Usher in “The Fall of the House of Usher” that Roderick suffers from a terminal illness symbolic of the impending death of the entire Usher line of descent.

Irony-

A contrast or discrepancy between expectation and reality. Irony has three major forms.

- a. Verbal Irony - when a person says one thing while meaning another.
- b. Situational Irony - when the outcome of the situation is the opposite of what someone expected.
- c. Dramatic Irony - when the audience or reader knows something that the characters do not know.

An example of all three types of irony can be found in Chaucer's “The Pardoner's Tale” in *Canterbury Tales*.

Summary: While watching a funeral procession, three tavern rioters pledge to find death. They meet an old man who tells them that Death is waiting beneath an oak tree. The rioters race toward the oak tree where they find a pile of gold coins. The search for Death is immediately forgotten. Instead, the three agree that the youngest will go to town for bread and wine while the other two guard the treasure. One of the rioters exclaims, “The three of us together now/Hold up your hands, like me, and we'll be brothers/In this affair; and each defend the others...” (*verbal irony*).

While the youngest is gone, the other two plan to kill him when he returns. In town, the youngest buys poison and mixes it into the wine bottles. When he returns to the oak tree, the other two kill him. As they celebrate, they drink the poisoned wine. (*dramatic irony*.) The two die. Indeed, all three rioters have found Death beneath the tree. (*situational irony*).

Literary Devices- (See **Analogy**, **Imagery**, **Metaphor**, etc.)

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Literary Movement-

A collective phrase for works that are classified together because they share a common theme or variation on a theme. Works classified in a particular movement usually share a common sensibility.

Classicism: A literary movement concerned with universality, noble ideas, dignified languages, restraint, clarity, objectivity, the importance of structure, and an edifying purpose.

Writers of Classic literature include Plato, Homer, The Bible

Expressionism: A literary movement concerned with subjective responses, inner reality, abstract and mythical ideas, symbols and masks, man and society in chaos, and a creation of new worlds.

Writers of Expressionistic literature include T.S. Eliot, Franz Kafka, Eugene O’Neil.

Impressionism: A literary movement concerned with an appeal to the senses, mood and effects, vagueness and ambiguity, momentary insights, impressions of setting, plot, character, an emphasis on color and light, emotions and feelings, and sensations into words.

Writers of Impressionistic literature include Joseph Conrad, Kate Chopin, Henry James.

Naturalism: A literary movement concerned with realism to its extreme, fact and detail, social awareness and reform, a broad spectrum of both positive and negative subjects, man as animal in society, and scientific impartiality.

Writers of Naturalistic literature include Frank Norris, Tennessee Williams, Upton Sinclair.

Realism: A literary movement concerned with truth and actuality, detail, character portal, psychology, objectivity, and a lack of sentimentality.

Writers of Realistic literature include Leo Tolstoy, Chaucer, Ernest Hemingway.

Romanticism: A literary movement concerned with emotions and passion, imagination and wonder, the variety and power of Nature, the individual, freedom and revolution, dreams and idealism, mystery and the supernatural experimentation with form, and spontaneity.

Writers of Romantic literature include Shakespeare, Hawthorne, Bronte.

Litotes-

A figure of speech containing an understatement for emphasis. Examples of literary litotes include:

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“Last week I saw a woman flayed, and you will hardly believe how much it altered her physical appearance.” – *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens

“It isn’t very serious. I have this tiny tumor in my brain.” – *The Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger

In everyday speech, it is usually an assertion of an idea by denying its opposite; as a result, it understates the case.

An example of litotes in everyday speech is:

When the Orioles lost the game to the Red Sox, 13-0, the manager told the reporter, “It wasn’t our best effort.”

Metaphor-

A figure of speech that makes a comparison between two seemingly unlike things to help the reader to visualize the first thing more vividly and to suggest an underlying similarity between the two. A metaphor is stronger than a simile since it does not use *like* or *as*; as a result, it’s implication is that the two things compared are the same.

Examples:

Love is not all; it is not meat or drink
Nor slumber nor a roof against the rain
Nor yet a floating spear to men that sink...
- “Love is Not All” by Edna St. Vincent Millay

I have bought a mansion of a love,
But not possess’d it, and though I am sold,
Not yet enjoyed.”
- *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare

Extended Metaphor: An extended metaphor is a metaphor that compares two unlike things throughout a paragraph, a stanza, or a selection.

An example of an extended metaphor is:

“Read o’er the volume of young Paris’ face,
And fine delight writ there with beauty’s pen;
Examine every married lineament,
And see now one another lend content;
And what obscur’d in this fair volume lies
Find written in the margent of his eyes.
This precious book of love, this unbound lover,
To beautify him only lacks a cover...”
- *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare

Methods of Interpretation-

Literary approaches used to analyze character development, setting, theme, symbolism, and other literary elements. Teachers should consult handbooks to literature for more

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complete definitions and explanations. A good general discussion of these approaches appears in the BCPS publication, *Literary Criticism: A Primer* (1996) by Mark Lund, available through the Department for Curriculum and Instruction.

- a. Archetypal Approach: an approach to literature that focuses on constantly recurring situations, images, or characters in life and literature. The archetypal critic relates elements of a literary work to basic impulses in all men or relates a work to all other works in a similar situation. (See also CG. Jung and J.G. Fraser.)
- b. Formalistic Approach: an approach to literature that focuses on how all parts of a literary work fit together to produce an organic whole. According to Mark Lund, “the formalistic critic embraces an objective theory of art and examines plot, characterization, dialogue, and style to show how these elements contribute to the theme or unity of a literary work. ...content and form in a work constitute a unity, and it is the task of the critic to examine and evaluate the integrity of the work. Paradox, irony, dynamic tension, and unity are the primary values of formalist criticism.”
- c. Historical Approach: an approach that places a literary work squarely in the time and place it was written. Biographical information on the author is often used to explicate text. A “new historicism” has recently been the focus of a school of literary critics with Marxist concerns about the political and economic basis of a literary production. Works of critical theory by Terry Eagleton would be an appropriate place to begin.
- d. Philosophical Approach: an approach that focuses on the moral and ethical content of a literary work. For instance, the philosophical critic of *Antigone* would analyze how the conflict between civil authority and divine authority, and its outcome, may influence the reader. This position holds that literary works can have both positive and negative influences.
- e. Psychological Approach: an approach which probes the depths of the human psyche, and in the 20th century, has been one of the most productive avenues for literary analysts. Freud, Jung, Adler, Skinner and others have lent their names to “schools” of criticism, different schemes for analyzing and evaluating human motivation in real life and in literature. The teacher is referred to published

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works in psychological theory for background in this complex approach.

- f. Sociological Approach: an approach which focuses on how a literary work deals with social issues, either during the time it was written or the time it is being read. “Environment” is the key word because the sociological critic is concerned with ideas about man’s place in social organization. Historical and Marxist criticism are often listed as types of sociological criticism.

Metonymy -

A figure of speech in which a word is used to apply to something conventionally associated with it.

Examples:

“He drank the whole bottle” – ‘bottle’ refers to its contents.

“She reads only Jane Austen” – ‘Jane Austen’ refers to all her literary works.

“The Birds will play a double-header at the Yard.”- ‘Birds’ refers to the Baltimore Orioles baseball team and ‘the Yard’ refers to Camden Yards.

Monologue-

A speech given by one character which may be an entire work or part of a larger whole. A soliloquy or interior monologue is spoken by one person who is alone or acts as though he were alone. It is a kind of “talking to oneself.”

The dramatic monologue is a one-sided conversation by one person to another or to a group. Robert Browning produced the most successful dramatic monologues.

Mood-

The prevailing atmosphere/emotional aura of the story as experienced by the reader. For example, the mood of a story could be romantic, joyous, nostalgic or one of despair. Setting, tone, events, descriptive details and images all affect the mood. The major difference between tone and mood is that tone alludes to the author’s attitude toward the subject, characters, or audience while mood refers to the feeling projected onto the reader.

Narration/

Narrative Elements- The telling of a sequence of events, actual or imagined. The narrative elements are the interaction of setting, characterization, plot, and theme. Narration is controlled by such considerations as point of view, stance, voice, and tone.

Organization-

The way a speaker or a writer presents an argument or supports a thesis. Organizational patterns include chronological, spatial, specific to general, general to specific, least to most important, most important to least, flashback or fast forward, contrast/comparison, and cause/effect.

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- Oxymoron-** A figure of speech with apparently contradictory words and meanings to highlight an ambiguous situation. Shakespeare includes several oxymorons in Romeo’s words in Act I, Scene ii.
Ex. “Here’s much to do with hate, but more with love.
Why then, O brawling love! O loving hate!
O anything! Of nothing just create!
O heavy lightness! Serious vanity!
Mis-shapen chaos of well-seeming forms!”
- Paradox-** A statement that at first glance seems to be contradictory but on closer inspection, can be proven to be true, reconciling the conflicting opposites.
Examples:
“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness....” - *A Tale of Two Cities*, Charles Dickens

“The child is father of the man...” – “My Heart Leaps Up When I Behold Him,” William Wordsworth

“The earth that’s nature mother is her tomb; what is her burying grave, that is her womb.” *Romeo and Juliet*, William Shakespeare
- Personification-** The attribution of human qualities to an inanimate object, an animal, or an idea.
Examples:
“The Road was long. Whenever he took a step forward, little clouds of **dust whirled angrily** around him...Yet with every step he seemed more and more conscious of the hardness and apparent **animosity of the road.**”
from “Return” by Ngugi wa Thiong’o

“The scrap of **news stumbled** in the alleyways
its whisper finding no shelter
lodged obscurely in an unseen corner.
The **moon mumbled** sadly.”
- “Elegy for a Woman of Nonimportance by N_zik al – Mat_ – ikah
- Persuasion-** The type of speaking or writing that is intended to make its audience adopt a certain opinion and/or perform an action. Modern examples of persuasion include political speeches, television commercials, and newspaper editorials.
(See **Argument**.)

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simple, compound and complex, it is the organization or placement of these structures within a given text that contributes to the pacing, atmosphere and tone. Thus, sentence structure is a significant component of the author's style. Consider the following long, complex sentence from Joseph Conrad's *The Secret Shares*:

"My eye followed the light could of her smoke, now here, now there, above the plain according to the devious curves of the stream, but always fainter and farther away, till I lost it at last behind the miter-shaped hill of the great pagoda."

The long flowing structure of the sentence promotes a sense of calm and placidity.

Setting-

The time and place of a literary work. Setting generally serves two purposes. The first purpose is to provide the background to the plot. The second purpose is to enhance the plot by creating atmosphere. For example, the opening paragraphs of Dickens' *Great Expectations* create a gloomy, suspenseful atmosphere that enhances the suspense and mystery of the novel's plot and theme.

Shift in Development-

Any deliberate change, contrast, or movement that occurs within a text. This shift serves as a signal to the reader, emphasizes the author's point, and therefore contributes to the reader's interpretation of the work. Samples of questions involving shift developments:

- a. In which line does a shift in tone occur?
- b. How does the passage indicate a shift in point of view?

Simile-

A simile is a figure of speech that uses the words *like* or *as* to compare two things.

Examples:

"The bedbugs are swarming around **like army tanks on maneuvers.**"
- "Prison Diary" by Ho Chi Minh

"Now, therefore, while the youthful hue sits on skin **like morning dew...**"
- "To His Coy Mistress" by Andrew Marvell

Sources (Primary and Secondary)-

A primary source reflects a contemporary account of an era, culture, or event.

Examples of primary sources include letters, speeches, magazine and newspaper articles, and interviews.

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A secondary source is composed by an author who is not a contemporary of the era, culture, or event about which he is writing. Some secondary sources are biographies and history texts.

- Style -** The organization of textual elements and the effect this organization has on the meaning that the reader derives from the text. Dimensions of style include diction, syntax, tone, figures of speech, point of view, organization, selection of detail and pacing.
- Symbolism -** Used to stand for something larger than itself, such as a quality, an attitude, a belief, or value. For example, a rose is often a symbol of love and beauty; a dove is generally symbolic of peace; spring symbolizes birth; and winter symbolizes death. In Plato's "The Allegory of the Cave", the light of the sun symbolizes truth.
- Synecdoche -** A figure of speech in which the part stands for the whole. As a result, the reader or listener understands something else within the figure of speech. Examples:
"All hands on deck," meaning all crew members, not just their hands, should immediately report to the deck of the ship

Ex. "My wheels are important to me," meaning the entire automobile is important to the owner.
- Syntax** The word order and structure in a sentence. For example in his analysis of the opening paragraph of Henry James' *The Ambassadors* (1903), Ian Watt focuses on James' use of intransitive verbs, abstract nouns, subordinate clauses, and other distinctly syntactic features of this paragraph in order to describe its general effect on the reader.
- Textual Support-** Examples from a text that a writer uses to support a thesis.
- Theme -** The author's message in a literary work. It is not to be confused with the subject of the story. While a short work may have only one theme, longer works often have several. Theme gives the reader the opportunity to gain further insight into life's complexities. A writer develops theme through narrative elements such as characterization, conflict, motif, language, etc. Though theme is generally inferred in a fictional work, it is generally more directly stated in a nonfiction works, especially expository and argumentative writings. For example, the theme of O. Henry's short story "The Gift of the Magi" can be stated as the best gifts are the gifts of love and sacrifice. The subject, however, is the relationship between Jim and Della, the married couple in the story.
- Thesis** The controlling statement with a written work. All details, implied or stated, work to support the thesis.

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Tone -	The writer's attitude or intellectual position towards his or her subject, audience, or both. It is created through the author's choice of words or details. Determining a writer's tone increases the reader's understanding of the intended message. Though tone and mood are similar, they are not to be confused. For instance, while the mood of the work may be humorous, its tone may be formal. Consider Jonathan Swift's "A Modest Proposal". While the tone is satiric, the mood is that of horror.
Tragedy	A literary work in which the central character meets an unhappy or disastrous end. Tragedy often depicts problems of a central character of dignified or heroic stature. Through a related series of events, this main character, the tragic hero or heroine, is brought to a final downfall. The tragic hero or heroine, though defeated, usually gains a measure of wisdom or self-awareness. There may be more than one central character in a tragedy such as in Shakespeare's <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> .
Types of Poetry-	Poems fall into three major categories: lyric, narrative, and dramatic. Lyric poetry reflects an emotion or an attitude. Sonnets, odes, and elegies are all examples of lyric poetry. Narrative poetry tells a story and includes the narrative elements of plot, characters and setting, as well as poetic elements. Epics (See Epic .) and ballads are types of narrative poems. Dramatic poetry reflects a dramatic interaction between characters who may or may not actively converse.
Understatement	(See Litotes .)
Verisimilitude-	A fictional work that has the quality of realism, due to the inclusion of details that accurately reflect the human experience and/or a historical period.
Vignette-	A short essay which often expresses a writer's personal thoughts and experiences.
Voice-	<p>The total "sound" of a piece of writing, which is created by a writer's distinctive style.</p> <p>Voice may also refer to the form that a verb takes to explain whether the subject performs the action (active voice) or when the action is performed on the subject (passive voice).</p> <p>Ex. The bear captured a salmon between its front paws. (active voice)</p> <p>Ex. The salmon was captured between the bear's front paws. (passive voice)</p>