Intended for teachers of grades 4-8, this book provides tools and resources to help students fall in love with literature. The book contains reproducible glossaries containing over 200 literary, genre, book content, and book construction terms, along with removable flashcards, to make reviewing language arts essentials easy, enjoyable, and fun. The book provides game suggestions such as tic-tac-toe and "Jeopardy." The book's literary terms glossary and flashcards include figurative language, creative devices, story parts, skills, and similar expressions related to poetry and prose. The Genre glossary and flashcards cover both content (poetry and prose) and form (fiction and nonfiction). The Book Terminology glossary and flashcards cover book content and construction, with terms ranging in difficulty from simple to advanced. The book's instructions suggest that definitions and examples can be modified by using titles and excerpts students will recognize and that unfamiliar listed examples can be used as springboards to introduce and seek out new titles or pieces. (CR)
GOOD APPLE

Glossaries and Flashcards for 200+ Terms

Chapter

BY R. HOWARD BLOUNT, JR.
LANGUAGE ARTS LINGO

Glossaries and Flashcards for 200+ Terms

by R. Howard Blount, Jr.

Good Apple
Dedication.

For my fellow scholars and students,
those present and those yet to come . . .

Psalm 119:130  •  2 Timothy 3:15
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Using Literary Glossaries and Flashcards

Dear Colleagues,

In my literature-based sixth-grade classroom, my ultimate goal is to convert my average students into junior literary snobs, or at least to encourage them to fall deeply in love with reading and writing. Students delve into the rich world of literature, including the study of literary terms, genre, and book terminology.

To accomplish this, I've developed the following set of literary glossaries and flashcards for student use. The three reproducible glossaries contained in Language Arts Lingo become a permanent reference in my students' folders. Students mark selected glossary entries with a highlighter pen for easy focus and referral. To help students review the glossaries' content, I put the terms on homemade flashcards. The flashcards included in this book are designed to be removed and separated along the perforations. You may wish to laminate them. My students invented games to play and even asked to use the cards for study. They internalized and increased their retention of the material dramatically. They even trounced "gifted" classes in the school Library Jeopardy tournament! Because the flashcards have been so beneficial in my classroom, I believe they will be equally effective for other language arts teachers as well.

The glossaries and flashcards are each divided into three domains: Literary Terms, Genre, and Book Terminology. A single term is printed on the front side of each flashcard. On the reverse side are the term's definition and, where possible, authentic examples from literature. Each card is labeled for its domain, for example, LT1 is Literary Terms #1, G2—Genre terms #2, and BT5—Book Terms #5.
The Literary Terms glossary and flashcards include figurative language, creative devices, story parts, skills, and similar expressions related to poetry and prose. The Genre glossary and flashcards cover both content (poetry and prose) and form (fiction and nonfiction). The Book Terminology glossary and flashcards cover book content and construction. The terms range in difficulty from simple to advanced. You will be the one best able to determine the terms most appropriate for your class.

Feel free to modify definitions and examples by using titles and excerpts your students will recognize. Use any unfamiliar listed examples as springboards to introduce and seek out new titles or pieces. Examples that include blank spaces in the titles indicate where the key term is part of the title. In these cases, simply say the word blank instead.

It is my hope that these glossaries and flashcards will enhance the instruction, review, and retention of literary terms in your classroom and in the process increase student understanding of the literature that so enriches our lives. If you find this resource to be valuable and have a success story to share, I would enjoy hearing from you. Feedback of any kind is always welcome. Please send all correspondence with a SASE.

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The three main ways to give clues or ask questions with literary flashcards are by **term**, **definition**, or **example**. If you call out a **term**, the contestants provide either an acceptable definition or example. If you call out a **definition** or an **example**, the players provide the correct term. Variations of these methods are only limited by your creativity. Following are several games and variations that work well with literary flashcards.

### Quiz Teams

Organize teams of three to five players each. Call out a question or clue to each team sequentially. Team members have 15 seconds to determine their response, then the captain must give the answer. Award one point (tally mark) for each correct response. For incorrect responses, the next team gets a chance to steal a point by providing a correct response. Proceed by calling out the next question or clue for the same team. Continue play, making sure that all teams receive the same number of turns.

### Creative Team Play and Scorekeeping Variations

Instead of keeping score by tally marks, try the following variations.

- **Play tic-tac-toe** by drawing a large 3 x 3 matrix (grid with 3 columns and 3 rows) on the chalkboard. Correct responses allow opposing teams to place an X or O on the board. Each “three-in-a-row” wins a point. No point is awarded for a “cat” (when neither team is able to complete three in a row). Try more exciting games with a 4 x 4 or 5 x 5 matrix.

- **Draw a “literary football field”** on the chalkboard or markerboard. Use small magnets for players. Each correct response allows the teams to advance their magnetic players ten yards up the field. The first team to reach the opposing goal line wins.

- **Draw a “literary baseball diamond”** on the chalkboard or markerboard. Use small magnets for players. Each correct response allows a team to advance its magnetic players one base around the diamond. The team that scores the most runs wins. For variation, play with single, double, triple, and home-run questions.
Play 20 questions. The team to first collect 20 points is the winner.

If you regularly play with the same teams, try keeping a running score on a wall chart.

**Literary Jeopardy**

Design a Jeopardy game panel on a standard or tall science project board. Add three columns labeled Literary Terms, Genre, and Book Terminology. Glue five library-card pockets vertically under each heading, assigning them point values 100 through 500. Select flashcards from the appropriate domains and place them in the pockets according to degree of difficulty, with 100 being the easiest and 500 the most difficult. Identify two "daily doubles" if so desired. Contestants may compete as two individuals or two teams.

The game begins with one team selecting an answer category and value. The host reads the definition from the flashcard, and the player or team must provide the term in question format (for example, **What is simile?**). If the response is correct, the assigned points are awarded. If the response is incorrect, the opposing team gets to steal. (Daily double answers may not be stolen.) If their answer is correct, the assigned points are awarded. If the response is incorrect, the host provides the answer. Play continues with the same team selecting a category and value.

When all categories have been exhausted, the host states the "final Jeopardy" answer category. Contestants wager based on their total scores and write the amount on a sheet of paper. When the answer is read, the players write their responses below the wager and submit the papers to the host. When the responses have been read, final scores are tallied, and the winner(s) are declared. (Thanks, Carol!)

**Card Collecting**

The object of card collecting is for contestants to collect as many flashcards as possible. One version is played with a host and a small group (up to three players). When the host delivers a question or clue, the contestants shout out their responses. The host determines the contestant who first gave the correct response and awards the flashcard to that player. If no correct response is given, the host provides the answer, and the card is placed at the bottom of the stack. The game continues until all of the preselected cards have been distributed. Contestants then count their cards. The player with the most cards is declared the winner.
**Literary Terms**

**acronym** - a new word created from the first letters of a series of words

**allegory** - a literary piece that disguises a deeper meaning within the story

**alliteration** - the repetition of the same initial sounds in a series of words

**allusion** - a passing reference to a historical or literary person, place, event, or work that is not explained in the piece

**analogy** - the explanation of an idea by means of a figurative, more familiar parallel idea

**annotation** - a brief description or summary accompanying a bibliographic listing

**antagonist** - the most prominent character who opposes the protagonist; the villain

**aphorism** - a brief statement expressing a general truth

**archetype** - a universally recognized setting, character, symbol, theme, or image that regularly appears in literature

**bibliophile** - a person who loves books; a “bibloholic”

**bibliophobe** - a person who hates or fears books

**characterization** - the description of the internal attributes of story characters

**character** - a person or animal around whose actions a story revolves

**main character** - the central story personage

**secondary character** - an essential supporting story personage

**cliché** - a highly overused word or expression

**cliffhanger** - a device of suspense that leaves the reader wanting to read on

**climax** - the turning point of the plot or story action, usually characterized by great intensity
clipped words - words that have been shortened through common usage

conflict - the primary battle or problem faced by the protagonist

    internal conflict - the struggle within a character

    external conflict - the character's struggle with an outside force

connotation - a word's suggested variation or shade of meaning

cyclical story - a story that ends where it began

denotation - the dictionary meaning of a word

dialect - a distinctive form of a language spoken by members of an identifiable regional, national, or social group

dialogue - the exact words spoken by story characters; conversation

epithet - a word or phrase used to capture a person's most outstanding characteristic

eponym - a word whose origin is a person's name

euphemism - verbiage that puts a positive, respectful slant on a negative subject

excerpt - a selection excised from an original piece and used in an alternate setting

falling action - the plot events immediately following the climax that lead to the resolution; dénouement

figurative language - creative language or figures of speech used in poetry and prose

flashback - recalling previous events at a latter point within a story; analepsis

foreshadowing - literary clues that allude to future story events

genre - traditionally the five major classifications of literature—drama, poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and essay; commonly referred to as any particular type of published writing characterized by form or content

hero or heroine - a story character who exhibits remarkable strength or courage

hyperbole - the use of obvious excessive exaggeration

idiom - a common saying unique to a group of people that has a meaning apart from its literal translation; idiomatic expression

imagery - descriptive language that evokes mental impressions of the five senses
introduction • the beginning of a plot sequence that acquaints the reader with characters and setting

irony • the contrast between the way something appears to be and what it actually is

jargon • conversational language unique to a group, trade, or profession

kenning • a brief metaphor or stock phrase used in place of a more familiar term

linear story • a story that begins at one point and ends at a distant point

literary license • the author's right to break the rules of standard spelling, grammar, and punctuation for the sake of creativity

literature • creative writing of universally recognized artistic value

malapropism • the misuse of words characterized by confusion with similar terms

meiosis • a form of understatement whereby something is referred to in less-than-accurate terms

metaphor • a comparison between two distinct objects that does not use the words like or as

meter • a systematic pattern and measure of rhythm used in poetry

metonymy • replacing the name of one thing with the name of another closely associated thing

mood • the general feeling evoked in a reader through the author's use of words

moral • a lesson or principle intentionally communicated through the form of a story

motivation • a story character's reason for exhibiting a particular behavior

narrative • any form of writing that tells a story

narrator • the person telling the story, usually a character or the author

onomatopoeia • the use of words that imitate sounds

oxymoron • the combined use of terms that seem to be contradictory

pace • the rate at which a story moves along, defined by the tension between descriptive passages and action sequences

palindrome • a word or phrase that reads the same both forward and backward

© 1997 Good Apple
paradox • a statement or situation whereby two opposing conditions exist simultaneously

parody • the imitation of an author's style or literary work, most commonly for amusement

personification • attributing human characteristics to nonhuman objects

plagiarism • passing off the writings of another person as one's own

plot • the sequence of story events

poetic justice • a deserved happy ending for heroes and a sad fate for villains

poetic license • the poet's freedom to depart from conventional poetic devices

point of view • the perspective from which a story is told

  first person • the story told from the author's or one character's perspective, characterized by use of the pronouns I, me, my, we, us, and our

  third person omniscient • the narrator tells the story from the perspective of more than one character

  third person limited • the narrator tells the story from one character's perspective

portmanteau words • words with dual meanings that have been blended through common usage

protagonist • the main character in a story; the hero or heroine

pun • a play on words involving two similar-sounding words that have distinctive meanings

purpose • the author's reason for writing a literary piece, most commonly to entertain, inform, persuade, or describe

quote or quotation • a reference to the exact words spoken by another well-known person or used in a recognized literary work

redundancy • the unnecessary sequential use of two or more words with identical or similar meanings; overblown phrasing

repetition • the effective use of recurrent words, phrases, incidents, themes, images, or symbols in a literary piece

resolution • the final plot component immediately following the falling action; the outcome of a story
**rhyme** - in poetry the repetitive use of words or ending syllables that share the same sound

**rhyme scheme** - a standard rhyming pattern

**rhythm** - a poetic beat using light and heavy stress patterns; the harmonious pattern of syllables in prose

**rising action** - the plot events that lead to the climax; complication

**satire** - humorous mockery of the folly, vice, or stupidity of deserving individuals or institutions in hope of effecting reform

**scene** - in drama, the subdivision of a play or an act; one event in a story

**sequence of events** - the standard plot flow—introduction, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution

**setting** - the time and place in which a story takes place

**simile** - a comparison between two distinct objects using the words *like* or *as*

**slang** - nonstandard colorful sayings or terms; irreverent street language

**stanza** - a division within a poem, consisting of a number of related lines

**style** - an author's unique way of writing—creative or recognizable uses of theme, diction, syntax, imagery, rhythm, or figurative language

**subplot** - a minor related story within the dominant plot

**surprise ending** - an unexpected conclusion to a story, often marked by satisfaction or disappointment

**suspense** - the feelings of excitement, anxiety, and anticipation radiating from a story that motivate the reader to read on

**symbolism** - the use of images in literature that represent other entities or meanings

**synecdoche** - referring to a whole by one of its parts or a more comprehensive whole

**theme** - the author's message or the main idea of a story

**tone** - manner of expression revealing author's attitude toward subject matter or reader
Genre

**adventure** • a literary work with elements of risk, action, and suspense

**ABC poem** • unrhymed verse of up to 26 lines, each word beginning sequentially with the letters of the alphabet

**almanac** • a reference book published annually that contains updated statistics, lists, tables, and charts of information from many fields

**anecdote** • a brief interesting or humorous story

**anthology** • a collection of literary pieces, such as poems, essays, short stories, or plays, contained in one volume

**atlas** • a reference book of maps, geographic tables, and charts

**autobiography** • the story of a person's life written by that person

**ballad** • a narrative poem or folk song with simple stanzas and a recurring refrain

**biography** • the story of a person's life

**cento** • a rhymed aabbcc "patchwork" poem consisting of lines borrowed from various existing poems

**chapbook** • a cheaply produced pamphlet sold by peddlers from the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries; a small, often self-published, paperback book of poetry

**cinquain** • an unrhymed 5-line poem dividing 22 syllables into a 2-4-6-8-2 pattern

**classic** • a definitive literary work that has been widely read and recognized for many years

**clerihew** • a humorous 4-line rhymed poem based on a person's name

**comedy** • a humorous play or literary work

**comic strip** • a humorous vignette illustrated with multipaneled scenes, caricatures, and ballooned dialogue

**companion title** • a literary piece that stands alone but is related in character or setting to another work
concrete poem: verse arranged visually or shaped to represent its theme

contemporary fiction: a literary work with no distinguishable regional or periodic attachments that technically could occur anywhere in modern times

couplet: a 2-lined rhyming stanza or poem

diamante: a form of unrhymed poetry that physically resembles a diamond; related to cinquain

diary: a daily written record of one's personal experiences

dictionary: a reference book for finding meanings, pronunciations, and other information related to words

drama: a literary work designed for public performance by actors

dramatic poem: a narrative play written in verse form, involving two or more voices

elegy: a poem lamenting a death

encyclopedia: a comprehensive reference book containing articles on a wide variety of topics

epic: a long narrative work of poetry, prose, or drama that ceremoniously recounts the deeds of a legendary hero

epigram: a concise, clever poem that expresses a single observation

epitaph: a short poem, often engraved on a tombstone, that memorializes someone who has died

essay: a short, formal or informal, written discussion of a subject; composition

eulogy: a spoken or written tribute praising someone who has died

fable: a short story with a moral; commonly uses animal characters with human characteristics

fairy tale: a story involving legendary royalty, commoners, and magical characters; often begins with *Once upon a time* . . . and ends with . . . they lived happily ever after.
**fantasy** - a fictional work marked by supernatural or magical characters and events that could not happen in real life

**high fantasy** - set within a created world

**low fantasy** - set within the real world

**fiction** - a literary work created by the author's imagination; an untrue story

**folklore** - the traditional oral culture of a people: its beliefs, practices, myths, folk tales, legends, fables, fairy tales, parables, and tall tales

**folk tale** - a magical story that is unique to a cultural group and that has been modified by years of oral retellings prior to being put into print

**free verse** - poetry that follows no standard pattern of rhythm or rhyme

**grue** - a short, simple, gruesome rhyming poem

**haiku** - a 3-line, 17-syllable poetic form of Japanese origin that describes a single natural image in a 5-7-5 syllabic pattern

**historical fiction** - an untrue story set in an authentic period from the past and characterized by events that could have happened

**horror** - a literary work marked by elements of extreme suspense told in shocking, gruesome detail; a thriller

**humor** - a funny literary work

**informational book** - nonfiction title that provides extensive data on a particular topic

**interactive fiction** - a story that allows the reader to determine the direction the narrative will take

**journal** - a written record of experiences, reflections, and perceptions that is appended on a regular basis

**journalism** - written pieces that deal with news items and that are published in periodicals or reported through the media

**legend** - an unverified story passed down orally from generation to generation
letter • any formal or informal written communication from one person to another

light verse • an amusing form of verse having no serious purpose

limerick • a humorous 5-line poem in which the first, second, and fifth lines rhyme and contain 3 stresses, while the third and fourth lines rhyme and contain 2 stresses

lyric poem • a form of melodious verse; hymn, ode, psalm, ballad, sonnet, elegy

memoir • an autobiographical account concerning a period in one's life

modern classic • a newly published literary work that has gained considerable attention and has been widely read in recent years

mystery • a literary work featuring a plot that revolves around an unsolved crime

myth • an ancient story of gods, goddesses, and superhuman heroes that explains events from a cultural standpoint

narrative poem • a poem that tells a story

nonfiction • any true written work

nonsense • an amusing poem characterized by uses of nonexistent terms and illogical ideas

novel • a book-length work of fictional prose with a complex extended plot

novelette • a cheaply produced, sensational short novel; pulp fiction

novella • a fictional work of intermediate length and complexity that places it between a short story and a novel; a short novel

nursery rhyme • traditional rhythmic rhyming verse for young children

ode • a lengthy, formal lyric poem with a serious tone

parable • an allegorical story that illustrates a religious lesson or moral

parallel poem • verse in which each line begins or ends with the same word or phrase

pastoral poem • verse about country life, especially related to shepherding; idyll
periodical • a regularly issued news publication; newspaper, magazine, bulletin

play • a drama acted out onstage

poetry • creative writing characterized by formal patterns of verse, thought and emotion, lines and stanzas, rhythm and rhyme

prequel • a companion literary piece, complete in itself, that gives an account of events prior to the narrative of an earlier work

propaganda • information or ideas distributed by commercial advertisers or the promoters of a political belief or cause; persuasive techniques include bandwagoning, glittering generality, red herring, transfer, snob appeal, testimonial, prestige identification, card stacking, plain folks, exigency, name calling, flag waving, innuendo

prose • writing characterized by sentences and paragraphs; any type of writing that is not poetry

proverb • a short, widely used saying that expresses a general truth

quatrain • a 4-line rhyming stanza or poem

realistic fiction • a created literary piece involving elements that could actually occur in life

reference books • volumes containing extensive information within a specific area; dictionary, thesaurus, encyclopedia, almanac, atlas

romance • a literary work featuring a plot that revolves around a love affair

science fiction • a futuristic work of literary fantasy characterized by time and space travel, nonexistent technology, alien creatures, and other improbable scientific events

script • the written version of a play or motion picture

sequel • a companion literary piece, complete in itself, that continues the narrative of an earlier work

serial • a collection of stories published in sequential installments that feature the same characters, setting, or theme
sermon - a religious discourse offering words of encouragement and correction

short story - a brief work of fiction that can be read in one sitting

soliloquy - a dramatic monologue given by a lone character

sonnet - a 14-line rhyming lyric poem with lines of equal length that follows one of several conventional rhyme schemes

table - a highly illustrated, half-size newspaper featuring sensational stories and general gossip

tall tale - a humorous, highly exaggerated story detailing the impossible feats of a folk character

tanka - a 5-line, 31-syllable poetic form of Japanese origin in a 5-7-5-7-7 syllabic pattern; related to haiku

tercet - a 3-line rhymed stanza or poem; a triplet

textbook - a book adopted by schools for the formal study of an academic subject area

thesaurus - a reference book used for finding synonyms and antonyms of words

tragedy - a serious play or literary work with an unhappy or disastrous ending

trilogy - a collection of three related literary works

western - a literary work with a plot that revolves around frontier life in the American West
Book Terminology Glossary

**Book-Content Terms**

**acknowledgments** - a word of appreciation to individuals or groups who provided significant assistance in the creation of a book

**afterword** - a word from the author immediately following the text or narrative; author's note

**anonymous** - a term used when the author is unknown or wishes to remain unknown

**appendix** - a supplement to a book, usually included in the back matter

**author** - the writer of a book

**back matter** - book parts located behind the main text of the book; appendix, glossary, sources, bibliography, index

**bibliography** - list of sources or titles used or recommended by an author

**bio** - a short biography of an author or illustrator

**chapter** - a major subdivision of a book

**copyright** - a form of protection provided by U.S. law to authors of "original works of authorship," including literature, drama, music, and other genres. The owner of the copyright has the exclusive right to do or authorize others to do such things as reproduce the work, distribute the work, or perform the work.

**copyright date** - the year a book is published

**dedication** - statement identifying an individual or group an author wishes to remember

**designer** - a graphic artist who creates the overall appearance of a book, including selection of paper, colors, fonts, and images

**edition line** - a line on the copyright page that indicates the book's order of printing. This line indicates a first edition: 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

**editor** - a publisher's representative who acquires and prepares manuscripts from authors for publication

**epigraph** - a quotation usually from a speech, poem, or scripture placed at the front of a book that is indicative of the book's theme
epilogue  •  a summarizing or concluding passage at the end of a story; a passage that tells what happened after the story

folio  •  a page number

foreword  •  an introductory word from the author or guest writer

front matter  •  the book parts located before the main text of the book; half title, ad card, frontispiece, title page, copyright page, dedication, acknowledgments, table of contents, epigraph, preface, foreword, introduction

glossary  •  an alphabetical listing of book-related terms and definitions

illustrator  •  the book's artist

index  •  an alphabetical listing of important words and the page numbers where they are used in the text

introduction  •  a fairly long note from the author or another person that provides important background information for the book

ISBN  •  International Standard Book Number; the universal order number

permissions  •  a list of statements giving permission to use excerpts from other copyrighted works

preface  •  a brief note from an author

prologue  •  an introductory or opening passage at the beginning of a story; a passage that tells what happened prior to the story

pseudonym  •  an assumed name some writers use for publishing purposes; a pen name

public domain  •  literary works no longer protected by copyright laws

publisher  •  a company that prints and distributes books

sources  •  a bibliography of published matter used as research for a book

summary  •  a brief description of the book, located on the front flap of the dustjacket, on the back cover, or on the copyright page; a synopsis

table of contents  •  a list of chapter titles and page numbers

teaser  •  a brief phrase on the book cover designed to make you want to read the book

title  •  the name of a book
**Book Construction Terms**

binding • the sewn, stapled, or glued edge of a book

blanks • surplus pages at the back of a book

blind stamping • designs and letters embossed or impressed on hardcover book bindings without color or gilding

bookplate • a label pasted inside a book's front cover that names the owner; ex libris

case • a hard or soft book cover

copyright page • the verso of the title page, containing the copyright date, a rights statement, the full address of the publisher, an edition line, the Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication (CIP) notice, and ISBN

dust jacket • a paper book cover used with most hardcover books

endpapers • heavy sheets of paper glued to connect the front and back of a book to its cover

errata slip • a loose or pasted slip of printed paper inserted in a book to indicate and correct errors discovered after printing

frontispiece • a book-related map or illustration

gutter • the inside margins of two facing pages

half title • a page listing only the book's title

hardcover • a book with a rigid binding and cover

leaf • one sheet of paper; two pages

page • one side of a leaf

paperback • a book with a soft cover; also called a softcover

recto • the front side of a leaf; a right-hand page

spine • the folded and bound edge of a book; backstrip

title page • the page listing the book's title, author, illustrator, publisher, and place of publication

verso • the back side of a leaf; a left-hand page
Sources


**acronym** • a new word created from the first letters of a series of words

**Examples**
- scuba: self-contained underwater breathing apparatus
- dj: disc jockey
- laser: light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation
- radar: radio detecting and ranging
- snafu: situation normal all fouled up

**allegory** • a literary piece that disguises a deeper meaning within the story

**Example**

In *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, by C. S. Lewis, Lewis suggests in his writings that his central character—Aslan, the great lion—has another name. When questioned by a little girl in Texas, Lewis replied, “As to Aslan’s other name, well, I want you to guess. Has there never been anyone in this world who (1) Arrived the same time as Father Christmas (2) Said he was the Son of the Great Emperor (3) Gave himself up for someone else’s fault to be jeered at and killed by wicked people (4) Came to life again (5) Is sometimes spoken of as a Lamb? Don’t you really know His name in this world?”


**alliteration** • the repetition of the same initial sounds in a series of words

**Examples**

Miss Sook was ruminating on these matters while my mind wandered through a maze as melancholy as the wet twilight.


Silver stars spun before his eyes.


**allusion** • a passing reference to a historical or literary person, place, event, or work that is not explained in the piece

**Examples**

In Maya Angelou’s 1992 inaugural poem for President Clinton, entitled “On the Pulse of the Morning,” Angelou mentions “The Rock, the River, the Tree...” referring to the African American spirituals “No Hiding Place Down Here,” “Deep River,” “Down by the Riverside,” and “I Shall Not Be Moved.”

Among the vast number of symbols employed by T. S. Eliot in his five-part poem, “The Waste Land,” are references to Ecclesiastes XII, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Paradise Lost*, St. Augustine’s *Confessions*, and Buddha’s *Fire Sermon*. 
analogy

antagonist

annotation

aphorism
analogy

the explanation of an idea by means of a figurative, more familiar parallel idea

Examples

allegory

kenning

metaphor

personification

simile

symbolism

antagonist

the most prominent character who opposes the protagonist. the villain

Examples

Gordy Smith from Stepping on the Cracks by Mary Downing Hahn

Odie Ralston from Trapped in Death Cave by Bill Wallace

Judd Travers from Shiloh by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor

The Sheriff of Nottingham from Robin Hood legends

Medusa from Greek mythology

The sweetly sad love story of Pierrot, the famed jester of French pantomime, told through color, image, and tradition.


Spier, Peter. Rain. Doubleday, 1982. (Showers, rain, dew drops, puddles, streams, and storms accompany children as they run from French pantomime."


Tis better to have loved and lost Than never to have loved at all.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

Examples

symbolism

simile

metaphor

personification

personification

analogies

the explanation of an idea by means of a figurative, more familiar parallel idea

Examples

annotation

a brief description of a general truth accompanying a bibliographic listing
**archetype** • a universally recognized setting, character, symbol, theme, or image that regularly appears in literature

**Examples**

*A Perfect Society*—Utopia, Camelot, Shangri-la, Eden, the Community

*The Christ Figure*—Shane, Hercules, Billy Budd, Thomas More

*The Rebel*—Gilly Hopkins, Shoestring, Leslie Burke

*The Snob*—Prince Brat, Caroline Bradshaw

**bibliophile** • a person who loves books; a "biblioholic"

**Examples**

a librarian

a book collector

an avid reader

a bookstore proprietor

Amanda Beale from *Maniac Magee* by Jerry Spinelli

**bibliophobe** • a person who hates or fears books

**Examples**

an illiterate person

a nonreader

**characterization** • the description of the internal attributes of story characters

**Example**

"In addition to never having seen a movie, she has never: eaten in a restaurant, traveled more than five miles from home, received or sent a telegram, read anything except funny papers and the Bible, worn cosmetics, cursed, wished someone harm, told a lie on purpose, let a hungry dog go hungry."

character • a person or animal around whose actions a story revolves

Examples

main character—the central story personage
(Wilber in Charlotte's Web by E. B. White)

secondary character—an essential supporting personage
(Charlotte in Charlotte's Web by E. B. White)

cliffhanger • a device of suspense that leaves the reader wanting to read on

Example

“Lester screamed a shattering scream at that instant, and Momma rushed past me, nearly knocking me down. I went after her. In less than a breath, it seemed, Momma had picked Lester up and tossed him back toward the front of the soddy. In the same instant, she shoved me away. But not before I saw.”


cliché • a highly overused word or expression

Examples

Cliché

beyond a shadow of a doubt
bury the hatchet
grinning from ear to ear
in this day and age
one in a million

Correction

undoubtedly
make peace
smiling
today
unique

climax • the turning point of the plot or story action, usually characterized by great intensity

Example

“So what you going to do?” I ask. “Shoot me?”

Travers is so surprised his jaw drops. But I'm cooking now. Nothing can stop me. Braver than I ever been in my life.

“Going to shoot me like that dog I found up here six months back with a bullet in his head?”

Travers stares some more.

“I know whose bullet that was, Judd, and I told Dad, and if folks find me up here with a bullet in me, Dad'll know whose bullet that is, too.”

clipped words

connotation

cyclical story

conflict
clipped words - words that have been shortened through common usage

Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clipped Word</th>
<th>Whole Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ad</td>
<td>advertisement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mum</td>
<td>chrysanthemum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pen</td>
<td>penitentiary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sub</td>
<td>substitute teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vet</td>
<td>veteran or veterinarian</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

connotation - a word's suggested variation or shade of meaning

Examples

Positive
assertive
deceased
diplomatic
mentally ill
pleasingly plump
unattractive

Negative
bossy; domineering
dead
two-faced
crazy; loony
morbidly obese
ugly

cyclical story - a story that ends where it began

Examples

The Tortilla Factory ("La Tortilleria") by Gary Paulsen tells about the hands that plant the corn that eventually becomes the tortilla that feeds the hand that planted the corn.

Louise Bradshaw in Jacob Have I Loved by Katherine Paterson grows up believing that her parents show partiality to her twin sister Caroline because Caroline almost died as a baby. At the end of the story, Louise, now a midwife, delivers twins and devotes her attention to the sick one, and through the experience comes to terms with her jealousy.

conflict - the primary battle or problem faced by the protagonist

Examples

(internal—the struggle within a character)
In Hatchet by Gary Paulsen, Brian Robeson must deal with his feelings about his parents' impending divorce.

(external—the character's struggle with an outside force)
In Hatchet by Gary Paulsen, Brian Robeson must survive alone in the Canadian wilderness.
denotation • the dictionary meaning of a word

Example

conservative adj. 1 wanting to keep things as they are and being against change and reform [My mother is a very conservative person.] 2 cautious or safe; not risky [a conservative taste in music; a conservative estimate of costs]
n. a conservative person

—Webster's New World Dictionary for Young Adults.

dialect • a distinctive form of a language spoken by members of an identifiable regional, national, or social group

Examples

“Two days he be gone, and he come back and make a storm around the place so we all know John he made it. He be gone.”

“... It ain't fittin' to be frolicking when our men from right here on the Creek are dyin' in a war and all. My son darn't disobey me again to make a fool of hisself. Do you mind what I say?”

dialogue • the exact words spoken by story characters:

Example

“Miss Gomez . . . .”
“Yes, Franklin.”
“Miss Gomez, my parents aren't here.”
“I beg your pardon?”
“My father's working. My mother . . . went out.”
“Franklin, you told me they'd be here. I think you said they would be charmed to see me.”
“I lied.”


epithet • a word or phrase used to capture a person's most outstanding characteristic

Examples

Abraham Lincoln the Great Emancipator
Catherine, Called Birdy
Ethelred the Unready
Jesus the Messiah
Peter the Great
**eponym** • a word whose origin is a person's name

**Examples**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eponym</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>decibel</td>
<td>Alexander Graham Bell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>guillotine</td>
<td>Joseph Guillotin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pasteurize</td>
<td>Louis Pasteur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>platonic</td>
<td>Plato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sideburns</td>
<td>Ambrose Burnside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teddy bear</td>
<td>Teddy Roosevelt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**excerpt** • a selection excised from an original piece and used in an alternate setting

**Examples**

A chapter from The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe is reprinted in a basal reader.

A verse from the Christmas carol "I Wonder as I Wander" is used within the narrative of the novel Jacob Have I Loved by Katherine Paterson.

A passage from the short story "A Christmas Memory" is published in a literature anthology for young readers.

**euphemism** • verbiage that puts a positive, respectful slant on a negative subject

**Examples**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Euphemism</th>
<th>Blunt Truth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“frugal” or “thrifty”</td>
<td>“cheapskate”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“has a great personality”</td>
<td>“is ugly to the bone”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“has a healthy appetite”</td>
<td>“eats like a pig”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“is between jobs”</td>
<td>“is a lazy bum”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**falling action** • the plot events immediately following the climax that lead to the resolution; dénouement

**Example**

“We're almost there, Gabriel,” he whispered, feeling quite certain without knowing why. “I remember this place, Gabe.” And it was true. But it was not a grasping of a thin and burdensome recollection; this was different. This was something that he could keep. It was a memory of his own.

figurative language • creative language or figures of speech used in poetry and prose

Examples
- hyperbole
- idiom
- metaphor
- personification
- simile

flashback • recalling previous events at a latter point within a story; analepsis

Example
As I caressed the smooth surfaces, my mind drifted back through the years, back to my boyhood days. How wonderful the memories were. Piece by piece the story unfolded.

foreshadowing • literary clues that allude to future story events

Example
There are two pictures of Emmeline Berryman I have frozen in my memory for all eternity, and this was the first. She was dressed in the most magnificent violet dress I could ever remember seeing, and across her lap lay a sparkling pink parasol flounced with lace and eyelet.

But she wasn't sitting up, ready and amused by our wide-eyed, droop-jawed welcoming party. She was slumped in a faint against the doctor, and her face was gray, like winter prairie grass before a storm.

genre • traditionally the five major classifications of literature—drama, poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and essay; commonly referred to as any particular type of published writing characterized by form or content

Examples
- biography
- classic
- fiction
- nonfiction
- romance
- western

55
hyperbole
hero or heroine
imagery
idiom
hero or heroine • a story character who exhibits remarkable strength or courage

Examples
Brian Robeson from Hatchet by Gary Paulsen
Hercules
Joan of Arc
Karana from Island of the Blue Dolphins by Scott O’Dell
Kit Tyler from The Witch of Blackbird Pond by Elizabeth George Speare

idiom • a common saying unique to a group of people that has a meaning apart from its literal translation; idiomatic expression

Examples
I knew Mama meant what she said. This broke my heart.

Far down in the right-hand corner, I found an ad that took my breath away.

The way my grandfather stared at me made me uneasy. I was on needles and pins.


hyperbole • the use of obvious excessive exaggeration

Examples
The amount of medals Franklin D. Roosevelt had either hung around my neck or pinned to my front would have supplied the army with enough metal for a tank.

Just the look on the Captain’s face ripped my heart right out of my chest.


imagery • descriptive language that evokes mental impressions of the five senses

Example
The black stove, stoked with coal and firewood, glows like a lighted pumpkin. Eggbeaters whirl, spoons spin round in bowls of butter and sugar; vanilla sweetens the air; ginger spices it; melting, nose-tingling odors saturate the kitchen, suffuse the house, drift out to the world on puffs of chimney smoke.

irony

introduction

kenning

jargon
introduction • the beginning of a plot sequence that acquaints the reader with characters and setting

Example

Maycomb was an old town, but it was a tired old town when I first knew it... Somehow, it was hotter then: a black dog suffered on a summer's day; bony mules hitched to Hoover carts flicked flies in the sweltering shade of the live oaks on the square. Men's stiff collars wilted by nine in the morning. Ladies bathed before noon, after their three-o'clock naps, and by nightfall were like soft teacakes with frostings of sweat and sweet talcum...

We lived on the main residential street in town—Atticus, Jem and I, plus Calpurnia our cook. Jem and I found our father satisfactory: he played with us, read to us, and treated us with courteous detachment.


jargon • conversational language unique to a group, trade, or profession

Examples

baseball—southpaw, duster, green fly, hot corner, Sir Charles
cowboy—tarantula juice, bite the dust, tenderfoot, rubberneck
diner—sunnyside up, on the side, surf and turf
hipster—chill, dis, homeboy, def, fly
teacher—helicopter parent, marble palace, deep sneakers, SSR

irony • the contrast between the way something appears to be and what it actually is

Example

There was a funeral service for her in the church. Neither she nor the Captain had been to church for as long as anyone could remember, but the preacher in those days was young and earnest and gave her what was warmly regarded as a 'right purty service.'


kenning • a brief metaphor or stock phrase used in place of a more familiar term

Examples

Kenning Term
bone house body
firewater whiskey
sky candle sun
literary license
linear story
malapropism
literature
**linear story** • a story that begins at one point and ends at a distant point

**Examples**

In *Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan, the pilgrim named Christian embarks upon a treacherous journey. He encounters many physical and spiritual obstacles along the way, but through determination he makes it to the Celestial City.

At the beginning of *Justin and the Best Biscuits in the World* by Mildred Pitts Walter, Justin is an immature, lazy young man. After spending time at his grandfather's ranch, Justin learns the importance of responsibility.

---

**literature** • creative writing of universally recognized artistic value

**Examples**

classic novel
essay
play
poem
short story

---

**literary license** • the author's right to break the rules of standard spelling, grammar, and punctuation for the sake of creativity

**Example**

Gary Paulsen's use of fragmented sentences to create a contemplative effect:

But there was one dog who taught me the most. Just one dog.

Storm.

First dog.


---

**malapropism** • the misuse of words characterized by confusion with similar terms

**Example**

"Maybe she's got some mysterious illness and doesn't want to be a burden to him."

"Who?"

"Mr. Rice's finance." I had picked up the word, but not the pronunciation from my reading. It was not in the spoken vocabulary of most islanders.

"His what?"

"The woman he's engaged to marry, stupid."

metaphor

meiosis

metonymy

meter
meiosis • a form of understatement whereby something is referred to in less-than-accurate terms

Examples
Mercutio from Romeo and Juliet refers to his mortal wound as a “scratch.”
Vincent van Gogh was a part-time doodler.
Whitney Houston can carry a tune.

metaphor • a comparison between two distinct objects that does not use the words like or as

Examples
The cows watched, their eyes sad in their dinner-plate faces. And I slept, dreaming a perfect dream. The fields had turned to a sea that gleamed like sun on glass. And Sarah was happy.

Gordy’s face turned white. I was standing so close to him I could see the constellations of freckles on his face, the tiny network of blue veins at his temples, the purple scar over his eyebrow, the yellowing bruises on his face.

meter • a systematic pattern and measure of rhythm used in poetry

Examples
Basic Metrical Feet and Symbols
iamb / 
trochee / »
dactyl / » »
anapest » » /
spondee / /
(/ = stressed syllable; » = unstressed syllable)

metonymy • replacing the name of one thing with the name of another closely associated thing

Examples
Metonym
the bottle
the Oval Office
the pen
the press
the sword

Term
alcohol
the President
writing
journalism
warfare
mood • the general feeling evoked in a reader through the author's use of words

Example

With that he raised himself to one elbow and began to drag himself down the road. The boys and I, candy canes in hand, stood motionless. We watched Mr. John Wallace to see if he would raise the shotgun again. Jeremy, the candy cane in his pocket, watched too. We all waited for the second click of the shotgun. But only the cries of Mr. Tom Bee as he inched his way along the road ripped the silence. "John! John! John!" he cried over and over again. "Ya hear me, John? Till the judgment day! John! John! JOHN!"

There was no other sound.


moral • a lesson or principle intentionally communicated through the form of a story

Examples

"Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."
"Misery loves company."
"Slow and steady wins the race."
"You are judged by the company you keep."
"You can't please everybody."

—Aesop's Fables

motivation • a story character's reason for exhibiting a particular behavior

Example

"...Son, didn't you know what her fits were?"

Jem shook his head.

"Mrs. Dubose was a morphine addict," said Atticus. "She said she was going to leave this world beholden to nothing and nobody. Jem, when you're sick as she was, it's all right to take anything to make it easier, but it wasn't all right for her. She said she meant to break herself of it before she died, and that's what she did."


narrative • any form of writing that tells a story

Examples

anecdote
epic
novel
novella
short story
onomatopoeia  narrator
pace  oxymoron
narrator • the person telling the story, usually a character or the author

Examples

Title/Genre
To Kill a Mockingbird
Lincoln: A Photobiography
The Story of My Life
Charlotte's Web
The True Story of the Three Little Pigs
wordless picture book
autobiography

Narrator
Scout Finch (character)
Russell Freedman (author)
Helen Keller (author/subject)
E. B. White (author)
the wolf (character)
the illustrator/the reader
the subject (author)

oxymoron • the combined use of terms that seem to be contradictory

Examples

jumbo shrimp
original copy
holy war
justifiable homicide
death benefits
unbiased opinion
sweet sorrow
random pattern
awfully nice
freezer burn
black light
urban cowboy

onomatopoeia • the use of words that imitate sounds

Examples


Watermelon seed number three leaves Ben's garage with a thunderous gazonk. Zing, and it's gone.

pace • the rate at which a story moves along, defined by the tension between descriptive passages and action sequence

Examples

rapid
rollercoaster
slow
steady
stop and go
palindrome

parody

paradox

personification
palindrome: a word or phrase that reads the same both forward and backward

Examples
A man, a plan, a canal, Panama.
Madam, I'm Adam.
Tuna roll or a nut?
Was it Eliot's toilet I saw?
Wow!
—Smith, Dona. Wo! Nemo, Toss a Lasso to Me
Now! Scholastic, 1993.

paradox: a statement or situation whereby two opposing conditions exist simultaneously

Example
After the Nazis began to use police dogs to sniff out hidden passengers on the fishing boats, Swedish scientists worked swiftly to prevent such detection. They created a powerful powder composed of dried rabbit's blood and cocaine; the blood attracted the dogs, and when they sniffed at it, the cocaine numbed their noses and destroyed, temporarily, their sense of smell. Almost every boat captain used such a permeated handkerchief, and many lives were saved by the device.


parody: the imitation of an author's style or literary work, most commonly for amusement

Examples

Parody Titles:

Gooflumps: Stay Out of the Bathroom by R. U. Slime
Politically Correct Bedtime Stories by James Finn Garner
The Night Before Thanksgiving by Dav Pilkey
The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales by Jon Scieszka and Lane Smith
The Three Little Wolves and the Big Bad Wolf by Eugene Trivizas

personification: attributing human characteristics to nonhuman objects

Example
“For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap [their] hands.” Isaiah 55:12

—The Holy Bible (KJV)

The lightning lit up everything else. Only the mouth of the cave stayed dark, black as death itself.

plagiarism

plot

poetic license

poetic justice
plagiarism • passing off the writings of another person as one's own

Examples
“The Gettysburg Address” by R. Howard Blount, Jr.
Copying a report verbatim from an encyclopedia
Not quoting sources

plot • the sequence of story events

Examples
beginning, middle, end
introduction, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution

poetic justice • a deserved happy ending for heroes and a bad fate for villains

Examples
At the end of Trapped in Death Cave by Bill Wallace, greedy Odie Ralston falls into a rattlesnake pit and is found dead with fifty fang marks on his body.
At the end of Shiloh by Phylis Reynolds Naylor, the love and care that Marty shows Shiloh eventually make the dog become his.

poetic license • the poet's freedom to depart from conventional poetic devices

Examples
e. e. cummings is known for writing almost exclusively in lowercase letters as well as using unconventional punctuation.
Some poets use irregular shortened forms of words such as “o'er” for “over,” “tane” for “taken,” or “heav'n” for “heaven” for the sake of rhythm or rhyme.
A poet may write a line in reverse order such as “To the sea he went,” rather than “He went to the sea” for the sake of rhythm or rhyme.
Writers of free verse invoke their right to create their own rules of writing. When young poets have learned the rules of grammar, punctuation, and style, they may then choose to sacrifice the rules of writing in order to enhance creativity.
point of view

protagonist

portmanteau

words

pun
point of view  • the perspective from which a story is told
Examples
first person—the story told from the author’s or one character's perspective, characterized by use of the pronouns I, me, my, we, us, and our
third person omniscient—the narrator tells the story from the perspective of more than one character
third person limited—the narrator tells the story from one character's perspective

protagonist  • the main character in a story; the hero or heroine
Examples
Brian Robeson in Hatchet by Gary Paulsen
Louise Bradshaw in Jacob Have I Loved by Katherine Paterson
Billy Colman in Where the Red Fern Grows by Wilson Rawls
Lucas Cott in Class Clown by Johanna Hurwitz
Wilbur in Charlotte's Web by E. B. White

portmanteau words  • words with dual meanings that have been blended through common usage
Examples
Portmanteau Words
bleep
brunch
fortnight
goodbye
motel
Original Words
blankout + beep
breakfast + lunch
fourteen + nights
God + be (with) + ye
motor + hotel

pun  • a play on words involving two similar-sounding words that have distinctive meanings
Examples
"Bee it ever so bumble, there’s no place like comb."
"Two maggots were fighting in dead Ernest."
"Eat drink and be merry for tomorrow you may diet."

The course was listed in the FBI refresher catalog as: SLIME AND PUNISHMENT 3A
A one-day intensive seminar on nipping insect no-goodskies in the bug, presented by one of the nation’s foremost slime fighters.
**purpose** • the author's reason for writing a literary piece

**Examples**
to describe
to entertain
to inform
to persuade

**redundancy** • the unnecessary sequential use of two or more words with identical or similar meanings; overblown phrasing

**Example**

"Did Mama sing every day?" asked Caleb. "Every-single-day?" He sat close to the fire, his chin in his hand. It was dusk, and the dogs lay beside him on the warm hearthstones.

"Every-single-day," I told him for the second time this week. For the twentieth time this month. The hundredth time this year? And the past few years?


**Other Examples**
pain and suffering
cool, calm, and collected
in any way, shape, or form
the exact same thing

**quote or quotation** • a reference to the exact words spoken by another well-known person or used in a recognized literary work

**Examples**

"He who would be no slave, must consent to have no slave. Those who deny freedom to others, deserve it not for themselves; and, under a just God, cannot long retain it." —From a letter to H. L. Pierce and others, April 6, 1859.


"It is nonviolence only when we love those that hate us," Gandhi had written before his death.


**repetition** • the effective use of recurrent words, phrases, incidents, themes, images, or symbols in a literary piece

**Examples**

"Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow, Creeps in this petty pace from day to day"

Were the whole world good as you—not an atom better—
Were it just as pure and true,
Just as pure and true as you;
Just as strong in faith and works;
Just as free from crafty quirks;
All extortion, all deceit;
Schemes its neighbors to defeat;
Schemes its neighbors to defraud;
Schemes some culprit to applaud—
Would this world be better?
—Anonymous, excerpt from "The Question"
resolution • the final plot component immediately following the falling action; the outcome of a story

Example

And there came a day when it was done.

"Done for now," Mick said. "It won't really be done until the trees are full grown—forty or fifty years—and then still won't be done until there are no more names or trees to put in. But done for now."

We were standing—Tru, Mick, Python, and I were standing by the end of the monument area. It was done and in some way looked like it had always been there.


rhyme • in poetry the repetitive use of words or ending syllables that share the same sound

Examples

sand/band
labor/neighbor
curious/furious
walk/talk
fiddler/riddler

rhythm • a poetic beat using light and heavy stress patterns; the harmonious pattern of syllables in prose

Examples

iambic pentameter
iambic tetrameter
anapestic trimeter
dactylic tetrameter
trochaic tetrameter

rhyme scheme • a standard rhyming pattern

Examples

Patterns:
couplet aabbcc
limerick aabba
quatrain abab abcbaabba
satire

rising action

sequence of events

scene
rising action • the plot events that lead to the climax; complication

Example
1. Fern saves Wilbur’s life.
2. Wilbur is sold to the Zuckermans.
3. Wilbur gets lonely at his new home.
4. Wilbur meets Charlotte and they become friends.
5. Wilbur learns he is set to be butchered.
6. Charlotte begins to write complimentary words about Wilbur in her web.

—based on Charlotte’s Web by E. B. White

satire • humorous mockery of the folly, vice, or stupidity of deserving individuals or institutions in hope of effecting reform

Examples
Aesop’s Fables
Alice in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll
Animal Farm by George Orwell
Brave New World by Aldous Huxley
Gulliver’s Travels by Jonathan Swift
Vanity Fair by William Makepeace Thackeray

scene • in drama, the subdivision of a play or an act; one event in a story

Examples
The part in Shakespeare’s Hamlet where Hamlet gives his famous monologue
The part in William Gibson’s The Miracle Worker where Helen Keller first understands fingerspelling
The part in E. B. White’s Charlotte’s Web where Charlotte first writes a word in her web
The part in Katherine Paterson’s Jacob Have I Loved where Louise comes to terms with her sibling rivalry

sequence of events • the standard plot flow—introduction, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution

Examples
1. At age 14, Louise Bradshaw has always felt her parents gave preferential treatment to her twin Caroline.
2. Caroline eventually enrolls at Juilliard, then marries Louise’s best friend, Call Purnell.
3. Embittered, Louise leaves home to find her own way.
4. Louise becomes a midwife, marries, and becomes a mother.
5. When she delivers a set of twins, she suddenly comes to terms with her bitterness.

—based on Jacob Have I Loved by Katherine Paterson
setting • the time and place in which a story takes place  

**Examples**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Title and Author</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>Florida Everglades</td>
<td><em>Lostman's River</em> by Cynthia DeFelice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Future</td>
<td>The Community</td>
<td><em>The Giver</em> by Lois Lowry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern Day</td>
<td>Seagrove, Oregon</td>
<td><em>I'm Going to Be Famous</em> by Tom Birdseye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World War II</td>
<td>The Caribbean Sea</td>
<td><em>The Cay</em> by Theodore Taylor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 12, 1290-</td>
<td>Stonebridge Manor, England</td>
<td><em>Catherine, Called Birdy</em> by Karen Cushman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 23, 1291</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**slang** • nonstandard colorful sayings or terms; irreverent street language

**Example**

Thomas says the king and the people of his court have chosen each his own special profanity so that they don't have to say "Deus!" or "Corpus bones!" or "Benedicite!" as we ordinary folk do. The king says "God's breath!" His son says "God's teeth!" Thomas says "God's feet!" I, not being ordinary shall choose one also. I will try one on each day and see what fits me best. Today it is; God's face!


simile • a comparison between two distinct objects, using the words *like* or *as*

**Examples**

The prairie was like a giant plate, stretching all the way to the sky at the edges.


Mrs. Underwood looked to be made of dried-out apples. She was small and tight and dry, just like her house, but with a shine that attracted me. She shook my hand, and her thin cool fingers felt like twigs that could be snapped in a minute.


**slang** • nonstandard colorful sayings or terms; irreverent street language

**Example**

Thomas says the king and the people of his court have chosen each his own special profanity so that they don't have to say "Deus!" or "Corpus bones!" or "Benedicite!" as we ordinary folk do. The king says "God's breath!" His son says "God's teeth!" Thomas says "God's feet!" I, not being ordinary shall choose one also. I will try one on each day and see what fits me best. Today it is; God's face!


simile • a comparison between two distinct objects, using the words *like* or *as*

**Examples**

The prairie was like a giant plate, stretching all the way to the sky at the edges.


Mrs. Underwood looked to be made of dried-out apples. She was small and tight and dry, just like her house, but with a shine that attracted me. She shook my hand, and her thin cool fingers felt like twigs that could be snapped in a minute.


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subplot

style

suspense

surprise ending
**style** • an author's unique way of writing—creative or recognizable uses of theme, diction, syntax, imagery, rhythm, or figurative language

**Examples**

Gary Paulsen uses sentence fragments and one word sentences.
Truman Capote uses run-on sentences filled with series and clauses.
Pam Conrad uses setting-linked simile and metaphor.
Katherine Paterson uses obscure yet powerful words.
Gloria Houston infuses character dialogue with Appalachian dialect.
Paula Danziger writes humorously about the problems of adolescence.

**surprise ending** • an unexpected conclusion to a story, often marked by satisfaction or disappointment

**Example**

Jim had not yet seen his beautiful present. She held it out to him eagerly upon her open palm. The dull, precious metal seemed to flash with a reflection of her bright and ardent spirit.

"Isn't it a dandy, Jim? I hunted all over town to find it. You'll have to look at the time a hundred times a day now. Give me your watch. I want to see how it looks on it."

Instead of obeying, Jim tumbled down on the couch and put his hands under the back of his head and smiled.

"Dell," said he, "let's put our Christmas presents away and keep 'em awhile. They're too nice to use just at present. I sold the watch to get the money to buy your combs. And now, suppose you put the chops on."

—Henry O. *The Gift of the Magi.*

**subplot** • a minor related story within the dominant plot

**Example**

The growth of Rocky as an artist and the developing relationship between Tru and Mick are minor stories within the greater plot of how Bolton, Kansas, gets a war memorial in *The Monument* by Gary Paulsen.

**suspense** • the feelings of excitement, anxiety, and anticipation radiating from a story that motivate the reader to read on

**Example**

He walked slowly up to his mother, one eye closed and the other focused down the barrel of the rifle, slowly, slowly, his bare feet sure and steady in the grass.

"Get in the wagon, Ma," he ordered.

"Paulie, you put that down." She was backing up, her arms held away from her sides.

"Into the wagon, Ma," he repeated.

"Paulie, your pa is gonna—"

A blast exploded at her feet, and the hem of her skirt tore from her and flapped on the ground.

synecdoche
symbolism
tone
theme
**symbolism** • the use of images in literature that represent other entities or meanings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fire</td>
<td>passion</td>
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<td>water</td>
<td>cleansing</td>
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<td>roses</td>
<td>love</td>
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<td>birds</td>
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<td>sun</td>
<td>happiness</td>
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<td>black</td>
<td>death</td>
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<td>river</td>
<td>life</td>
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<tr>
<td>shadow</td>
<td>foreboding</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**theme** • the author's message or the main idea of a story

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Title and Author</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>friendship</td>
<td><strong>Charlotte's Web</strong> by E. B. White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>art; war</td>
<td><strong>The Monument</strong> by Gary Paulsen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>survival</td>
<td><strong>Hatchet</strong> by Gary Paulsen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>restoration</td>
<td><strong>The Lost Sailor</strong> by Pam Conrad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>independence</td>
<td><strong>Lyddie</strong> by Katherine Paterson</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**synecdoche** • referring to a whole by one of its parts or a more comprehensive whole

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>calling a school principal &quot;the administration&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>calling a singer &quot;a voice&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>calling manual laborers &quot;hands&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>calling police officers &quot;the law&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>calling the Buccaneers &quot;Tampa&quot;</td>
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</table>

**tone** • manner of expression revealing author's attitude toward subject matter or reader

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>distant</td>
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<td>formal</td>
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<td>humorous</td>
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<tr>
<td>informal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intimate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>serious</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

115 116
adventure • a literary work with elements of risk, action, and suspense

Examples
Bones on Black Spruce Mountain by David Budbill
Dead Man in Indian Creek by Mary Downing Hahn
Rescue Josh McGuire by Ben Mikaelson
The Cay by Theodore Taylor
Trapped in Death Cave by Bill Wallace

ABC poem • unrhymed verse of up to 26 lines, each word beginning sequentially with the letters of the alphabet

Example
“Food”
Apples
bubbly corn dishes
eating favorites
greedy helpings
ices
juicy kumquat
luscious melons


almanac • a reference book published annually that contains updated statistics, lists, tables, and charts of information from many fields

Examples
Poor Richard’s by Benjamin Franklin
Statistical Abstract of the United States published by U.S. Bureau of the Census
The Information Please published by Houghton Mifflin
The Old Farmer’s published by Yankee Publishing
World & Book of Facts published by Funk & Wagnalls

anecdote • a brief interesting or humorous story

Example
A small child was drawing a picture and his teacher said, “That’s an interesting picture. Tell me about it.”

“It’s a picture of God.”

“But nobody knows what God looks like.”

“They will when I get done.”

atlas

anthology

ballad

autobiography
| **anthology** | a collection of literary pieces, such as poems, essays, short stories, or plays, contained in one volume. |
| **Examples** | - Good Books, Good Times! poems selected by Lee Bennett Hopkins  
- Hey! Listen to This: Stories to Read Aloud edited by Jim Trelease  
- Spoon River by Edgar Lee Masters  
- The Dream Keeper: And Other Poems by Langston Hughes  
- Where the Sidewalk Ends by Shel Silverstein |

| **atlas** | a reference book of maps, geographic tables, and charts. |
| **Examples** | - Florida County Maps published by C. J. Puetz  
- Hammond of the World and Trip Planning Guide published by H.M. Goosha  
- Rand McNally of the United States |

| **ballad** | a narrative poem or folk song with simple stanzas and a recurring refrain. |
| **Examples** | - Gunga Din by Rudyard Kipling  
- Hero by Mariah Carey and Walter Afanasieff  
- John Brown's Body by Stephen Vincent Benet  
- Lord Randall My Son by Anonymous  
- The Rime of the Ancient Mariner by Samuel Taylor Coleridge |

| **autobiography** | the story of a person's life written by that person. |
| **Examples** | - Coal Miner's Daughter by Loretta Lynn with George Vecsey  
- How I Came to Be a Writer by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor  
- Night by Elie Wiesel  
- Rosa Parks: My Story by Rosa Parks  
- The Story of My Life by Helen Keller |
**biography** • the story of a person's life  

**Examples**

Frances Hodgson Burnett: Beyond the Secret Garden by Jean Shirley and Angelica Shirley Carpenter

Look Homeward: A Life of Thomas Wolfe by David Herbert Donald

Peter the Great: His Life and World by Robert K. Massie

Prairie Visions: The Life and Times of Solomon Butcher by Pam Conrad

The Double Life of Pocahontas by Jean Fritz

**cento** • a rhymed aabbcc "patchwork" poem consisting of lines borrowed from various existing poems  

**Examples**

I saw a ship a-sailing.

Blue sky prevailing.

Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright

Welcome all wonders in one sight.

On this green bank, by thee, soft stream, Was it a vision—or a waking dream?


**chapbook** • a cheaply produced pamphlet sold by peddlers from the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries; a small, often self-published, paperback book of poetry  

**Examples**

Bevis of Hampton

Guy of Warwick

John Gilpin

Robinson Crusoe

Pieces of Light

**cinquain** • an unrhymed 5-line poem dividing 22 syllables into a 2-4-6-8-2 pattern  

**Example**

Rain

Heavy, Awesome

Drenching, soaking, penetrating

Renewing the earth's firmament

Soil-soaker

**classic** - a definitive literary work that has been widely read and recognized for many years

**Examples**

Hans Brinker or the Silver Skates by Mary Dodge
Heidi by Johanna Spyri
Little Women by Louisa May Alcott
Moby Dick by Herman Melville
Treasure Island by Robert Louis Stevenson
White Fang by Jack London

**clerihew** - a humorous 4-line rhymed poem based on a person's name

**Examples**

Geoffrey Chaucer
Could hardly have been coarser.
But this never harmed the sales
Of his "Canterbury Tales."

Sir Humphrey Davy
Abominated gravy.
He lived in the odium
Of having discovered sodium.

**comedy** - a humorous play or literary work

**Examples**

A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court by Mark Twain
A Midsummer Night's Dream by William Shakespeare
Funny Girl by Isobel Lennart
The Importance of Being Earnest by Oscar Wilde
The Odd Couple by Neil Simon

**comic strip** - a humorous vignette illustrated with multipaneled scenes, caricatures, and ballooned dialogue

**Examples**

Beetle Bailey by Mort Walker
Blondie by Chic Young
Garfield by Jim Davis
Mickey Mouse by Walt Disney
Peanuts by Charles Schulz
companion title • a literary piece that stands alone but is related in character or setting to another work

Examples

The Borrowers
The Borrowers Afield
The Borrowers Afloat
The Borrowers Aloft
The Borrowers Avenged
—All by Mary Norton

Little House on the Prairie
Little House in the Big Woods
By the Shores of Silver Lake
Farmer Boy
These Happy Golden Years
—All by Laura Ingalls Wilder

couplet • a 2-lined rhyming stanza or poem

Example

"Trees"
I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.
A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;
A tree that looks at God all day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;
A tree that may in Summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;
Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
Who intimately lives with rain.
Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.

concrete poem • verse arranged visually or shaped to represent its theme

Example

I wish everyone
could see my Christmas tree
and have the fun
and feel the childish glee that comes to me when decorating it for all my friends to see.


contemporary fiction • a literary work with no distinguishable regional or periodic attachments that technically could occur anywhere in modern times

Examples

A Taste of Blackberries by Doris Buchanan Smith
On My Honor by Marion Dane Bauer
The Best Christmas Pageant Ever by Barbara Robinson
The Dead Man in Indian Creek by Mary Downing Hahn
The Summer of the Swans by Betsy Byars
**diamante** • a form of unrhymed poetry that physically resembles a diamond; related to cinquain

*Example*

Love

Warm, wonderful

Embracing, hugging, laughing

Parents, relatives, — Strangers, enemies

Neglected, frightened, trembling,

Cold, bitter,

Hate


**diary** • a daily written record of one's personal experiences

*Examples*

Anne Frank: The ________________ of a Young Girl

*Catherine, Called Birdy* by Karen Cushman

*Go Ask Alice* by Anonymous

The ________________ of Latoya Hunter: My First Year in Junior High

*Z for Zachariah* by Robert C. O'Brien

**dictionary** • a reference book used for finding meanings, pronunciations, and other information related to words

*Examples*

*Cassell's Spanish* ________________ published by Funk and Wagnalls

______________ of Scientific and Technical Terms published by McGraw-Hill

*Partridge's Concise* ________________ of Slang and Unconventional English published by Macmillan

*The American Heritage* ________________ published by Houghton Mifflin

*Webster's New World* ________________ published by Prentice Hall

**drama** • a literary work designed for public performance by actors

*Examples*

*Hamlet* by William Shakespeare

*Our Town* by Thornton Wilder

*Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry

*The Effect of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds* by Paul Zindel

*The Miracle Worker* by William Gibson
dramatic poem • a narrative play written in verse form, involving two or more voices

Examples
"Canterbury Tales" by Geoffrey Chaucer
Choruses from "The Rock" by T. S. Eliot
"Sordello" by Robert Browning
"The Death of the Hired Man" by Robert Frost
"Ulysses" by Alfred, Lord Tennyson

elegy • a poem lamenting a death

Examples
"In Memoriam A.H.H." by Alfred, Lord Tennyson
"Oh Captain, My Captain" by Walt Whitman
"Thanatopsis" by William Cullen Bryan
"Annabel Lee" by Edgar Allan Poe
"I Have a Rendezvous With Death" by Alan Seeger

encyclopedia • a comprehensive reference book containing articles on a wide variety of topics

Examples
Americana
Brittanica
Compton's
Grovier's
The World Book

epic • a long narrative work of poetry, prose, or drama that ceremoniously recounts the deeds of a legendary hero

Examples
"Hiawatha" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (poem)
October (a.k.a.) Ten Days That Shook the World by Sergei Mikhailovich Eisenstein (drama)
Odyssey by Homer (classical)
"Paradise Lost" by John Milton (poem)
War and Peace by Leo Tolstoy (novel)
**epigram** • a concise, clever poem that expresses a single observation

**Example**

We have a pretty witty King
Whose word no man relies on,
Who never said a foolish thing,
Nor ever did a wise one.

—Wilmont, John, 2nd Earl of Rochester

**epitaph** • a short poem, often engraved on a tombstone, that memorializes someone who has died

**Example**

The Body of
B. Franklin, Printer
(Like the Cover of an old Book
Its Contents torn out
And stript of its Lettering and Gilding)
Lies here, food for Worms.
But the Work shall not be lost;
For it will (as he believed) appear once more,
In a new and more elegant Edition
Revised and corrected
by the Author

—proposed epitaph of Benjamin Franklin, age 20

**essay** • a short, formal or informal, written discussion of a subject; composition

**Examples**

“A Few Minutes with Andy Rooney” (collection)
“How to Make History Dates Stick” by Mark Twain
“Nature” by Ralph Waldo Emerson
“The Fire Next Time” by James Baldwin
“The Fisherwoman’s Daughter” by Ursula K. Le Guin

**eulogy** • a spoken or written tribute praising someone who has died

**Examples**

Memorial Services in the Congress of the United States and Tributes in ____________ of Dwight D. Eisenhower, Late a President of the United States published by the U.S. Government Printing Office

Michael Landon: Life, Love & Laughter: A Tribute to a Beloved Actor by the People Who Knew Him Best by Harry and Pamela Flynn

The Legacy of Nehru: A Memorial Tribute edited by K. Natwar-Singh
**Fable** • a short story with a moral; commonly uses animal characters with human characteristics

**Examples**
- "The Boy Bathing" (There is a time and place for everything.)
- "The Crow and the Pitcher" (Necessity is the mother of invention.)
- "The Fox and the Grapes" (Don't trust the advice of a man in trouble.)
- "The Thief and His Mother" (Spare the rod and spoil the child.)
- "The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing" (Looks can be deceiving.)

**Fairy Tale** • a story involving legendary royalty, commoners, and magical characters; often begins with *Once upon a time*... and ends with ... *they lived happily ever after.*

**Examples**
- "Cinderella" by Charles Perrault
- "Rumpelstiltskin" by the Brothers Grimm
- "The Frog Prince" by the Brothers Grimm
- "The Little Mermaid" by Hans Christian Andersen
- "The Princess Bride" by William Goldman

**Fantasy** • a fictional work marked by supernatural or magical characters and events that could not happen in real life

**Examples**
- High fantasy (set within a created world):
  - *A Wrinkle in Time* (Camazotz) by Madeleine L'Engle
  - *Tehanu* (Earthsea) by Ursula K. Le Guin
  - *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* (Narnia) by C. S. Lewis
  - *The Wizard of Oz* (Oz) by L. Frank Baum
- Low fantasy (set within the real world):
  - *Charlotte's Web* by E. B. White
  - *Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH* by Robert O'Brien
  - *Pippi Longstocking* by Astrid Lindgren
  - *The Indian in the Cupboard* by Lynne Reid Banks

**Fiction** • a literary work created by the author's imagination; an untrue story

**Examples**
- fantasy
- folklore
- novel
- serial
- short story
folklore - the traditional oral culture of a people

Examples
beliefs
fables
fairy tales
folk tales
legends
myths
parables
practices
tall tales

free verse - poetry that follows no standard pattern of rhythm or rhyme

Examples
“Leaves of Grass” by Walt Whitman
“Paterson” by William Carlos Williams
Psalm 8:1–9 by King David
“Thanatopsis” by William Cullen Bryant
“The North Sea” by Heinrich Heine

guide - a short, simple, gruesome rhyming poem

Examples
Lizzie Borden took an axe,
And gave her mother forty whacks.
When she saw what she had done,
She gave her father forty-one!
—Anonymous

folk tale - a magical story that is unique to a cultural group and that has been modified by years of oral retellings prior to being put into print

Examples
Beauty and the Beast by Jan Brett
East o’ the Sun and West o’ the Moon by P. J. Lynch
Momotaro, the Peach Boy by Linda Shute
Rip Van Winkle by Washington Irving
Sundiata, Lion King of Mali by David Wisniewski
historical fiction

haiku

humor

horror
haiku • a 3-line, 17-syllable poetic form of Japanese origin that describes a single natural image in a 5-7-5 syllabic pattern

Examples

Letter's fading ink
Flows like silent, running streams
Tears from broken hearts
—R. Howard Blount, Jr.

Eagle wings take flight
Catching thermal canyon winds
Soaring over all
—R. Howard Blount, Jr.

horror • a literary work marked by elements of extreme suspense told in shocking, gruesome detail; a thriller

Examples

Creepshow by Stephen King
Dracula by Bram Stoker
Frankenstein by Mary Shelley
The Stepsister by R. L. Stine
The Tell-Tale Heart by Edgar Allan Poe

historical fiction • an untrue story set in an authentic period from the past and characterized by events that could have happened

Examples

Gone With the Wind by Margaret Mitchell
Island of the Blue Dolphins by Scott O'Dell
Number the Stars by Lois Lowry
Shane by Jack Schaefer
The Witch of Blackbird Pond by Elizabeth George Speare

humor • a funny literary work

Examples

How to Eat Fried Worms by Thomas Rockwell
Sideways Stories from Wayside School by Louis Sachar
Soup by Robert Newton Peck
The Best Christmas Pageant Ever by Barbara Robinson
The Cat Ate My Gymsuit by Paula Danziger
Who Put That Hair in My Toothbrush? by Jerry Spinelli
**Informational Book** - nonfiction title that provides extensive data on a particular topic

**Examples**

- *Cowboys* by Martin W. Sandler
- *Mardi Gras: A Cajun Country Celebration* by Diane Hoyt-Goldsmith
- *The Threatened Florida Black Bear* by Margaret Goff Clark

**Interactive Fiction** - a story that allows the reader to determine the direction the narrative will take

**Examples**

- *Choose Your Own Adventure* (Bantam Skylark)
- *Find Your Fate Adventure* (Ballantine)
- *Nancy Drew and The Hardy Boys Be a Detective Mysteries* (Wanderer)
- *Twistaplot* (Scholastic)
- *Which Way Books* (Pocket)

**Journal** - a written record of experiences, reflections, and perceptions that is appended on a regular basis

**Examples**

- *A Gathering of Days: A New England Girl's 1830-32* by Joan Blos
- *Bluewater: The Voyage of the Sea Tiger* by Loretta Krupinski
- *Pedro's: A Voyage with Christopher Columbus* by Pam Conrad
- *Strider* by Beverly Cleary
- *The of Beatrix Potter, 1881-1897
- *Writing Nature: Henry Thoreau's*
legend • an unverified story passed down orally from generation to generation

Examples
How the Animals Got Their Colors by Michael Rosen
How Turtle’s Back Was Cracked retold by Gayle Ross
The __________________ of the Indian Paintbrush retold by Tomie dePaola
The __________________ of El Dorado adapted by Nancy Van Laan
The Seven Voyages of Sinbad the Sailor

letter • any formal or informal written communication from one person to another

Example

Dear Mr. Henshaw,

My teacher read your book about the dog to our class. It was funny. We licked it.

Your friend,

Leigh Botts (boy)


light verse • an amusing form of verse having no serious purpose

Examples
cleriheu
epigram
limerick
nonsense
parody

limerick • a humorous 5-line poem in which the first, second, and fifth lines rhyme and contain 3 stresses, while the third and fourth lines rhyme and contain 2 stresses

Examples
There is a Young Lady, whose nose, Continually prospers and grows; When it grew out of sight, She exclaimed in a fright, “Oh! Farewell to the end of my nose!”

There was an Old Man who said, “Hush! I perceive a young bird in this bush!” When they said, “Is it small?” He replied, “Not at all; It is four times as big as the bush!”

—Edward Lear
lyric poem

modern classic

memoir

mystery
lyric poem • a form of melodious verse

Examples
ballad
elegy
hymn
ode
psalm
sonnet

modern classic • a newly published literary work that has gained considerable attention and has been widely read in recent years

Examples
Flowers for Algernon by Daniel Keyes
Of Mice and Men by John Steinbeck
The Color Purple by Alice Walker
The Yearling by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings
To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee

memoir • an autobiographical account concerning a period in one's life

Examples
A Girl from Yamhill by Beverly Cleary
An American Childhood by Annie Dillard
I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings by Maya Angelou
Keeping Faith: _____________ of a President by Jimmy Carter
Prairie-Town Boy by Carl Sandburg

mystery • a literary work featuring a plot that revolves around an unsolved crime

Examples
Encyclopedia Brown, Boy Detective by Donald Sobol
Murder on the Orient Express (Hercule Poirot) by Agatha Christie
The Case of the Velvet Claws (Perry Mason) by Erle Stanley Gardner
The Dollhouse Murders by Betty Ren Wright
The Hound of the Baskervilles (Sherlock Holmes) by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
myth • an ancient story of gods, goddesses, and superhuman heroes that explains events from a cultural standpoint

Examples
Isis and Osiris (Egyptian)
King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table (Celtic)
The Birth of Venus (Roman)
The Twelve Labors of Hercules (Greek)
Thor, the God of Thunder (Norse)

nonfiction • any true written work

Examples
biography
essay
informational book
journalism
textbook

narrative poem • a poem that tells a story

Examples
"Casey at the Bat" by Ernest Law Thayer
"Paul Revere's Ride" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
"The Cremation of Sam McGee" by Robert W. Service
"The Highwayman" by Alfred Noyes
"The Night Before Christmas" by Clement C. Moore

nonsense • an amusing poem characterized by uses of nonexistent terms and illogical ideas

Examples
From "Jabberwocky":
'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.
—Carroll, Lewis. "Jabberwocky."

From "The Jumblies":
And everyone said, "If we only live,
We too will go to sea in a Sieve,—
To the hills of the Chankly Bore!"
Far and few, far and few,
Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,
And they went to sea in a Sieve.
**novel** - a book-length work of fictional prose with a complex extended plot

**Examples**
- *Anne of Green Gables* by L. M. Montgomery
- *Little Lord Fauntleroy* by Frances Hodgson Burnett
- *Stepping on the Cracks* by Mary Downing Hahn
- *The Cay* by Theodore Taylor
- *The Yearling* by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings

**novelette** - a cheaply produced, sensational short novel; pulp fiction

**Examples**
- *Destry Rides Again* by Max Brand
- *Magdalena, the Beautiful Mexican Maid* by Ned Buntline
- *The Black Avenger* by Ned Buntline
- *The Resurrection of Jimber-Jaw* by Edgar Rice Burroughs
- *Wake for the Living* by Ray Bradbury

**novella** - a fictional work of intermediate length and complexity that place it between a short story and a novel; a short novel

**Examples**
- *Animal Farm* by George Orwell
- *Breakfast at Tiffany's* by Truman Capote
- *Sarah, Plain and Tall* by Patricia MacLachlan
- *Stone Fox* by John Reynolds Gardiner
- *The Friendship* by Mildred D. Taylor

**nursery rhyme** - traditional rhythmic rhyming verse for young children

**Examples**
- "Humpty Dumpty"
- "Jack and Jill"
- "Little Boy Blue"
- "Old Mother Hubbard"
- "There Was a Crooked Man"
ode • a lengthy, formal lyric poem with a serious tone

Examples
“Dejection” by Samuel Taylor Coleridge
“____________ to a Nightingale” by John Keats
“____________ to Spring” by Thomas Gray
“The Wreck of the Deutschland” by Gerard Manley Hopkins
“To the Memory of My Beloved Master, William Shakespeare” by Ben Jonson

parable • an allegorical story that illustrates a religious lesson or moral

Examples
The House on the Rock (Matthew 7)
The Lost Sheep (Matthew 18)
The Mustard Seed (Mark 4)
The Prodigal Son (Luke 15)
The Ten Talents (Matthew 25)
—The Holy Bible (KJV)

parallel poem • verse in which each line begins or ends with the same word or phrase

Example
“I can . . . .”
I can run;
I can try;
I can dream;
I can fly;
I can do anything if I aim for the sky.

pastoral poem • verse about country life, especially related to shepherding; idyll

Examples
As You Like It, II. v. by William Shakespeare
“Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard” by Thomas Gray
“The Deserted Village” by Oliver Goldsmith
“The Faerie Queen” by Edmund Spenser
periodical • a regularly issued news publication; newspaper, magazine, bulletin

Examples
Ladies’ Home Journal
National Examiner
Publisher’s Weekly
The New York Times
The Tampa Tribune

poetry • creative writing characterized by formal patterns of verse, thought and emotion, lines and stanzas, rhythm and rhyme

Examples
free verse
grue
haiku
limerick
sonnet

play • a drama acted out onstage

Examples
Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare
The Mousetrap by Agatha Christie
Bell, Book and Candle by John Van Druten

Places where plays are performed:
Broadway
off-Broadway
community theatre
derner theatre
thespians/drama club

prequel • a companion literary piece, complete in itself, that gives an account of events prior to the narrative of an earlier work

Example
Garden of Shadows, the first book sequentially in “The Dollanganger Series” by V. C. Andrews, was the last to be published.

Garden of Shadows, 1987
Flowers in the Attic, 1979
Petals on the Wind, 1980
If There Be Thorns, 1981
Seeds of Yesterday, 1983
protestantism - a branch of christianity that broke away from the roman catholic church in the 16th century over the issue of justification by faith

Examples
- reformation
- lutheran
- calvinist
- anabaptist
- pentecostal

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prose - writing characterized by sentences and paragraphs; any type of writing that is not poetry

Examples
- biography
- essay
- fiction
- short story
- textbook

---

quotation - a statement of another's words

Example


---

proverb - a short, widely used saying that expresses a general truth

Examples

A {good} name {is} rather to be chosen than great riches, {and} loving favour rather than silver and gold. (Proverbs 22:1)

All that glitters is not gold.

Don't cry over spilt milk.

The pen is mightier than the sword.

When the cat's away, the mice will play.
realistic fiction • a created literary piece involving elements that could actually occur in life

Examples
adventure
contemporary fiction
historical fiction
romance
western

romance • a literary work featuring a plot that revolves around a love affair

Examples
Bingo Brown, Gypsy Lover by Betsy Byars
Ivanhoe by Sir Walter Scott
Love Story by Erich Segal
Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare
The Reluctant Widow by Georgette Heyer

reference books • volumes containing extensive information within a specific area

Examples
almanac
atlas
dictionary
encyclopedia
thesaurus

science fiction • a futuristic work of literary fantasy characterized by time and space travel, nonexistent technology, alien creatures, and other improbable scientific events

Examples
A Journey to the Center of the Earth by Jules Verne
A Wrinkle in Time by Madeleine L'Engle
Jurassic Park by Michael Crichton
My Teacher Is an Alien by Bruce Coville
The Martian Chronicles by Ray Bradbury
War of the Worlds by H. G. Wells
**script** - the written version of a play or motion picture

**Example**

(From Act I)

KATE

She can't see.

(She takes the lamp from him, moves it before the child's face.)

She can't see!

KELLER (hoarsely)

Helen.

KATE

She can't hear you.

KELLER

Helen! Helen!


**sequel** - a companion literary piece, complete in itself, that continues the narrative of an earlier work

**Examples**


**serial** - a collection of stories published in sequential installments that feature the same characters, setting, or theme

**Examples**

“Culpepper Adventures: Dunc and Amos Meet the Slasher” by Gary Paulsen

“Fear Street” and “Goosebumps” by R. L. Stine

“Sweet Valley High” by Francine Pascal

“The Babysitters Club” by Ann M. Martin

“The Hardy Boys” by Franklin W. Dixon

**sermon** - a religious discourse offering words of encouragement and correction

**Examples**

“Let's Keep Christmas” by Peter Marshall

“Loving Your Enemies” by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

“Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God” by Jonathan Edwards

“The Gift of Salvation” by Billy Graham

“Ye Must Be Born Again” by Billy Sunday
**short story** • a brief work of fiction that can be read in one sitting

**Examples**

"A Christmas Memory" by Truman Capote
"The Lady or the Tiger?" by Frank R. Stockton
"The Lottery" by Shirley Jackson
"The Ransom of Red Chief" by O. Henry
"The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" by James Thurber

**soliloquy** • a dramatic monologue given by a lone character

**Example**

To be or not to be: that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them. . . .


**sonnet** • a 14-line rhyming lyric poem with lines of equal length that follows one of several conventional rhyme schemes

**Examples**

"Bright Star, Would I Were Steadfast as Thou Art" by John Keats
"Leda and the Swan" by William Butler Yeats
"Ozymandias" by Percy Bysshe Shelley
"Symptoms" by Robert Lowell
"Upon Westminster Bridge" by William Wordsworth

**tabloid** • a highly illustrated, half-size newspaper featuring sensational stories and general gossip

**Examples**

Globe
National Enquirer
Sun
The Star
Weekly World News
tall tale • a humorous, highly exaggerated story
detailing the impossible feats of a folk character

Examples
Swamp Angel
Pecos Bill
Paul Bunyan
John Henry
Slappy Hooper

tanka • a 5-line, 31-syllable poetic form of Japanese origin in a 5-7-5-7-7 syllabic pattern; related to haiku

Example
The rain spills from clouds
Over thirsty grass and trees
It mists the landscape
Like a soft gentle shower
Spring awakens the whole world.


tercet • a 3-line rhymed stanza or poem; a triplet

Example
“The Flies and the Honey Pot”

A jar of honey chanced to spill
Its contents on the windowsill
In many a viscous pool and rill.
The flies, attracted by the sweet,
Began so greedily to eat,
They smeared their fragile wings and feet.
With many a twitch and pull in vain
They gasped to get away again,
And died in aromatic pain.

—Aesop. The Book of Virtues for Young People

textbook • a book adopted by schools for the formal study of an academic subject area

Examples
Introduction to Literature by Holt Rinehart Winston
Mathematics Plus by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich
Science Plus: Technology and Society by Holt Rinehart Winston
The Music Connection by Silver Burdett Ginn
The Writer’s Craft by McDougal, Littell
World Geography by Prentice Hall
tragedy

thesaurus

western

trilogy
**thesaurus** - a reference book used for finding synonyms and antonyms of words

*Examples*

- *Clear and Simple* published by Grosset & Dunlap
- *Roget's International* published by HarperCollins
- *Webster's New World* published by Simon & Schuster

**trilogy** - a collection of three related literary works

*Examples*

- *The Lord of the Rings*, three books by J. R. R. Tolkien
  - The Fellowship of the Ring
  - The Two Towers
  - The Return of the King
- *The Time*, three books by Madeleine L'Engle
  - A Wrinkle in Time
  - A Wind in the Door
  - A Swiftly Tilting Planet

**tragedy** - a serious play or literary work with an unhappy or disastrous ending

*Examples*

- *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller
- *King Lear* by William Shakespeare
- *Long Day's Journey Into Night* by Eugene O'Neill
- *Polly Vaughn* (traditional English ballad)
- *The Drowning of Stephan Jones* by Bette Greene

**western** - a literary work with a plot that revolves around frontier life in the American West

*Examples*

- *Hondo* by Louis L'Amour
- *Lonesome Dove* by Larry McMurtry
- *Riders of the Purple Sage* by Zane Grey
- *Shane* by Jack Schaefer
- *The Outcasts of Poker Flat* by Bret Harte
**acknowledgments** • a word of appreciation to individuals or groups who provided significant assistance in the creation of a book

**Example**

Special thanks go to Mary E. Woodruff of the Vermont Women's History Project and Dr. Robert M. Brown of the Museum of American Textile History, who read this book in manuscript and offered suggestions and corrections. Any errors of fact which remain are, of course, my own.


**anonymous** • a term used when the author is unknown or wishes to remain unknown

**Examples** (Titles by Unknown Authors)

Beowulf
Go Ask Alice
Hindu Myths
Jay’s Journal
Sir Gawain and the Green Knight

**afterword** • a word from the author immediately following the text or narrative; author's note

**Example**

How much of Annemarie's story is true? I know I will be asked that. Let me try to tell you, here, where fact ends and fiction begins.

Annemarie Johansen is a child of my imagination, though she grew there from the stories told to me by my friend Annelise Platt, to whom this book is dedicated, who was herself a child in Copenhagen during the long years of the German occupation.


**appendix** • a supplement to a book, usually included in the back matter

**Example**

**Appendices**

A. Garth Williams, the Illustrator
B. The Manuscripts
C. Spiders
D. E. B. White's Letters and Comments About *Charlotte's Web*
E. Readers' Responses
F. Critical Appraisals
G. Recommended Reading

**author** • the writer of a book

**Examples**

Pam Conrad
Gloria Houston
Katherine Paterson
Gary Paulsen
Bill Wallace

**back matter** • book parts located behind the main text of the book

**Examples**

appendix
glossary
sources
bibliography
index

**bibliography** • list of sources or titles used or recommended by an author

**Example**

Four books stimulated my thinking when I was deciding how to treat the subject of plagues in history. They were:


**Disease and History** by Frederick F. Cartwright, in collaboration with Michael D. Boddiss (New York: Dorset Press, 1991).


**bio** • a short biography of an author or illustrator

**Example**

Mem Fox is the beloved author of many popular picture books, including Harcourt Brace's **Possum Magic, Guess What?, Koala Lou**, and most recently, **Time for Bed**. She lives with her family near the sea in Adelaide, South Australia, but has never seen a real pirate. The inspiration for **Tough Boris** came during a writing exercise assigned by one of her students at Flinders University, where she is a senior lecturer in language arts.

chapter - a major subdivision of a book
Example
I Callers
II Fences
III School
IV Hogses
V Overalls

copyright - a form of protection provided by U.S. law to authors of "original works of authorship," including literature, drama, music, and other genres. The owner of the copyright has the exclusive right to do or authorize others to do such things as reproduce the work, distribute the work, or perform the work.

copyright date - the year a book is published
Examples
© 1997
© 1940
© 1912
© 1890
© 1872

dedication - statement identifying an individual or group an author wishes to remember
Examples
To my father, Haven Peck, a quiet and gentle man whose work was killing pigs.

For all the children to whom we entrust the future.
**designer** • a graphic artist who creates the overall appearance of a book, including selection of paper, colors, fonts, and images

**editor** • a publisher's representative who acquires and prepares manuscripts from authors for publication

**Examples**
Virginia Buckley
James Cross Giblin
Margaret K. McElderry
George Nicholson
Maxwell Perkins

**edition line** • a line on the copyright page that indicates the book's order of printing

**Examples**
These lines indicate first editions.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
ABCDE
First Impression

**epigraph** • a quotation usually from a speech, poem, or scripture placed at the front of a book that is indicative of the book's theme

**Example**
A farmer's heart is rabbit soft,
And farmer eyes are blue.
But farmers' eyes are eagle fierce
And look a man right through.
**epilogue** • a summarizing or concluding passage at the end of a story; a passage that tells what happened after the story

**Example**

Sadako Sasaki died on October 25, 1955.

Her classmates folded three hundred and fifty-six cranes so that one thousand were buried with Sadako. In a way she got her wish. She will live on in the hearts of people for a long time.


**foreword** • an introductory word from the author or guest writer

**Example**

An Open Letter from Johanna Hurwitz

Dear Readers,

In this book about corresponding with authors and illustrators, let me begin by writing a letter to you. When I was growing up in the 1940s and 50s, teachers never thought to ask their students to write to authors. Nevertheless, one day when I was about twelve years old, I felt so sorry to reach the end of the book I was reading that I just had to write to its author. The book was *Betsy and Tacy Go Downtown* and the author was Maud Hart Lovelace. I did not know where she lived or even if she was alive. Yet the very act of writing to Mrs. Lovelace and telling her how much I liked her story made me feel good...—Johanna Hurwitz

glossary • an alphabetical listing of book-related terms and definitions  

Example  
barrel: standard of measurement for cranberries. One barrel equals 100 pounds of cranberries.  
bed: one portion of a cranberry bog, usually rectangular in shape and two to four acres in size  

bog: a type of wetland on which cranberries can be farmed. Cranberry bogs have a peat bottom and acidic soil.  


index • an alphabetical listing of important words and the page numbers where they are used in the text  

Example  
Acadia, 6–8, 14, 31  
Ash Wednesday, 11, 30  
bandits, 10  
bayou, 5  
boudin, 17  
buvette, 13  

Cajun, 31  
ancestors, 5, 6, 7, 10, 30  
history, 6–8, 14  


illustrator • the book’s artist  
Examples  
Jan Brett  
Leo & Diane Dillon  
David Macaulay  
Patricia Polacco  
Chris Van Allsburg

introduction • a fairly long note from the author or another person that provides important background information for the book  

Example  
... Imaginative though I was as a kid, I never pictured a mailman knocking at the door of a writer and saying something mundane like, “Lots of mail from your fans today.” Nor could I envision the writer opening a letter, reading a letter, or chuckling or weeping at a letter from a person like me.  

Yet here I sit today, chewing on a strand of hair while I ponder a sentence, and on my desk is a stack of mail from readers who realize that I am no farther away from them than a first-class stamp.  

I wish I were young again, with a favorite book by my side and a pen and paper in my hand. ...—Lois Lowry  

ISBN - International Standard Book Number; the universal order number

Example
1-56417-665-7

permissions - a list of statements giving permission to use excerpts from other copyrighted works

Example

preface - a brief note from an author

Example
Some of this story is true. Some of it's lies. No brontosaurus has ever been found in Nebraska, but I'm partial to Nebraska, and all my own fossils and bones come from there. And while I never heard of a young girl in Nebraska taking part in a dinosaur adventure, there was once a young girl in England in 1810 who made an important dinosaur discovery with the help of her brother.

So this story could have happened like it says, almost, but it didn't really, not exactly anyway.

prologue - an introductory or opening passage at the beginning of a story, a passage that tells what happened prior to the story

Example
They say Maniac Magee was born in a dump. They say his stomach was a cereal box and his heart a sofa spring.

They say he kept an eight-inch cockroach on a leash and that rats stood guard over him while he slept.

They say if you knew he was coming and you sprinkled salt on the ground and he ran over it, within two or three blocks he would be as slow as everybody else.

They say.
pseudonym • an assumed name some writers use for publishing purposes; a pen name

Examples
- Given Name
  - Samuel Langhorne Clemens
  - Anne Evelyn Bolton
  - Marijane Meaker
  - Edward Stratemeyer
  - Lee Hadley and Ann Irwin
  - Theodore Seuss Geisel

- Pseudonym
  - Mark Twain
  - Eve Bunting
  - M. E. Kerr, Vin Packer
  - Laura Lee Hope, Franklin W. Dixon
  - Hadley Irwin
  - Dr. Seuss

public domain • literary works no longer protected by copyright laws

Examples
- anonymous works
- classics
- government publications
- pieces published, yet never copyrighted
- works 50 years after the copyright owner's death

publisher • a company that prints and distributes books

Examples
- Harcourt Brace
- HarperCollins
- Houghton Mifflin
- Random House
- Simon & Schuster

sources • a bibliography of published matter used as research for the book

Example
- DOUGLASS'S AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL WORKS
  - Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave. Written by Himself. Boston: Anti-Slavery Office, 1845. (Available now in several paperback reprints.)
  - BIOGRAPHIES OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS
  - OTHER WRITINGS ON DOUGLASS
hardcover - a book with a rigid binding and cover

leaf - one sheet of paper, two pages

paperback - a book with a soft cover, also called a softcover

page - one side of a leaf
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