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Abstract: Refers to language that describes concepts rather than concrete images.

Allegory: A story that acts as an extended metaphor. Characters, objects, and actions in the story have additional meanings separate from and outside of the story itself. An allegory is different from a symbol because a symbol presents additional levels of meaning that are centered on a single character, object or action, and the symbol is only a part of the story (although it may be a very important part). In an allegory, these additional levels of meaning are the story.

Alliteration: The repetition of the same consonant or vowel sound at the beginning of several closely placed words. The sound can also be included within the words as well as at the beginning. Example: The moan of doves in immemorial elms,

And murmuring of innumerable bees.
-“Come Down, O Maid”, Alfred Lord Tennyson

Allusion: A brief reference to a historical or literary figure, event, or object.

Example: No! I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be;
-“The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock”, T. S. Eliot

Ambiguity: The multiple meanings, either intentional or unintentional, of a word, phrase, sentence, or passage.

Amplification: Involves repeating a word or expression while adding more detail to it, in order to emphasize what otherwise might be passed over.

Anaphora: The repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of successive phrases, clauses, or lines.

Anastrophe: Transposition of normal word order; most often found in Latin in the case of prepositions and the words they control. (a form of hyperbaton)

Example: He spoke of times past and future, and dreamt of things to be

Anecdote: A story or brief episode told by the writer or a character to illustrate to a point.

Anthropomorphism: A technique in which a writer ascribes human traits, ambitions, emotions or entire behavior to animals, non-human beings, natural phenomena or objects.

Anti Hero: A prominent character in a play or book that has characteristics opposite to that of a conventional hero. The protagonist is generally admired for his bravery, strength, charm, ingenuity etc. while an anti-hero is typically clumsy, unsolicited, and unskilled and has both good and bad qualities.

Antiphrasis: One word irony, established by context.

Example: “Yes, I killed him. I killed him for money--and a woman--and I didn’t get the money and I didn’t get the woman. Pretty, isn’t it…..”

-A Double Indemnity, Billy Wilder

Aphorism: A terse statement of known authorship which expresses a general truth or moral principle. (If the authorship is unknown, the statement is generally considered to be a folk proverb.) An aphorism can be a memorable summation of the author’s point.

Apophasis: (also called praeteritio or occupatio) Asserts or emphasizes something by pointedly seeming to pass over, ignore, or deny it.

Aporia: Expression of doubt (often feigned) by which a speaker appears uncertain as to what he should think, say, or do.

Aposiopesis: A form of ellipse by which a speaker comes to an abrupt halt, seemingly overcome by passion (fear, excitement, etc.) or modesty.

Example: I will have revenges on you both

That all the world shall--I will do such things--What they are yet, I know not; but they shall be The terrors of the earth!

-King Lear, William Shakespeare
Apostrophe: A figure of speech that directly addresses an absent or imaginary person or personified abstraction, such as liberty or love. The effect may add familiarity or emotional intensity. William Wordsworth addresses John Milton as he writes, "Milton, thou shouldst be living at this hour: England hath need of thee."

Appositive: A noun or noun substitute placed next to (in apposition to) another noun to be described or defined by the appositive.

Example: "Though her cheeks were high-colored and her teeth strong and yellow, she looked like a mechanical woman, a machine with flashing, glassy circles for eyes."

- Bronx Primitive, Kate Simon

Archaism: Use of an older or obsolete form.

Archetype: a typical character, theme, symbols, setting, an action or a situation that seems to represent such universal patterns of human nature.

(Examples: The Hero, Good vs. Evil, White = Purity)

Assonance: The use of the same or similar vowel sounds in the stressed syllables of several closely placed words that end with different consonant sounds.

Example: *Hear the mellow wedding bells.*
- "The Bells", Edgar Allan Poe

Asyndeton: Lack of conjunctions between coordinate phrases, clauses, or words.

Example: "Are all thy conquests, glories, triumphs, spoils, Shrunk to this little measure?"
- Julius Caesar, William Shakespeare

Atmosphere: The emotional mood created by the entirety of a literary work, established partly by the setting and partly by the author's choice of objects that are described. Even such elements as a description of the weather can contribute to the atmosphere. Frequently, atmosphere foreshadows events.

Attitude: The relationship an author has toward his or her subject, and/or his or her audience.

Blank Verse: unrhymed iambic pentameter

Cacophony: Harsh and discordant sounds in a line or passage in a literary work.

Example: "And being no stranger to the art of war, I have him a description of cannons, culverins, muskets..."
- Gulliver's Travels, Jonathan Swift

Caesura: A pause or break in a line of poetry.

Example: *We have but faith: we cannot know; For knowledge is of things we see;*
- "In Memoriam", Alfred Lord Tennyson

Characterization: The way an author creates and develops the characters in the story. This includes appearance, personality, behavior, beliefs, and relationships with other characters.

Direct Characterization: The narrator explains the character to the reader.

Indirect Characterization: The reader infers what the character is like through his actions and the reactions of other characters.

Cliché: An overused common expression. The term is derived from a French word for a stereotype printing block. Just as many identical copies can be made from such a block, so clichés are typically words and phrases used so frequently that they become stale and ineffective. Everyone uses clichés in speech: "in less than no time" they "spring to mind," but "in the last analysis," a writer ought to "avoid them like the plague," even though they always seem "to hit the nail on the head."

Climax: Arrangement of words, phrases, or clauses in an order of ascending power.
Colloquial: The use of slang in writing, often to create local color and to provide an informal tone. *Huckleberry Finn* is written in a colloquial style.

Example: “But by-and-by pap got too handy with his hick’ry, and I couldn’t stand it.”

Comedy: Drama that is meant to amuse the audience through wit, humor, subtlety, and character.

Comic Relief: The inclusion of a humorous character or scene to contrast with the tragic elements of a work, thereby intensifying the next tragic event.

Conceit: A fanciful expression, usually in the form of an extended metaphor or surprising analogy between seemingly dissimilar objects. A conceit displays intellectual cleverness due to the unusual comparison being made.

Example: "Thou counterfeit’st a bark, a sea, a wind; For still thy eyes, which I may call the sea, Do ebb and flow with tears; the bark thy body is, Sailing in this salt flood; the winds, thy sighs; Who, raging with thy tears, and they with them, Without a sudden calm, will overset Thy tempest-tossed body."

- *Romeo & Juliet*, William Shakespeare

Concrete: Words describe things that exist and can be experienced through the senses. Abstractions are rendered understandable and specific through concrete examples.

Conflict: A struggle between a character and another opposing force. There are four types of conflict.

- **Man vs. Self**: The character struggles within herself to make a decision, reach a conclusion, or overcome a part of herself.
- **Man vs. Man**: The character struggles against the will or actions of another character.
- **Man vs. Society**: The character struggles against a group or society.
- **Man vs. Nature**: The character struggles against natural forces or elements outside of human creation or control.

Connotation: Any meaning a word conveys, emotional or social, that is in addition to its official meaning. The additional meaning may be personal, limited to a group, or universal. (Don’t confuse this with slang, when a word takes on an entirely new meaning in informal speaking.)

Example: Consider these two sentences.

“He was a zealous promoter of the cause.”

“He was a fanatical promoter of the cause.”

The words “zealous” and “fanatical” mean essentially the same thing and are listed as synonyms in a thesaurus. However, “zealous” is generally seen as a positive enthusiasm, while “fanatical” is generally seen as negative. Another example of synonymous words with different connotations is “giggle”, “chuckle”, “chortle”, and “guffaw”.

Denotation: The formal or official meaning of a word, separate from any other associations or acquired meanings.

Dialect: The recreation of regional spoken language, such as a Southern dialect. Zora Neale Hurston uses this in such works as *Their Eyes Were Watching God*.

Diction: Is the choice of words used in speaking or writing. It is frequently divided into four levels: formal, informal, colloquial, and slang. Formal diction is found in traditional academic writing, such as books and scholarly articles; informal diction, generally characterized by words common in conversation contexts, by contractions, and by the use of the first person (I), is found in articles in popular magazines.

Didactic: From the Greek, didactic literally means "teaching." Didactic works have the primary aim of teaching or instructing, especially the teaching of moral or ethical principles. Sometimes used it poetry to teach a lesson, as in Alexander Pope’s *An Essay on Man*.

Double Entendre: A literary device that can be defined as a phrase or a figure of speech that might have multiple senses, interpretations or two different meanings or that could be understood in two different ways. The first meaning in double entendre is usually straightforward while the second meaning is ironic, risqué or inappropriate.

Dramatic Monologue: A poem in which a single character gives a speech, usually to a known but silent listener, that reveals something about himself as he is in a dramatic or significant situation.
**Ellipsis** a literary device that is used in narratives to omit some parts of a sentence or event, which gives the reader a chance to fill the gaps while acting or reading it out. The part of a sentence or an event that is left out by substituting it with ellipses is often used to either save time or use it as a stylistic element by allowing the reader to fill in the gaps by using their imagination. It could be a word, a phrase, a sentence, a paragraph, or a whole section (as in Virginia Woolf’s novel *To The Lighthouse*, in which tells the story of characters before, and after, WWI, but leaves out their lives during the actual war. The reader must deduce what has happened from the changes in the lives of the characters). Be wary of the ellipsis; it could obscure the real meaning of the piece of writing.

**Enjambment:** The continuation of a thought or clause from one line of poetry to another.

Example: *It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil Crushed. Why do men then now not reck his rod?*  
“God’s Grandeur”, Gerard Manley Hopkins

**Epanalepsis:** Repeats the beginning word of a clause or sentence at the end.

**Epic Poem:** A long narrative poem written in a formal style that involves important characters whose actions highlight the deeds of the protagonist and form the framework for culturally and historically significant events.

**Epigraph:** The use of a quotation at the beginning of a work that hints at its theme. Hemingway begins *The Sun Also Rises* with two epigraphs. One of them is “You are all a lost generation” by Gertrude Stein.

**Epithet:** A descriptive literary device that describes a place, a thing or a person in such a way that it helps in making the characteristics of a person, thing or place more prominent than they actually are.

**Epizeuxis:** Repetition of one word (for emphasis).

**Euphemism:** A more acceptable and usually more pleasant way of saying something that might be inappropriate or uncomfortable. “He went to his final reward” is a common euphemism for “he died.” Euphemisms are also often used to obscure the reality of a situation. The military uses “collateral damage” to indicate civilian deaths in a military operation.

**Euphony:** The pleasant, mellifluous presentation of sounds in a literary work. Often a very subjective term.

**Exemplum:** Citing an example; using an illustrative story, either true or fictitious.

**Exposition:** Background information presented in a literary work.

**Extended Metaphor:** A sustained comparison, often referred to as a conceit. The extended metaphor is developed throughout a piece of writing.

**Figurative Language:** The use of language in a non-literal, non-normative way. Figurative language includes things such as metaphor, simile, hyperbole, and synecdoche, among others.

**Foil:** A character in a story who contrasts with another character, making the latter’s attributes clearer and more distinctive, much like adding salt to a recipe brings out the flavors of the other ingredients.

**Foreshadowing:** Information given in a text that prepares the reader for future parts of the text. This information may be subtle or overt. Some examples of foreshadowing include the creation of a mood that hints at upcoming events or the presence or appearance of objects or facts not previously known.

**Free Verse:** Poetry that is free from limitations of regular meter or rhythm and does not rhyme with fixed forms. Such poems are without rhythms and rhyme schemes; do not follow regular rhyme scheme rules and still provide artistic expression.

**Homily:** This term literally means "sermon," but more informally, it can include any serious talk, speech, or lecture involving moral or spiritual advice.

**Hyperbole:** An exaggeration to amuse or to reinforce or heighten effect.

**Hysteron Proteron (“later-earlier”)** - Inversion of the natural sequence of events, often meant to stress the event which, though later in time, is considered the more important.

**Image:** A description of an experience, object, or person using sensory details, usually more than one. Images are sometimes called concrete details. They are the building blocks of poetry.

**In Medias Res:** Starting a story in the middle and giving necessary exposition as the story unfolds (through dialogue, flashback, narration, etc.).
Intertextuality: A textual reference within some text that reflects the text used as a reference. Instead of employing referential phrases from different literary works, intertextuality draws upon the concept, rhetoric or ideology from other texts to be merged in the new text. It may be the retelling of an old story, or you may rewrite the popular stories in modern context for instance, James Joyce retells The Odyssey in his very famous novel Ulysses.

Irony: When reality is different from what it appears to be or what is anticipated.

  Verbal Irony: Much like sarcasm, when what is said differs from what is actually meant, but usually not as harsh or abrasive.

  Dramatic Irony: When the reader or viewer or a text or performance knows something that the characters themselves do not.

Juxtaposition: A literary technique in which two or more ideas, places, characters and their actions are placed side by side in a narrative or a poem for the purpose of developing comparisons and contrasts.

  Example: “Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears, I pray.
            Do not go gentle into that good night.
            Rage, rage against the dying of the light.”

            -“Do not Go Gentle into that Good Night,” Dylan Thomas

Litotes: Understatement, for intensification, by denying the contrary of the thing being affirmed. (Sometimes used synonymously with meiosis.)

  Example: “I am not unaware how the productions of the Grub Street brotherhood have of late years fallen under many prejudices.”

            -Jonathan Swift, A Tale of a Tub

Loose sentence: A type of sentence in which the main idea (independent clause) comes first, followed by dependent grammatical units such as phrases and clauses. If a period were placed at the end of the independent clause, the clause would be a complete sentence. A work containing many loose sentences often seems informal, relaxed, and conversational.

Metaphor: A comparison between two things in which the similarity between the two is implied and not directly stated.

  Example: That time of year thou mayst in me behold
            When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
            Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
            Bare ruined choirs, where late the sweet birds sang –

            -Sonnet 73, William Shakespeare

Metonymy: Substituting a thing closely related to a word with the word itself.

  Example: “The Pentagon released a statement today about national security.”

            A building cannot release a statement; the Pentagon is a building closely associated with the leaders of the armed forces and stands in their place to represent them.

Meter: The rhythm of a piece of poetry. The rhythm is determined by the number of syllables in a line and the number and placement of accents in the line. The smallest unit of rhythm is called a foot, and there are six basic types of feet and seven basic arrangements of these feet, all of which we’ll discuss later in class.

Mood: This term has two distinct technical meanings in English writing. The first meaning is grammatical and deals with verbal units and a speaker’s attitude. The indicative mood is used for only factual sentences. For example, “Joe eats too quickly.” The subjunctive mood is used for a doubtful or conditional attitude. For example, “If I were you, I’d get another job.” The imperative mood is used for commands. For example, “Shut the door!” The second meaning of mood is literary, meaning the prevailing atmosphere or emotional aura of a work. Setting, tone, and events can affect the mood. In this usage, mood is similar to tone and atmosphere.

Motif: A recurring word, phrase, image, object, or action that creates unity throughout a text and may also reinforce its theme.

Onomatopoeia: Words that sound the same as the things they mean.

  Example: “Buzz”, “Snap”, “Hiss”, “Sizzle”

Oxymoron: An image of contradictory term (bittersweet, pretty ugly, jumbo shrimp).

Parable: A story that operates on more than one level and usually teaches a moral lesson. (The Pearl by John Steinbeck is a fine example.)
**Paradox:** A statement that appears to be self-contradictory or opposed to common sense, but upon closer inspection contains some degree of truth or validity. The first scene of Macbeth, for example, closes with the witches' cryptic remark "Fair is foul, and foul is fair...."

**Parallelism:** Also referred to as parallel construction or parallel structure, this term comes from Greek roots meaning "beside one another." It refers to the grammatical or rhetorical framing of words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs to give structural similarity. This can involve, but is not limited to, repetition of a grammatical element such as a preposition or verbal phrase.

Example: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity..."

- *A Tale of Two Cities*, Charles Dickens

The effects of parallelism are numerous, but frequently, they act as an organizing force to attract the reader’s attention, add emphasis and organization, or simply provide a musical rhythm.

**Parataxis:** Writing successive independent clauses, with coordinating conjunctions, or no conjunctions.

**Parenthesis:** A final form of hyperbaton, consists of a word, phrase, or whole sentence inserted as an aside in the middle of another sentence.

**Parody:** A comic imitation of a work that ridicules the original. It can be utterly mocking or gently humorous. It depends on allusion and exaggerates and distorts the original style and content.

**Pathos:** The aspects of a literary work that elicit pity from the audience. An appeal to emotion that can be used as a means to persuade.

**Pedantic:** A term used to describe writing that borders on lecturing. It is scholarly and academic and often overly difficult and distant.

**Periodic Sentence:** A sentence that places the main idea or central complete thought at the end of the sentence, after all introductory elements. The effect of the periodic sentence is to add emphasis and structural variety.

**Personification:** Giving human characteristics to animals, ideas, feelings, or inanimate objects.

Example: "Ah, William, we're weary of weather,"

* said the sunflowers, shining with dew.

"Two Sunflowers Move in the Yellow Room", William Blake

**Plot:** The pattern of events in a story. Plot is more than a simple diagram of the story (although a diagram is helpful for seeing the pattern) – it is the relationship between the parts and how they fit together. Traditionally, plot has been subdivided into parts: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action or dénouement, and resolution. These parts sometimes overlap, and varying definitions are used depending on whether the work is a play or another kind of prose.

**Poetic Justice:** An ideal form of justice in which the good characters are rewarded and the bad characters are punished by an ironic twist of their fate.

**Poetry:** Literature that is written with a regular rhythm and is usually expressive, imaginative, and relevant to the life and experience of the reader or listener.

**Point of View:** The perspective from which a narrative is told.

- **First Person:** The narrator speaks in the first person and the reader can only know or experiences things that this character knows, thinks, feels, and experiences.

- **Third Person Limited:** The narrator speaks in the third person, but the focus is on only one character, and the reader can only know or experience things that this character knows, thinks, feels, and experiences.

- **Third Person Omniscient:** The narrator speaks in the third person and can know and explain anything that happens in the story and what the characters in it know, think, feel, and experience.

- **Third Person Objective:** The narrator speaks in the third person and can know and explain anything that happens in the story externally but does not or cannot comment on what a character is thinking or feeling; no internal information about characters is available.

**Polysyndeton:** The repetition of conjunctions in a series of coordinate words, phrases, or clauses.

**Prose:** Literature that is not written with a regular rhythm. Although it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between prose and poetry, prose usually includes novels, novellas, short stories, plays, and essays.
Reduction ad Absurdum: The Latin for “to reduce to the absurd.” This is a technique useful in creating a comic effect and is also an argumentative technique. It is considered a rhetorical fallacy, because it reduces an argument to an either/or choice.

Satire: A mode of writing based on ridicule that criticizes the foibles and follies of society without necessarily offering a solution.

Sentence structure: (see also, Syntax) When an essay question asks you to analyze sentence structure, look at the type of sentences the author uses. Remember that the basic sentence structures are simple, compound, and complex, and variations created with sentence combining. Also consider variation or lack of it in sentence length, any unusual devices in sentence construction, such as repetition or inverted word order, and any unusual word or phrase placement. As with all devices, be prepared to discuss the effect of the sentence structure. For example, a series of short, simple sentences or phrases can produce a feeling of speed and choppiness, which may suit the author’s purpose.

Sententia: Quoting a maxim or wise saying to apply a general truth to the situation; concluding or summing foregoing material by offering a single, pithy statement of general wisdom.

Setting: The place in which a piece of literature is set, the time in which it occurs, the special circumstances that make it unique or different from our own world, and the culture in which it takes place.

Simile: A comparison between two things in which the similarity between the two is directly stated, usually using the words “as” or “like”.

Example: “The very mist on the Essex marshes was like a gauzy and radiant fabric.”

-Heart of Darkness, Joseph Conrad

Soliloquy: A speech given when a character is alone, and meant to share with the reader or viewer what is happening in that character’s thoughts and feelings.

Stanza: A set of two or more lines in a poem, grouped by their arrangement on the page or the subject that they express.

Syllogism: The format of a formal argument that consists of a major premise, a minor premise, and a conclusion.

Example: “All crows are black and the bird in my cage is black. So, the bird in my cage is a crow.”

Symbol: Something that is itself but also represents or stands for something else. A flag is a piece of cloth that can be seen, felt, and experienced through the senses, but it also represents a country or community. In literature, symbols are usually used in this way, with something tangible also representing something abstract, on a different level of meaning.

Synecdoche: Substituting a part of the whole for the whole itself.

Example: “He’s got a nice set of wheels.”

The speaker is referring to a car as a whole and not the wheels themselves.

Syntax: The way an author arranges words and phrases to create sentences. This is roughly analogous to sentence fluency.

Theme: The author’s message about or commentary on life that applies to everyone, is based on events in the text, and is expressed as a statement. A theme is different from a moral because the first is declarative and the second is imperative.

Tone: The author’s attitude towards his/her subject as expressed to the reader. The author creates tone through the use of diction (especially words with clear connotations), syntax, imagery, and the information given through exposition. Tone is sometimes used interchangeably with the term “mood”.

Tragedy: Drama that is meant to show the darker aspects of human existence that occur through nature or their own flaws. It also can celebrate the heroic struggle against this darkness, although this struggle results in defeat of some kind.

Unreliable Narrator: A narrator in a first-person narrative who cannot be completely trusted to relay information accurately or to understand what is going on. This can also apply in a third-person narrative if narrator is another character addressing the reader directly.

Verisimilitude: likeness to the truth i.e. resemblance of a fictitious work to a real event even if it is a far-fetched one. Verisimilitude ensures that even a fantasy must be rooted in reality, which means that events should be plausible to the truth.
1. **EVERY TRIP IS A QUEST (EXCEPT WHEN IT'S NOT):**
   a. A quester - person who goes on the quest, whether he knows it's a quest or not; often young, inexperienced, immature, sheltered
   b. A place to go
   c. A stated reason to go there
   d. Challenges and trials
   e. The real reason to go is **never** for the stated reason. The quester usually fails at the stated task. The real reason is educational - **always** self-knowledge.

2. **NICE TO EAT WITH YOU: ACTS OF COMMUNION** (fake people don't have to eat)
   a. Whenever people eat or drink together, it's communion
   b. Not usually religious
   c. An act of sharing and peace
   d. A failed meal carries negative connotations (a bad sign)

3. **NICE TO EAT YOU: ACTS OF VAMPIRES**
   a. **Literal Vampirism:** Nasty old man, attractive but evil, violates a young woman, leaves his mark, takes her innocence (ability to marry)
   b. Sexual implications—a trait of 19th century literature to address sex indirectly- often used supernatural devices or biblical allusion – Eve and the serpent
   c. **Symbolic Vampirism:** selfishness, exploitation, refusal to respect the autonomy of other people, using people to get what we want, placing our desires, particularly ugly ones, above the needs of another.
   d. Ghosts and vampires are **never** only about ghosts and vampires.
      i. Don’t have to appear in visible forms
      ii. Can be entirely human
      iii. When you can’t reveal true feelings, create a ghost to do it for you (Scrooge)
   e. Essentials of the vampire story
      i. Older figure representing corrupt, outworn values
      ii. A young, preferably virginal female
      iii. A stripping away of her youth, energy, virtue
      iv. A continuance of the life force of the old male
      v. The death or destruction of the young woman

4. **IF IT'S SQUARE, IT'S A SONNET**
   a. Versatile, ubiquitous (ever present), varied, and agreeably short
   b. Fourteen lines long and written in iambic pentameter (5 iambs - 10 syllables) - Ten syllables long x fourteen lines high - SQUARE
   c. Usually has two units of meaning that are closely related and broken into a basic pattern of 8/6
      i. Petrarchan (Italian) sonnet - rhyme scheme in the following order:
         1. Octave (first 8 lines): present a situation, present an idea, raise a question
         2. Volta (line 9): turn/ shift
         3. Sestet (last 6 lines): comment on the situation, give an example of the idea, provide an answer to the question
            * WILL NEVER END IN RHYMING COUPLET!
       ii. Shakespearean (Elizabethan) sonnet - divided up in four units
         1. 3 sets of quatrains (4 line stanzas): present three examples of a common idea; or three images to relate to the idea; or three metaphoric statements centering around the idea
         2. Rhyming couplet (last 2 lines): present a conclusion or thematic idea
         * Often contains a *conceit* (extended metaphor)
         * Volta (shift) is usually still in line 9
   d. Takes far more time to write because of the structure

5. **NOW, WHERE HAVE I SEEN HER BEFORE?**
   a. There is no such thing as a wholly original work of literature—stories grow out of other stories, poems out of other poems.
   b. There is only one story—of humanity and human nature, endlessly repeated
   c. “Intertextuality”—
      i. Recognizing the connections between one story and another deepens our appreciation and experience
      ii. Brings multiple layers of meaning to the text, may not be conscious of
   iii. The more consciously aware we are, the more alive the text becomes to us
   iv. Anything you write is connected to other written things
   d. If you don’t recognize the correspondences, it’s ok. If a story is no good, being based on Hamlet won’t save it.
6. WHEN IN DOUBT, IT'S FROM SHAKESPEARE...
   a. Writers use what is common in a culture as a kind of shorthand. Shakespeare is pervasive (constant), so he is frequently echoed.
   b. A kind of authority and universally known – most quoted
   c. See plays as a pattern, either in plot or theme or both. Examples:
      i. Hamlet: heroic character, revenge, indecision, melancholy nature
      ii. Henry IV—a young man who must grow up to become king, take on his responsibilities
      iii. Othello—jealousy
      iv. Merchant of Venice—justice vs. mercy
   v. King Lear—aging parent, greedy children, a wise fool

7. ...OR THE BIBLE
   a. Before the mid-20th century, writers could count on people being very familiar with Biblical stories, a common touchstone a writer can tap
   b. Modern and postmodern texts use biblical allusions as irony
      i. To illustrate a disparity or disruption
      ii. Is not always received favorably
   c. Recognizing biblical allusion - if something is going on in the text that seems beyond the scope of the story’s immediate dimensions (resonates outside itself) then start looking for allusions to older/bigger texts.
   d. Common Biblical stories with symbolic implications
      i. Garden of Eden: women tempting men and causing their fall, the apple as symbolic of an object of temptation, a serpent who tempts men to do evil, and a fall from innocence
      ii. Cain and Abel – denies responsibility toward brother or betrays brother
      iii. David and Goliath—overcoming overwhelming odds
      iv. Jonah and the Whale—refusing to face a task and being "eaten" or overwhelmed by it anyway.
      v. Job: facing disasters not of the character’s making and not the character’s fault, suffers as a result, but remains steadfast
      vi. The Flood: rain as a form of destruction; rainbow as a promise of restoration
      vii. Christ figures (a later chapter): in 20th century, often used ironically
      viii. The Apocalypse—Four Horseman of the Apocalypse usher in the end of the world.
      ix. Biblical names often draw a connection between literary character and Biblical character.

8. HANSEL AND GRETEL—using fairy tales and kid literature
   a. A common body of knowledge that most readers know and recognize—fairy tales, kiddie literature – familiar
   b. Ambiguous – stands the test of time and history
      i. Hansel and Gretel: lost children trying to find their way home
      ii. Peter Pan: refusing to grow up, lost boys, a girl-nurturer/
      iii. Little Red Riding Hood: See Vampires
      iv. Alice in Wonderland, The Wizard of Oz: entering a world that doesn't work rationally or operates under different rules, the Red Queen, the White Rabbit, the Cheshire Cat, the Wicked Witch of the West, the Wizard, who is a fraud
      v. Cinderella: orphaned girl abused by adopted family saved through supernatural intervention and by marrying a prince
      vi. Snow White: Evil woman who brings death to an innocent—again, saved by heroic/princely character
      vii. Sleeping Beauty: a girl becoming a woman, symbolically, the needle, blood—womanhood, the long sleep an avoidance of growing up and becoming a married woman, saved by, guess who, a prince who fights evil on her behalf.
      viii. Evil Stepmothers, Queens, Rumpelstiltskin
   ix. Prince Charming heroes who rescue women. (20th c. frequently switched—the women save the men—or used highly ironically)

9. IT'S GREEK TO ME
   a. Myth is a body of story that matters—the patterns present in mythology run deeply in the human psyche
   b. Why writers echo myth—because there’s only one story (see #4) – reaching back for stories that matter to him and his community
   c. Fall of Icarus – failed to follow his father’s advice, plunged to his death
      i. Parental attempt to save the child and the grief having failed
      ii. Youthful exuberance that leads to self-destruction
      iii. Sober, adult wisdom vs. adolescent recklessness
   d. Odyssey and Iliad
      i. Men in an epic struggle over a woman, heroes, characters have unmistakable nobility, rivalry and violence
      ii. Great struggles of the human being
          1. With nature
          2. With the divine
          3. With other humans
          4. With ourselves
   e. Achilles—a small weakness in a strong man; the need to maintain one’s dignity
   f. Odysseus – struggle to return home
   g. Penelope (Odysseus’s wife)—the determination to remain faithful and to have faith
   h. Hector: The need to protect one’s family
10. IT'S MORE THAN JUST RAIN OR SNOW

a. Rain
   i. fertility and life
   ii. Noah and the flood
   iii. Drowning—one of our deepest fears

b. Why?
   i. plot device – forces men together in uncomfortable circumstances
   ii. atmospherics – mysterious, murkier, more isolating
   iii. misery factor—challenge characters physically and emotionally
   iv. democratic element—the rain falls on the just and the unjust alike

c. Symbolically
   i. rain is clean—a form of purification, baptism, removing sin or a stain
   ii. rain is restorative—can bring a dying earth back to life, new growth
   iii. destructive as well—causes pneumonia, colds, etc.; hurricanes, etc.
   iv. Ironic use— “April is the cruellest month” (T.S. Eliot, The Wasteland) plays off our cultural expectations of spring and rain and fertility
   v. Rainbow—God’s promise never to destroy the world again; hope; a promise of peace between heaven and earth
   vi. fog—almost always signals some sort of confusion; mental, ethical, physical “fog”; people can’t see clearly

d. Snow
   i. negatively—cold, stark, inhospitable, inhuman, nothingness, death, suffocating
   ii. positively—clean, pure, playful, inviting, warm
   iii. great unifier – falls “upon all the living and the dead”

11. ...MORE THAN IT'S GONNA HURT YOU: CONCERNING VIOLENCE

a. Violence can be symbolic, thematic, biblical, Shakespearean, Romantic, allegorical, transcendent.

b. The universe is indifferent to our mortality

c. Two categories of violence in literature
   i. Character caused—shootings, stabbings, drownings, poisonings, bombings, hit and run, etc
   ii. Narrative • Death and suffering authors introduce for plot advancement or thematic development and for which they, not the characters, are responsible.
      1. Make action happen
      2. Cause or end plot complications
      3. Put other characters under stress

d. Violence is symbolic action, but hard to generalize meaning
   i. Example: In Toni Morrison’s Beloved, Sethe kills her own daughter. If we only look on the surface, we cannot feel any sympathy for her – feel disgust and loathing. Symbolically, it is an action that speaks for the experience of a race at a certain horrific moment in history (slavery, rape, loss of freedom, physical and mental cruelty at the hands of others). She is freeing her baby daughter from this future.

e. Questions to ask:
   i. What does this type of misfortune represent thematically?
   ii. What famous or mythic death does this one resemble?
   iii. Why this sort of violence and not some other?

12. IS THAT A SYMBOL?

a. Yes. But figuring out what is tricky. Can only discuss possible meanings and interpretations

b. There is no one definite meaning unless it’s an allegory, where characters, events, places have a one-on-one correspondence symbolically to other things.
   i. Allegory • convey a certain message • Christian based
   ii. Names indicate their qualities: Despair, Faithful, Suffering

c. Each reader brings an individual history to our reading and their own interpretations
   i. Mix of previous readings
   ii. Educational attainment, philosophical inclination
   iii. Gender, race, class, faith, social involvement

d. Rivers • takes lives, escape, freedom, a road, danger and safety, solitude

e. Actions and events, as well as objects and images, can be symbolic.
   i. “Mowing” • sweeping clean, physical labor, solitary life
   ii. “After Apple Picking” • point in life, wear and tear of the activity of living on the psyche
   iii. “The Road Not Taken” • universal graduation poem – choices to make

f. Ask questions:
   i. What’s the writer doing with this image, this object, this act?
   ii. What possibilities are suggested by the movement of the narrative or lyric?
   iii. What does it feel like it’s doing? Listen to your instincts and pay attention to what you feel about the text.
13. IT'S ALL POLITICAL
   a. Literature tends to be written by people interested in the problems of the world, so most works have a political and historical element in them
   b. Issues:
      i. Individualism and self-determination against the needs of society for conformity and stability.
      ii. Power structures
      iii. Relations and criticism among social classes
      iv. Issues of justice and rights
      v. European society (opposition, corruption) vs. American society (freedom)
      vi. Interactions between the sexes and among various racial and ethnic constituencies.
   c. Historical and social implications in a writer's work – emulate the time period.

14. YES, SHE'S A CHRIST FIGURE, TOO
   a. Essential to know something about the Old and New Testaments
   b. Religion influences the culture, values, and principles – whether a writer follows the beliefs or not
   c. Characteristics of a Christ Figure:
      i. crucified, wounds in hands, feet, side, and head, often portrayed with arms outstretched
      ii. in agony
      iii. self-sacrificing
      iv. good with children
      v. good with loaves, fishes, water, wine
      vi. thirty-three years of age when last seen
      vii. employed as a carpenter
      viii. known to use humble modes of transportation, feet or donkeys preferred
      ix. believed to have walked on water
      x. known to have spent time alone in the wilderness
      xi. believed to have had a confrontation with the devil, possibly tempted
      xii. last seen in the company of thieves
      xiii. creator of many aphorisms (statement of truth/opinion) and parables
      xiv. buried, but arose on the third day
      xv. had disciples, twelve at first, although not all equally devoted
      xvi. very forgiving
      xvii. came to redeem an unworthy world
   d. As a reader, put aside belief system – be analytical when you read.
   e. Why use Christ figures? Deepens our sense of a character's sacrifice, thematically has to do with redemption, hope, or miracles, triumph over adversity
   f. Does not have to resemble Christ in every way - can be female, doesn't have to be Christian, and doesn't have to be good.
   g. If used **ironically**, makes the character look smaller rather than greater

15. FLIGHTS OF FANCY
   a. Daedalus and Icarus
   b. Flying was one of the temptations of Christ
      i. Satan asks him to demonstrate his divinity by flying
      ii. Associated witchcraft with flight
   c. Symbolically: freedom, escape, the flight of the imagination, spirituality, returning home, largeness of spirit, freeing of spirit, love
   d. Interrupted flight or characters don't quite fly
      i. Generally a bad thing
      ii. In avoiding death there is an element of rebirth - symbolic
   e. Usually not literal flying, but might use images of flying, birds, etc.
   f. **Irony trumps everything**

16. IT'S ALL ABOUT SEX...
   a. Female symbols: chalice, Holy Grail, bowls, rolling landscape, empty vessels waiting to be filled, tunnels, caves, images of fertility
   b. Male symbols: blade, tall buildings
   c. Why?
      i. Before mid 20th c., encoded sex avoided censorship
      ii. Can function on multiple levels
      iii. Can be more intense than literal descriptions

17. ...EXCEPT SEX. When authors write directly about sex, they're writing about something else, such as sacrifice, submission, rebellion, supplication, domination, enlightenment, psychological neediness, desire for power over another, liberation of women
18. If she comes up, it’s baptism
   a. Baptism is symbolic death and rebirth as a new individual
   b. Drowning is symbolic baptism, **if** the character comes back up, symbolically reborn. But drowning on purpose can also represent a form of rebirth, a choosing to enter a new, different life, leaving an old one behind.
   c. Traveling on water—rivers, oceans—can symbolically represent baptism. i.e. young man sails away from a known world, dies out of one existence, and comes back a new person, hence reborn. Rivers can also represent the River Styx, the mythological river separating the world from the Underworld, another form of transformation, passing from life into death.
   d. Rain can by symbolic baptism as well—cleanses, washes
   e. Sometimes the water is symbolic too—the prairie has been compared to an ocean, walking in a blizzard across snow like walking on water, crossing a river from one existence to another *(Beloved)*
   f. There’s also rebirth/baptism implied when a character is renamed.

19. Geography matters...
   a. What represents home, family, love, security?
   b. What represents wilderness, danger, confusion? i.e. tunnels, labyrinths, jungles
   c. Geography can represent the human psyche *(Heart of Darkness)*
   d. Going south = running amok and running amok means having a direct, raw encounter with the subconscious.
   e. Low places: swamps, crowds, fog, darkness, fields, heat, unpleasantness, people, life, death
   f. High places: snow, ice, purity, thin air, clear views, isolation, life, death

20. So does season
   a. Spring = childhood and youth, fertility, life, happiness, growth, resurrection *(Easter)*
   b. Summer = adulthood, romance, fulfillment, passion, love
   c. Fall/Autumn = decline, middle age, tiredness, harvest *(agricultural and personal—results of our endeavors)*, reaping what we sow = both rewards and punishments
   d. Winter = old age, resentment, lack of growth, punishment, anger, hatred, hibernation, death *(the big sleep)*
   e. Christmas=childhood, birth, hope, family
   f. Irony trumps all "April is the cruellest month" from *(The Wasteland)*

21. Marked for greatness
   a. Physical - marks or imperfections, lame, wounded
      i. Indicators of the damage life inflicts
      ii. Marking oneself - atonement, guilt, contrition
      iii. Signifies some psychological or thematic point by the writer
   b. Symbolically - mirror moral, emotional, or psychological scars or imperfections.
   c. Landscapes can be marked as well—*(The Wasteland)* by T.S. Eliot - society has been rendered barren spiritually, morally, intellectually, and sexually by the war.
   d. Physical imperfection, when caused by social imperfection, often reflects not only the damage inside the individual, but what is wrong with the culture that causes such damage
   e. Monsters
      i. *Frankenstein*—monsters created through no fault of their own (perils of man seeking to play God); the real monster is the maker; science without ethics, forbidden insights; a modern pact with the devil.
      ii. *Faust*—bargains with the devil in exchange for one’s soul
      iii. *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*—the dual nature of humanity, that in each of us, no matter how well-made or socially groomed, a monstrous Other exists.
      iv. *Quasimodo* *(Hunchback of Notre Dame)*, *Beauty and the Beast*—ugly on the outside, beautiful on the inside. The physical deformity reflects the opposite of the truth.

22. He’s blind for a reason, you know
   a. Physical blindness = psychological, moral, and intellectual blindness
   b. Sometimes ironic; the blind see and sighted are blind
   c. Many times blindness is metaphorical, a failure to see—reality, love, truth, etc.
   d. darkness=blindness; light=sight

23. It's never just heart disease...
   b. Socially, something on a larger scale or something seriously amiss at the heart of things *(Heart of Darkness)* - their character’s humanity
   c. If physical heart trouble, look for the significance.
   d. If emotional heart trouble, look for the physical ailment to appear.

24. ...and rarely just illness
   a. Not all illnesses are created equal.
      i. Romantics/ Victorian era – consumption or tuberculosis
      ii. Modern/ Post Modern era – AIDS
b. It should be picturesque – bizarre beauty: pale skin, appearance of a martyr/ artistic
c. It should be mysterious in origin – mode of transmission was unclear or unknown
d. It should have strong symbolic or metaphorical possibilities
   i. Tuberculosis—a wasting disease: physically wasting away and the waste of lives that were unfulfilled
      1. Common disease in novels
      2. Writers either suffered from disease personally or watched friends/family suffer with the disease
   ii. Physical paralysis can mirror moral, social, spiritual, intellectual, political paralysis – Illness parallels life choices.
      Example: small pox – character takes as a sign of divine judgment against vanity and her marital lapse.
   iii. Plague: divine wrath; the communal aspect and philosophical possibilities of suffering on a large scale; the
        isolation and despair created by wholesale destruction; the puniness of humanity in the face of an indifferent
        natural world
   iv. Malaria: great metaphor – literally means “bad air” (contracted from harmful vapors in hot, moist night air) and
       figuratively as malicious gossip, hostile public opinion
   v. Venereal disease: reflects immorality OR innocence, when the innocent suffer because of another’s immorality;
      passed on to a spouse or baby, men’s exploitation of women, i.e. syphilis, cholera
   vi. AIDS: the modern plague.
      1. Symbolic
         a. Tendency to lie dormant for years and then appear
         b. Turn every victim into unknowing carriers of death 100% mortality rate
      2. Metaphor, Theme, Plot
         a. Disproportionately hits young people, gay community, developing countries, artistic circles, poor, etc.
         b. An opportunity to show courage and resilience and compassion (or lack of)
         c. Political and religious angles
            i. Divine retribution in religious conservatives
            ii. Activists saw slow gov’t response as evidence of official hostility to ethnic and sexual
                constituencies
   vii. The generic fever that carries off a child

  e. Modern writers are at a disadvantage with diseases in their writings; modern medicine has identified so many
     germs/illnesses/diseases – no mystery.

25. DON’T READ WITH YOUR EYES
   a. You must enter the reality of the book – history, social issues, time period. Don’t read from your own fixed position in the
      current year.
   b. Find a reading perspective that allows for sympathy with the historical movement of the story - that understands the text as
      having been written against its own social, historical, cultural, and personal background.
   c. Negative approach – Deconstruction – questioning everything in the story to deconstruct the work and prove the writer
      wrong
      i. Example: comment about giving alcohol to an addict – character is not interested in the addiction but the depth,
         emotional turmoil of the other.
      ii. Avoid clouding the story’s own goals with pop culture principles.
   d. We don’t have to accept the values of another culture to sympathetically step into a story and recognize the universal
      qualities present there. We have to accept those values for those characters.

26. IS HE SERIOUS? AND OTHER IRONIES
   a. Irony trumps everything. Look for it.
   b. Example: Waiting for Godot
      i. Roads usually represent journeys, freedom, quests, self-knowledge
      ii. Dido and Gogo show inability to recognize the road exists for them to take, to engage life.
      iii. They wish for possibilities and change yet they use the road passively, looking at what it brings them.
   c. Other examples:
      i. The Christ figure causes the destruction of others while he survives nicely
      ii. Character crashes into a billboard but is saved by his seat belt. While trying to remove the seat belt to get out of
         the car, the billboard crashes down and kills him. The message on the billboard: Seat belts save lives.
   d. Irony works because the reader understands something that eludes one or more of the characters - what our expectation is
      and what is portrayed.
   e. Irony doesn’t work for everyone. Difficult to warm to, hard for some to recognize which causes all sorts of problems.
AP English – Archetypes and Symbols

This list of common archetypes and symbols in literature is useful, not only so you will recognize them in literature, but you may also use them when discussing literature (consider How to Read Literature Like a Professor).

For example, if a character nearly drowns in a lake, not only would we analyze the character for “rebirth” - a change as a result of the near-death experience, but we would also look to see if the character became aware of something in his unconscious, or reached a new level of depth in looking at the world around him, both common characteristics of the Lake archetype.

SITUATION ARCHETYPES

Many of the situations listed below refer to The Hero’s Journey (Joseph Campbell):

1. The Quest – this motif describes the search for someone or some talisman (symbolic object) which, when found and brought back, will restore fertility to a wasted land, the desolation of which is mirrored by a leader’s illness and disability.

2. The Task – this refers to a possibly superhuman feat that must be accomplished in order to fulfill the ultimate goal.

3. The Journey – the journey sends the hero in search for some truth of information necessary to restore fertility, justice, and/or harmony to the kingdom. The journey includes the series of trials and tribulations the hero faces along the way. Usually the hero descends into a real or psychological hell and is forced to discover the blackest truths, quote often concerning his own faults. Once the hero is at his lowest level, he must accept personal responsibility to return to the world of the living.

4. The Initiation – This situation refers to a moment, usually psychological, in which an individual comes into maturity. He or she gains a new awareness into the nature of circumstances and problems and understands his or her responsibility for trying to resolve the dilemma. Typically, a hero receives a calling, a message or signal that he or she must make sacrifices and become responsible for getting involved in the problem. Often a hero will deny and question the calling and ultimately, in the initiation, will accept responsibility.

5. The Ritual – not to be confused with the initiation, the ritual refers to an organized ceremony that involves honored members of a given community and an Initiate. This situation officially brings the young man or woman into the realm of the community’s adult world.

6. The Fall – Not to be confused with the awareness in the initiation, this archetype describes a descent in action from a higher to a lower state of being, an experience which might involve defilement, moral imperfection, and/or loss of innocence. This fall is often accompanied by expulsion from a kind of paradise as penalty for disobedience and/or moral transgression (see “Biblical Allusions: Garden of Eden”)

7. Death and Rebirth – the most common of all situational archetypes, this motif grows out of the parallel between the cycle of nature and the cycle of life. It refers to those situations in which someone or something, concrete and/or metaphysical, dies, yet is accompanied by some sign of birth or rebirth.

8. Nature v. Mechanistic World – expressed in its simplest form, this refers to situations which suggest that nature is good whereas the forces of technology are bad.

9. Battle Between Good and Evil – these situations pit obvious forces which represent good and evil against one another. Typically, good ultimately triumphs over evil despite great odds.

10. The Unhealable Wound – this wound, physical or psychological, cannot be healed fully. This would also indicate a loss of innocence or purity. Often the wounds’ pain drives the sufferer to desperate measures of madness.

11. The Magic Weapon – sometimes connected with the task, this refers to a skilled individual hero’s ability to use a piece of technology in order to combat evil, continue a journey, or to prove his or her identity as a chosen individual.

12. Father-Son Conflict – tension often results from separation during childhood or from an external source when the individuals meet as men and where the mentor often has a higher place in the affections of the hero than the natural parent. Sometimes the conflict is resolved in atonement.

13. Innate Wisdom v. Educated Stupidity – some characters exhibit wisdom and understanding intuitively as opposed to those supposedly in charge.
CHARACTER ARCHETYPES

1. **The Hero** – In its simplest form, this character is the one ultimately who may fulfill a necessary task and who will restore fertility, harmony, and/or justice to a community. The hero character is the one who typically experiences an initiation, who goes to the community’s ritual, etc. Often he or she will embody characteristics of a YOUNG PERSON FROM THE PROVINCES, INITIATE, INNATE WISDOM, PUPIL, and SON.

2. **Young Person from the Provinces** – This hero is taken away as an infant or youth and raised by strangers. He or she later returns home as a stranger and able to recognize new problems and new solutions.

3. **The Initiates** – These are young heroes who, prior to the quest, must endure some training and ritual. They are usually innocent at this stage.

4. **Mentors** – These individuals serve as teachers or counselors to the initiates. Sometimes they work as role models and often serve as father or mother figure. They teach by example the skills necessary to survive the journey and quest.

5. **Hunting Group of Companions** – These loyal companions are willing to face any number of perils in order to be together.

6. **Loyal Retainers** – These individuals are like the noble sidekicks to the hero. Their duty is to protect the hero. Often the retainer reflects the hero’s nobility.

7. **Friendly Beast** – These animals assist the hero and reflect that nature is on the hero’s side.

8. **The Devil Figure** – This character represents evil incarnate. He or she may offer worldly goods, fame, or knowledge to the protagonist in exchange for possession of the soul or integrity. This figure’s main aim is to oppose the hero in his or her quest.

9. **The Evil Figure with the Ultimately Good Heart** – This redeemable devil figure (or servant to the devil figure) is saved by the hero’s nobility or good heart.

10. **The Scapegoat** – An animal or more usually a human whose death, often in a public ceremony, excuses some taint or sin that has been visited upon the community.

11. **The Outcast** – This figure is banished from a community for some crime (real or imagined). The outcast is usually destined to become a wanderer.

12. **The Earth Mother** – This character is symbolic of fulfillment, abundance, and fertility; offers spiritual and emotional nourishment to those who she contacts; often depicted in earth colors, with large breasts and hips.

13. **The Temptress** – Characterized by sensuous beauty, she is one whose physical attraction may bring about the hero’s downfall.

14. **The Platonic Ideal** – This source of inspiration often is a physical and spiritual ideal for whom the hero has an intellectual rather than physical attraction.

15. **The Unfaithful Wife** – This woman, married to a man she sees as dull or distant, is attracted to a more virile or interesting man.

16. **The Damsel in Distress** – This vulnerable woman must be rescued by the hero. She also may be used as a trap, by an evil figure, to ensnare the hero.

17. **The Star-Crossed Lovers** – These two characters are engaged in a love affair that is fated to end in tragedy for one or both due to disapproval of society, friends, family, or the gods.

18. **The Creature of Nightmare** – This monster, physical or abstract, is summoned from the deepest, darkest parts of the human psyche to threaten the lives of the hero/heroine. Often it is a perversion or desecration of the human body.
SYMBOLIC ARCHETYPES

1. **Light v. Darkness** – Light usually suggests hope, renewal, or intellectual illumination; darkness implies the unknown, ignorance, or despair.

2. **Water v. Desert** – Because water is necessary to life and growth, it commonly appears as a birth or rebirth symbol. Water is used in baptism services, which solemnizes spiritual births. Similarly, the appearance of rain in a work of literature can suggest a character’s spiritual birth.

3. **Heaven v. Hell** – Humanity has traditionally associated parts of the universe not accessible to it with the dwelling places of the primordial forces that govern its world. The skies and mountaintops house its gods; the bowels of the earth contain the diabolical forces that inhabit its universe.

4. **Haven v. Wilderness** – Places of safety contrast sharply against the dangerous wilderness. Heroes are often sheltered for a time to regain health and resources.

5. **Supernatural Intervention** – The gods intervene on the side of the hero or sometimes against him. Also known as *Deus ex Machina* in drama.

6. **Fire v. Ice** – Fire represents knowledge, light, life, and rebirth, while ice-like desert represents ignorance, darkness, sterility, and death.

7. **Colors**
   a. **Black** (darkness) – chaos, mystery, the unknown, before existence, death, the unconscious, evil
   b. **Red** – blood, sacrifice, violent disorder, passion, disorder, sunrise, birth, fire, emotion, wounds, death, sentiment, mother Mars, anger, excitement, heat, physical stimulation
   c. **Green** – hope, growth, envy, Earth, fertility, sensation, vegetation, death, water, nature, sympathy, adaptability, growth, Jupiter and Venus, adolescence
   d. **White** (light) – purity, peace, innocence, goodness, Spirit, morality, creative force, the direction East, spiritual thought, higher class
   e. **Orange** – fire, pride, ambition, egoism, Venus, adulthood
   f. **Blue** – clear sky, the day, water/ the sea, height, depth, heaven, religious feeling, devotion, innocence, truth, spirituality, Jupiter, physical soothing and cooling, childhood
   g. **Violet** – water, nostalgia, memory, advanced spirituality, Neptune, old age
   h. **Gold** – Majesty, sun, wealth, corn (life dependency), truth
   i. **Silver** – Moon, Wealth

8. **Numbers:**
   a. **Three** – the Trinity (Father, Son, Holy Ghost); Mind – Body – Spirit; Birth – Life – Death
   b. **Four** – Mankind (four limbs); Elements (Fire, Water, Earth, Wind); Seasons (Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter)
   c. **Six** – Devil, evil
   d. **Seven** – Divinity (3) + Mankind (4) = relationship between man and God; Seven Deadly Sins (pride, greed, sloth, envy, lust, anger, gluttony); Seven Days of Week; Seven Days to Create World; Seven Stages of Life (birth, childhood, adolescence, adulthood, middle-age, old age, death); Seven Stages of Civilization (Mixture, Gestation, Expansion, Age of Conflict, Universal Empire, Decay, Invasion); Seven Colors of the Rainbow (Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Purple (indigo), Violet); Seven Gifts of Holy Spirit (wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, fear of the Lord (wonder))

9. **Shapes:**
   a. **Oval** – woman, passivity
   b. **Triangle** – communication between heaven and earth, fire, the number 3, trinity, aspiration, movement upward, return to origins, sight, light
   c. **Square** – pluralism, earth, firmness, stability, construction, material solidity, the number 4
   d. **Rectangle** – the most rational, most secure
   e. **Cross** – the Tree of Life, axis of the world, struggle, martyrdom, orientation in space
   f. **Circle** – Heaven, intellect, thought, sun, the number 2, unity, perfection eternity, oneness, celestial realm, hearing, sound
   g. **Spiral** – evolution of the universe, orbit, growth, deepening, cosmic motion, relationship between unity and multiplicity, macrocosm, breath, spirit, water
10. Nature:
   a. **Air** – activity, creativity, breath, light, freedom (liberty), movement
   b. **Ascent** – height, transcendence, inward journey, increasing intensity
   c. **Center** – thought, unity, timelessness, spacelessness, paradise, creator, infinity
   d. **Descent** – unconscious, potentialities of being, animal nature
   e. **Duality** – Yin and Yang, opposites, complements, positive-negative, male-female, life-death, good-evil
   f. **Earth** – passive, feminine, receptive, solid
   g. **Fire** – ability to transform, love, life, health, control, sun, God, passion, spiritual energy, regeneration
   h. **Lake** – mystery, depth, unconscious
   i. **Crescent Moon** – change, transition
   j. **Mountain** – height, mass, loftiness, center of the world, ambition, goals
   k. **Valley** – depression, low points, evil, unknown
   l. **Sun** – Hero, son of Heaven, knowledge, the Divine eye, fire, life force, creative-guiding force, brightness, splendor, active awakening, healing, resurrection, ultimate wholeness
   m. **Water** – passive, feminine
   n. **Rivers/ Streams** – life force, life cycle
   o. **Stars** – guidance
   p. **Wind** – Holy Spirit, life, messenger
   q. **Ice/ Snow** – coldness, barrenness
   r. **Clouds/ Mist** – mystery, sacred
   s. **Rain** – life-giver
   t. **Steam** – transformation to the Holy Spirit
   u. **Cave** – feminine
   v. **Lightning** – intuition, inspiration
   w. **Tree** – where we learn, tree of life, tree of knowledge
   x. **Forest** – evil, lost, fear

11. Objects:
   a. **Feathers** – lightness, speed
   b. **Shadow** – our dark side, evil, devil, unknown
   c. **Masks** – concealment, duality
   d. **Boats/ Rafts** – safe passage
   e. **Bridge** – change, transformation
   f. **Right hand** – rectitude, correctness
   g. **Left hand** – deviousness
   h. **Feet** – stability, freedom
   i. **Skeleton** – mortality
   j. **Heart** – love, emotions
   k. **Hourglass** – the passage of time
This list of allusions is useful, not only so you will recognize them in literature, but you may also use them when discussing literature. For example, if a character’s significant other is his one weakness, one could refer to the character’s lover as his “Achilles’ heel.”

Know these allusions! Incorporate these into your analytical writing.

**MYTHOLOGICAL ALLUSIONS**

1. **Achilles’ heel** – a **person’s only weak or vulnerable point** (Achilles was one of the greatest Greek heroes of the Trojan War. During his infancy, his mother dipped him in the waters of the river Styx, thus making his body invulnerable except for the heel by which she held him. This vulnerable spot would later prove fatal.)

   EX. (1) “There was every temporal reason for leaving: it would be entering again into a world which he had only quitted in a passion for isolation, induced by a fit of Achillean moodiness after an imagined slight.” Thomas Hardy *The Woodlanders* 1887

2. **Adonis** – in Greek mythology was a **beautiful youth** who was loved by both Aphrodite and Persephone. A man described an as Adonis usually has a **handsome face and gorgeous body.**

   EX. (1) “I really can’t see any resemblance between you, with your rugged strong face and your coal-black hair, and this young Adonis, who looks as if he was made out of ivory and rose-leaves.” Oscar Wilde *The Picture of Dorian Gray* 1891

3. **Apollo** – in Greek mythology was the son of Zeus and Leto and the twin brother of Artemis. He came to be associated with the **sun** and sometimes given the epithet Phoebus, the Bright One. Apollo later usurped Helios’ place as the god of the sun who drove the sun’s chariot across the sky each day. **Music** – his instrument was a seven-stringed lyre. **Medicine** - father of Aesculapius, god of medicine and healing - **poetic inspiration, archery, prophecy, and pastoral life (he protected herdsman).** Apollo, representing **order, reason, and self-discipline,** is often contrasted with Dionysus, representing creativity, sensuality and lack of inhibition. In art, Apollo is represented as an ideal type of male beauty, for example in the famous statue the Apollo Belvedere, now in the Vatican. Apollo had numerous affairs with nymphs, mortal women, and young men. Among his unsuccessful encounters were those with Daphne and Cassandra.

   EX. (1) “Your words have delineated very pretty a graceful Apollo; he is present to your imagination, tall, fair, blue-eyed, and with a Grecian profile.” Charlotte Bronte *Jane Eyre* 1847

   (2) “He had only a nodding acquaintance with the Hippocratic oath, but was somehow aware that he was committed to Apollo the Healer to look upon his teacher in the art of medicine as one of his parents.” John Mortimer *Paradise Postponed* 1985

4. **Athena/Minerva** – also called Pallas Athene was the Greek goddess of wisdom, of war, and of handicrafts, especially spinning and weaving. She corresponds to the Roman goddess Minerva. Athene is said to have sprung fully grown and fully armed from the brain of her father, Zeus. She is usually represented in sculpture and paintings in armor. The owl was associated with her. (patron goddess of Athens, personifies wisdom)

   EX. “It meant the sudden calling into existence, like Pallas Athene from the head of Zeus, of brand-new complex organs at a single stroke of the genetic wand.” Richard Dawkins *The Blind Watchmaker* 1986

5. **Atlantean** – a legendary island, beautiful and prosperous, which was overwhelmed by the sea – Atlantis was a legendary island continent in the ocean west of the Pillars of Hercules. According to Plato, Atlantis was beautiful and prosperous and ruled part of Europe and Africa, but following volcanic eruptions, it was swallowed by the sea.

   EX. “Under the clouds out there it’s as still, and lost, as Atlantis.” (Thomas Pynchon *Gravity’s Rainbow* 1973)
6. **Bacchus** – another name for the Greek god Dionysus, the son of Zeus and Semele. Originally, a god of the fertility of nature, associated with wild and ecstatic religious rites, in later traditions he is a god of wine who loosens inhibitions and inspires creativity in music and poetry. Bacchanalia was the name given to the annual feast and celebrations in honor of the Greek god Dionysus (Bacchus). The celebrations were characterized by wild orgies and drunkenness. The adjective Bacchanalian can refer to drunkenness or to wild or drunken partying.

   EX. “Jagger runs and cycles; Aerosmith singer Steve Tylor has banned sugar, salt, wheat, yeast, fat, red meat and alcohol from his band’s menus. Even the Grateful Dead, while publicly burning the Bacchanalian flame at both ends, were secretly calorie watching.” *The Independent* 1997

7. **Centaur** – in Greek mythology is one of a race of creatures who has the upper body, arms, and head of a man and the body and legs of a horse

   EX. “Turning half-beast and half-divine…like a heathen Centaur, he had escaped his death once more.” Eudora Welty “A Still Moment”

8. **Chimera** – in Greek mythology, a fire-breathing female monster with a lion’s head, a goat’s body, and a serpent’s tail – any mythical animal formed from parts of various animals – a thing which is hoped for but is illusory or impossible to achieve (adjective = chimerical)

9. **Halcyon** – a mythical bird said by ancient writers to breed in a nest floating at sea at the winter solstice, charming the wind and waves into calm – also denoting a period of time in the past that was idyllically happy and peaceful (halcyon days) – a kingfisher (bird) with brightly colored plumage, who laid its eggs and incubated them on the surface of the seas for fourteen days before the winter solstice, and the sea was calm

10. **Harpy** – in Greek and Roman mythology, harpies (from Greek word meaning snatchers) were fierce monsters with the heads and bodies of women and wings and claws of vultures. Harpies seem to have combined the primitive concepts of wind spirits and predatory ghosts with actual characteristics of carrion birds. Now it means a cruel or grasping, unscrupulous woman.

11. **Helen of Troy** – in Greek mythology the daughter of Zeus and Leda who grew into the most beautiful woman in the world. She married Menelaus, and her abduction by the Trojan prince Paris led the Trojan War. Doctor Faustus, in Marlowe’s play, calls up the spirit of Helen of Troy: “Was this the face that launch’d a thousand ships / And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?”

12. **Herculean** – in both Greek and Roman mythology, Heracles (Hercules by the Greeks) was a hero of superhuman strength and courage, usually depicted with a lion-skin, club and bow. He was son of Zeus by Alcemene, wife of Amphitryon. He performed 12 immense tasks, or “labours,” imposed on him by Eurystheus, King of Argos. After his death, he was granted immortality by the gods. Any exceptionally strong or muscular man can be described as a Hercules of Herculean. A Herculean task is one that is formidably difficult.

13. **Hydra-headed** – In Greek mythology, the Hydra was a many-headed snake of the marshes of Lerna – whose heads grew again as they were cut off. As one of his 12 labours, Hercules slew the Hydra by searing each neck with a burning torch as he cut off the head to prevent 2 more heads growing to replace it. Something that seems to be never-ending or indestructible because new parts keep developing are alluded to as hydra-headed or as a hydra.

14. **Junoesque** – in Roman mythology Juno was the wife and sister of Jupiter and queen of heaven, equivalent to the Greek Hera. She was enraged at the philanderings of her husband Jupiter. She was the protectress of marriage and women. Junoesque means marked by stately beauty, imposingly tall and stately.

15. **Lethargy** – named from the Lethe River in Greek mythology (one of the rivers in Hades), whose water caused those who drank it to lose all memory of their past life on earth. The souls of the dead were required to taste its water that they might forget everything said and done when alive. Lethargy represents oblivion or forgetfulness, and occasionally death. Lethargy can mean a lack of energy or enthusiasm.

16. **Martial** – Mars, in Roman mythology, was the god of war (second in importance only to Jupiter and for whom the month of March is named. Martial means related to fighting or war.

17. **Mentor** – an old man in the *Odyssey* who watched over Telemachus when Odysseus went to war. His name is synonymous with a wise and faithful counselor – an experienced and trusted adviser.
18. **Mercurial/ Hermetic** – in Roman mythology Mercury was the **messenger of the gods** (Hermes in Greek) and is pictured as a herald wearing winged sandals which enable him to travel very swiftly. He was the god of science, commerce, patron of travelers and of rogues, and thieves. Hence, his name denotes both a messenger and a thief. **Mercurial means to be quick and changeable in character, having the traits of Mercury.** Hermetically sealed means airtight, and Hermetic also relates to alchemy (god of science) – mercury, the element, goes up and down to measure atmospheric temperature or pressure – a mercurial person tends to go up and down in emotions (like Catherine in *Wuthering Heights* (“I love Heathcliff, I don’t” which got her into a heap of trouble).

19. **Muse** – in Greek mythology, the 9 Muses were daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne, goddess of memory. Today, a muse means a **woman or a force personified as a woman who is the source of inspiration for a creative artist.**

* Nine Muses:
  o Calliope (epic poetry)
  o Clio (history)
  o Erato (lyre and lyric love poetry)
  o Euterpe (flute playing and lyric poetry)
  o Melpomene (tragedy)
  o Polyhymnia (songs to the gods)
  o Terpsichore (dancing and singing that accompanies it)
  o Thalia (comedy and bucolic poetry)
  o Urania (astronomy)

20. **Narcissism** – in Greek mythology, Narcissus was a youth of extraordinary beauty who cruelly spurned many admirers, including the nymph Echo. He fell in love with his own reflection in a pool of water. Echo caused this. Narcissus pined away and died, longing for his own image, and was turned into the white flower named after him. **Narcissism describes a neurotic obsession with one’s own person, the epitome of excessive vanity.**

21. **Nemesis** – in Greek mythology, she was the goddess responsible for **retribution**, either for a person who had transgressed the moral code or for a person who had taken too much pride in his/her success or luck (hubris). Nemesis is used to refer to a person’s **doom or terrible but unavoidable fate**, or as a personification of punishment or retribution for wrongdoing or excessive pride.

22. **Neptune** – in Roman mythology (Poseidon in Greek) was god of the sea. He is represented as an elderly man of stately bearing, bearded, carrying a trident and sometimes riding a dolphin or horse.

23. **Niobe** – in Greek mythology was the daughter of Tantalus and mother of numerous offspring. She boasted about her large family, which angered the goddess Leto who only had Apollo and Artemis. Apollo slew all Niobe’s sons, and Artemis her daughters. Niobe was turned into a stone and her tears into streams that eternally trickled from it. She is a **symbol of inconsolable grief.**

EX: Hamlet: “Like Niobe, all tears.” Hamlet says of his mother at his father’s funeral.

24. **Odyssey** – In Greek mythology, Odysseus was the son of Laertes, King of Ithaca and central figure in the *Odyssey*. (In Roman, known as Ulysses). Homer’s epic poem recounts the ten-year voyage of Odysseus during his years of wandering after the fall of Troy. **Any long series of wanderings or long, adventurous journey can be described as an odyssey.**

25. **Olympian** – Mount Olympus in Greece is held to be the home of the Greek gods. Olympian refers to anyone or **anything that is superior** to or more important than lesser mortals.

26. **Pandora’s Box** – in Greek mythology Pandora, the first mortal woman was given by the gods a jar (or box) that she was forbidden to open. Out of curiosity she disobeyed and released from it all the evils and illnesses that have afflicted mankind ever since, with only Hope remaining at the bottom. **The term is used for a source of many unforeseen and unmanageable problems. Also, a process that once begun generates many complicated problems.** (These laws opened a Pandora’s Box for taxpayers.)

27. **Pegasus** – in Greek mythology is the winged horse which sprang from the blood of the Gorgon Medusa when Perseus cut off her head. Pegasus was ridden by Perseus in his rescue of Andromeda and by Bellerophon when he fought the Chimera. The name Pegasus can represent **a means of escape.**

28. **Phoenix** – a **mythical bird** of gorgeous plumage, the only one of its kind. After living for 5 or 6 centuries in the Arabian desert, it burnt itself on a funeral pyre ignited by the sun and fanned by its own wings and rose from the ashes with renewed youth to live through another lifespan. Anything that has been **restored to a new existence** after apparent destruction can be said to be like the Phoenix. It symbolizes **resurrection** or a person or thing regarded as **uniquely remarkable** in some respect.
29. **Plutocracy** – In Greek mythology **Plutus** was god of wealth and was represented as blind because he distributed riches indiscriminately, as lame because riches come slowly and with wings because riches disappear more quickly than they come. Plutocrat is one who exercises influence or possesses power through his wealth. Plutocracy is government by the wealthy.

30. **Promethean** – In Greek mythology Prometheus was a Titan, brother of Atlas, seen in many legends as the champion of humankind against the gods. In some stories, he actually made the first men by making figures of clay with which the help of Athene brought to life. Prometheus stole fire from Mt. Olympus and gave to men, angering the gods, and also taught them arts and sciences. As a punishment for his disobedience to the gods, Zeus had Prometheus chained to a rock, where each day an eagle tore out his liver, which grew again each night. Hercules rescued him. Prometheus is the archetype of the courageous rebel who dares to challenge the power of the gods and of fate. The Promethean spark of fire is the spark of life or vitality.

   EX: Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein is titled *Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus* because Dr. Frankenstein tried to create man. The result upsets the universe, literally, with the final product – the creature.

31. **Protean** – In Greek mythology the son of Oceanus and Tethys, was given by Poseidon the power to prophesy the future. He has power to change his shape, which he would exploit in order to escape those seeking his predictions. He is sometimes depicted as emerging from the sea, almost like a male Venus, and resting on the seashore. Protean refers to changeability, tending or able to change frequently or easily; able to do many different things, versatile (protean thinkers who scan the horizons of work and society).

32. **Pygmalion** – the king of Cyprus who fashioned an ivory statue of a beautiful woman and loved it so deeply that in answer to his prayer, Aphrodite gave it life. The woman was named Galatea, and she bore him a daughter.

   EX: George Bernard Shaw wrote the play *Pygmalion* in 1913 where Professor Henry Higgins takes a Cockney flower girl Eliza Doolittle and transforms her into an elegant lady. Later, this became the musical *My Fair Lady* (1956).

33. **Pyrrhic victory** – Pyrrhus was king of Epirus (c. 307-272). In defeating the Romans at Asculum in 279, he sustained heavy losses, commenting, “Such another victory and we are ruined.” Hence a pyrrhic victory is one gained with terrible loss of life or at too great a cost.

34. **Saturnalia** – The ancient Roman festival of Saturn in December, called the Saturnalia, was characterized by general unrestrained merrymaking. The term is applied to a scene of wild revelry or an orgy. The term Saturnine refers to a person or their features, dark in coloring and moody or mysterious (his saturnine face and dark, watchful eyes- such as Heathcliff in *Wuthering Heights*).

35. **Sisyphean** – In Greek mythology Sisyphus was a king of Corinth, punished in Hades for his misdeeds in life by being condemned to the eternal task of rolling a huge stone to the top of a hill. Each time he approached the summit, the stone slipped and rolled down to the bottom again. Sisyphean denotes a task that can never be completed, a seemingly endless ordeal.

36. **Stygian** – In Greek mythology the river Styx was the main river of Hades, the underworld, across which the souls of the dead were said to be ferried by Charon. Stygian refers to any deep, gloomy, or foggy darkness—very dark.

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**ALLUSIONS FROM LITERATURE**

1. **Babbitt** – George Babbitt was the protagonist of the satirical novel *Babbitt* (1922) by Sinclair Lewis. Babbitt means a materialistic, complacent, and conformist businessman.

2. **Brobdingnagian** – Brobdingnag is the land inhabited by giants in Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726). The word describes anything that is gigantic in size or scale.

3. **Bumble** – Mr. Bumble is in Dickens’s *Oliver Twist* and is a minor official in the workhouse where Oliver is brought up. Bumble is a cruel, fussy man with mighty ideas of his own importance. Bumbledom means officious arrogance and conceit of the petty dignitary.

4. **Cinderella** – a girl in various traditional European fairy tales. In one version she is exploited as a servant by her family but enabled by a fairy godmother to attend a royal ball where she meets Prince Charming. She has to flee at midnight, leaving the prince to identify her by the glass slipper she leaves behind. Cinderella means the following: (1) a person or thing that is undeservedly neglected or ignored, (2) used to describe a transformation from poverty of plainness to prosperity or glamour, (3) refer to an undervalued service that nobody will provide for, or (4) an instruction that must be followed precisely (late-night deadline).
5. **Don Juan** – was a legendary Spanish nobleman famous for his seductions. The term means a man with a reputation for seducing women.

6. **Don Quixote/Quixotic** – is the aging hero of a romance, *Don Quixote de la Mancha* (1605-15) by Miguel de Cervantes. He is devoted to tales of chivalry and romance, becoming so obsessed with these stories that “the moisture of his brain was exhausted to that degree, that at last he lost the use of his reason.” Unable to distinguish fanciful from the real, he determines to turn knight errant and sets out in search of adventures. Tall, lean, and thin-faced, he dons rusty armor and is accompanied by his scrappy old horse Rosinante and a short, fat quire. Sancho Panza. In one episode he attacks a group of windmills thinking they are giants. He elevates a village girl and names her Dulcinea as the ideal of womanly beauty and virtue. Don Quixote allusions pick up on various attributes of his character: his insanity, his idealism and his thinness. He is a foolish, mistaken idealist or someone who naively believes that he can set the world to rights single-handedly. The character fights against illusory evils or fails to see things as they really are. To tilt at windmills is to attack imaginary or impossible targets. Quixotic means extremely idealistic, unrealistic and impractical.

7. **Falstaffian** – Sir John Falstaff is the fat, witty, good-humored old knight in Shakespeare’s *Henry IV* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Falstaffian means something that resembles Falstaff, fat, jolly and debauched (a Falstaffian gusto for life.)

8. **Frankenstein** – Mary Shelley’s novel (1818) relates the exploits of Victor Frankenstein, a Genevan student who builds a grotesque manlike creature out of corpses and brings it to life. The creature is never named. The book ends with the monster destroying Victor and then goes away to end its own life. (EX. Does cloning entail Frankensteinian methods?)

9. **Faustian** – Faust is the protagonist of a classic German legend. He is a scholar who is highly successful yet dissatisfied with his life, which leads him to make a pact with the Devil, exchanging his soul for unlimited knowledge and worldly pleasures. A Faustian Bargain is an agreement in which a person abandons his or her spiritual values or moral principles in order to obtain wealth or other benefits.

10. **Galahad** – In Arthurian legend, Sir Galahad was the noblest knight of the Round Table, the son of Sir Lancelot and Elaine. His immaculate purity and virtue predestine him to succeed in the quest for the Holy Grail. His name is a byword for chivalrous heroism, and the image of him riding up on his charger to rescue a maiden in distress is a common one. His name can also mean a person characterized by nobility, integrity, or courtesy.

11. **Jekyll and Hyde** – In Robert Louis Stevenson’s *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886), Dr. Jekyll discovers a drug that allows him to have a separate personality, Mr. Hyde, through which he can express the evil side of his personality. Eventually, Hyde takes the upper hand. The term “Jekyll and Hyde” refers to someone whose personality appears to undergo an abrupt transformation, particularly from gentleness to aggressiveness or violence. A person who reveals an unsuspected evil side to his/her character can be said to be changing into Mr. Hyde.

12. **Lilliputian** – In book one of Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726), Gulliver finds himself shipwrecked on the island of Lilliput. The tiny Lilliputians are only 6 inches tall and are as small-minded as they are small-bodied—petty, pretentious and factious. Lilliputian means trivial or very small, traits of the Lilliputians.

13. **Machiavellian** – Machiavelli (1469-1527) was an Italian statesman and political philosopher. He is best known for *The Prince*, 1532, in which he argues that rulers may have to resort to methods that are not in themselves desirable in order to rule effectively. His name has come to represent the use of deceit and cunning in the pursuit of personal power – Machiavellian means elaborately cunning and scheming.

14. **Malapropism** – In Sheridan’s *The Rivals* (1775), Mrs. Malaprop is known for her aptitude for misusing long words, the mistaken use of a word in place of a similar-sounding one, often with an amusing effect (dance a flamingo instead of flamenco).

15. **Milquetoast** – Caspar Milquetoast was a timid comic-strip character created in 1924. A Milquetoast is any submissive, meek, or timid person.

16. **Panglossian** – In Voltaire’s *Candide* (1759), Dr. Pangloss is the tutor who imbues Candide with his guiding philosophy that all is for the best in the best of all possible worlds. No matter what misfortunes they each suffer on their travels, Pangloss confidently and complacently assures Candide that things could not be otherwise. Panglossian describes a person who is optimistic regardless of the circumstances.

14. **Pickwickian** – Samuel Pickwick is the central character of Dickens’s *The Pickwick Papers* (1836-37). He is jovial, generous, and unworlthy in character and short, plump and bespectacled in appearance.
17. **Pooh-bah** – is the Lord-High-Everything-Else character in Gilbert and Sullivan’s *The Mikado* (1885). It means a **self-important person** or a **person holding many offices at once**.

18. **Scrooge** – The miserly Ebenezer Scrooge is a character in Dickens’s *A Christmas Carol* (1843), whose parsimony and lack of charity are most apparent at Christmas. His names denotes **any mean or tight-fisted person**.

19. **Uncle Tom** – is a loyal and ever-patient black slave, the main character of Stowe’s anti-slavery novel *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1852). The term can be applied to a **black man whose behavior to white people is regarded as submissively servile, and by extension can refer to anyone regarded as betraying his or her cultural or social allegiance**.

20. **Walter Mitty** – James Thurber’s short story “The Secret Life of Walter Mitty” (1939) relates how a henpecked husband escapes his wife’s nagging by retreating into his own world of daydreams in which he is the hero of many adventures. A Walter Mitty is **someone who lives in a fantasy world, especially someone who has lost touch with reality**.

21. **Yahoo** – The Yahoos are the imaginary race of brutish creatures, resembling humans, in Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726). They embody all the baser vices and instincts of the human race. Yahoo refers **to a course, loutish, or rowdy person, or one who engages in wanton vandalism**. Also, a Yahoo can be a rude, noisy or violent person.

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**BIBLICAL ALLUSIONS**

1. **Abraham and Isaac** - God told Abraham that he would be the father of many nations and made a covenant with Abraham, promising to give his family (the Hebrews) the land of Canaan, called the Promised Land. God tested Abraham – Told him to sacrifice his son Isaac as a burnt offering. Abraham was ready to obey. At the last minute, God provided a way of escape for Abraham, a ram appeared. Isaac was spared, and Abraham received the Lord’s blessing. A literary reference to Abraham and Isaac is **symbolic of one’s willingness to make the ultimate sacrifice to demonstrate his obedience and his faith in God**. Abraham parallels God, in that he, like God, was willing to sacrifice his beloved son. **Isaac is a foreshadowing of Christ**. He carried the wood for the altar as Christ carried his cross to Calvary. Isaac, like Christ, was willing to lay down his life. Both Jews and Arabs claim descent from Abraham: Jews through Isaac; Arabs, through Abraham’s other son, Ishmael.

2. **Alpha and Omega** – the beginning and end (used by Christians as a title for Jesus) – the essence or most important features. These are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. Jesus says “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last” (Rev. 22:13).

3. **Cain** – in Genesis, **Cain was the first-born son of Adam and Eve**, who **murdered his younger brother Abel**. Cain was a tiller of the ground and Abel a keeper of sheep. When they brought their offerings to God, Abel’s lamb was accepted but Cain’s offering from his harvest was not. In jealous anger, Cain killed his brother. God demanded an explanation for Abel’s absence, to which **Cain responded “Am I my brother’s keeper?”** Cain was cursed by God forever and was cast out from his homeland and forced to live a life of vagrancy for the rest of his life. God branded him with a mark to indicate that no one should kill him and shorten his nomadic punishment. The phrase **“mark of Cain” has come to stand for the sign of a murderer**.
   - “Raise Cain” means to cause trouble or a commotion. In the epic poem, *Beowulf*, the monster Grendel was said to have descended from Cain.

4. **Daniel** – According to the book of Daniel, he was a devout Jew who spent his life as one of those taken into exile in Babylon. He had a gift for interpreting visions and dreams. He was able to explain the meaning of a strange dream that Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon, had had, for which he was made the king’s chief adviser. Later, he interpreted a second dream of N’s to foretell his insanity, which immediately came to pass. As a result of disobedience of a law (not to pray to God), Daniel was thrown in the lion’s den. God sent an angel to shut the lions’ mouths. **Daniel is synonymous with courage of one who faces great danger alone without any material protection**.

5. **Eye of the Needle/ Filthy Lucre** – lucre = money, especially when regarded as sordid or distasteful or gained in a dishonorable way. In one of Jesus’s parables, he states that “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.” (Matthew 19:24). Essentially, this refers to **those of wealth who lack morality**.
6. **Garden of Eden/ Fall of Man** - Also called “Paradise” – *any state or place of complete peace and happiness*. The only inhabitants of the Garden of Eden were Adam (first man; formed from the “dust of the ground”) and Eve (first woman; created from Adam’s rib). Within the Garden of Eden, God placed two trees: *Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil – the forbidden tree* and the *Tree of Life – the permitted tree*. Satan in the form of a *serpent* (an archetype of evil in literature) tempts Eve to eat the forbidden fruit (usually referred to as an apple), and in literature, refers to *anything tempting but potentially dangerous; Original Sin* (tendency of evil supposedly innate in all human beings); *loss of innocence*. This results in what we call **The Fall of Man.** This is thought of as a “fall” because, originally, God intended for Adam to “toil the earth,” which essentially means “labor,” though originally man did not feel exhaustion or dissatisfaction with his work (this became Adam’s punishment). Eve’s “labor” was to be “fruitful” and bear children, though originally her “labor” was not painful or sorrowful (Eve’s punishment).

7. **Goliath** – was the Philistine giant in the Bible who issued a challenge to single combat to any opponent from the Israelite army. The challenge was accepted by the young David, who slew the over 9-foot tall Goliath with a stone from a sling. A large or powerful person or organization can be described as a Goliath, especially if they are being challenged by someone small and weak. In literature, the reference to “David and Goliath” is *symbolic of the just defeating the unjust,* despite the latter’s strength: a David and Goliath contest is an unequal one where one side is far bigger.

8. **Good Samaritan** – One of Jesus’s parables tells of a Samaritan who stopped to help a victim of thieves left wounded by the roadside and already ignored by a priest and a Levite. This term is used to describe a *person who is helpful and compassionate,* especially to those in adversity.

9. **Handwriting on the Wall** – Belshazzar, King of Babylon, gave a great banquet where they drank from goblets taken from the temple and praised the gods of gold, silver, etc. Suddenly the fingers of a human hand appeared and wrote on the wall the words “Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin.” Daniel translated the words, explaining to Belshazzar that his reign was over, that he had been weighed in the balance and found wanting, and that his kingdom would be divided and given to the Medes and Persians. The **“writing on the wall” is thus a herald of doom.**

10. **Ishmael** – Ishmael is the son of Abraham by Hagar, the maid of Abraham’s wife, Sarah. Ishmael was cast out when Sarah gave birth to Isaac. **The name Ishmael is used allusively for an outcast.** The name is used for the narrator of Melville’s *Moby Dick*, the opening words of which are “Call me Ishmael.”

11. **Jacob** – Jacob was the son of Isaac and Rebecca and twin brother to Esau. He was tricked into marrying Leah, but he was given Rachel a week later (the one he loved) after promising to work for an additional seven years. **Jacob and Rachel can be alluded to as patient lovers.** Jacob also gave his brother Esau food (one day Esau who was extremely hungry wanted Jacob’s food) if Esau would sell Jacob his birthright as the elder of the twins. Esau did just that. **Jacob potage (or, a “pottage of mess” is something pleasant and immediately satisfying for which one gives up something far more valuable.** Jacob also tricked his father into giving him the blessing due the first-born (Esau); thus, **Jacob can be alluded to as someone who tricks or deceives others to gain what he wants.**

12. **Jesus Christ** – referred to as the **Lamb of God,** the sacrificial lamb who atoned for the sins of all men by taking them upon himself and sacrificing his life; also called the King of Kings. Jesus was both God and man. Earthly father was Joseph, a carpenter, and mother was Mary, a virgin. **Mary is a symbol of purity, virginity, maternal love.** Jesus was conceived of the Virgin Mary through the power of the Holy Spirit. He was born in Bethlehem in a manger because there was “no room for them in the inn.” A bright star in the sky guided shepherds and three wise men (magi) to Him. The wise men brought **gold (symbol of royalty), frankincense (the emblem of the divinity), and Myrrh (the symbol of death).** Grew up in the town of Nazareth and explained God’s teachings through parables (see Good Samaritan, Prodigal Son, Eye of the Needle). Jesus had twelve disciples or followers who helped him teach (see John the Baptist). Performed many miracles (turning water into wine, multiplying the loaves and fishes to feed the multitude, raising Lazarus from the dead)
   - **Last Supper** – Jesus’ last meal with his disciples; served them Communion, in which the bread and wine represented his body and blood which would be shed for them. In consuming the bread and wine, followers accept Jesus as their savior.
   - **Judas** - Betrayed by his disciple Judas Iscariot for thirty pieces of silver. Literary reference – A “Judas is a betrayer, especially one who betrays a friend. A “Judas kiss” is an act of seeming friendship that conceals some treachery.
   - **Pontius Pilate** – Roman soldier who condemned Jesus to death, (he personally could not find a reason to condemn Jesus but the people insisted); therefore, Pilate **washed his hands** to indicate that Jesus’s fate was no longer Pilate’s responsibility. A reference to Pontius Pilate in literature is **one who betrays his own moral convictions and submits to the pressure of others thus “washing his hands of the matter”**
   - **Crucifixion & Resurrection** – beaten and forced to carry his own cross to the hill at Golgotha or Calvary (near Jerusalem), hands and feet nailed to the cross and hung with two other thieves. Was buried in a tomb with a stone rolled over the entrance. During his death, **Jesus descended into hell to receive the punishment for mankind’s sin. Any descent into darkness in literature is a reference to this (Inferno, Heart of Darkness, etc.).** On the third day, Mary Magdalene found the tomb open and Jesus gone. He appeared before a crowd to prove his resurrection and that he was alive (historical documents show many reports of his appearing before hundreds of people).
13. **Job** – The Old Testament tells the story of Job, a prosperous man whose patience and piety God tries, first by taking away his wealth and then by heaping other misfortunes upon him, including “loathsome sores.” In spite of suffering, **Job remains humble** and accepting. He does not lose his confidence in the goodness and justice of God, and his patience is finally rewarded with wealth and long life. **His name is synonymous with forbearance.** A **Job’s comforter** is someone whose attempts to give sympathy and comfort have the opposite effect—from three friends of Job’s who came to comfort him but only increased his distress by telling him that his misfortunes were the result of his sinfulness.

14. **John the Baptist** – was a preacher on the banks of the Jordan river who called people to repent and be baptized in order to be cleansed of their sins. When he met Jesus, he recognized Him as the Messiah and baptized Him. Inspired many to follow Christ when he designated him the “Lamb of God.” In literature, **any resurfacing from water is considered to be a baptism- a renewal or cleansing, either morally or emotionally.**

15. **Jonah** – was a Hebrew minor prophet who was commanded by God to go to Nineveh and cry against it for its wickedness. He refused to obey God, and he embarked on a ship where God sent a storm as punishment. Jonah was cast into the water by the other sailors as an omen of bad luck; the storm abated and Jonah was swallowed by a huge fish. **Jonah means someone who has survived a very difficult or dangerous situation.**

16. **Judas** – Judas Iscariot was the disciple who, in return for 30 pieces of silver, betrayed Jesus to the Jewish authorities with a kiss of identification. When he learned that Jesus was condemned to death, he realized the enormity of his betrayal and repented, returned the money and hanged himself. The term Judas is one who **betrays a friend, and a “Judas kiss” is an act of betrayal.**

17. **Manna** – was the “bread” provided for God’s Israelites when they were crossing the desert during their flight from Egypt (Exodus.) It appeared as small white flakes and would not keep overnight except on the sixth day when enough was provided to keep for the seventh day, the Sabbath, on which the travelers were to rest. It tastes like wafers made with honey. Manna appeared miraculously. **It can mean something beneficial that appears or is provided unexpectedly or opportunely (a major aircraft accident is manna to lawyers)** – it is also referred to as spiritual nourishment.

18. **Moses** – Follows archetypal hero’s life – foundling child, rescued by Pharaoh’s daughter, raised to be a prince. Pharaoh ordered all male children of the Hebrews slain. Moses’ mother placed him in a small boat made of bulrushes, and hid him in a marsh, where he was found by Pharaoh’s daughter, who adopted him. When grown, he killed an Egyptian beating a Hebrew slave, so he had to flee Egypt. God spoke to him from a **burning bush**, commanding him to return to Egypt and tell the Pharaoh to “Let my people (the Hebrews) go.” The bush burns but is not consumed. References to the burning bush are **symbolic of initial reluctance, or a message from God.** Pharaoh refused and God sent **ten plagues** to afflict the Egyptians, the last of which was the death of every firstborn son. God **parted the Red Sea** so that the Hebrews could escape. When the Egyptians followed, the sea closed back in on them, and the Hebrews wandered in the wilderness for 40 years (see Manna). Received the Ten Commandments from God on Mount Sinai.

19. **Noah and the Flood** - God set out to destroy the people because of their wickedness. Spared Noah, who lived virtuously, and his family, whom he told to build an ark and take his family and a pair of each of the animals on earth. Rained 40 days and 40 nights until all living creatures drowned except those on ark. A dove sent out by Noah returns with an olive branch signifying it had found land. The **dove and olive branch** now regarded as **symbols of peace.** Ark comes to rest on Mt. Ararat and God makes a covenant with Noah that He will not destroy all flesh by flood again. The sign God uses for this covenant is a **Rainbow**, which is a **symbol for hope, future, and God’s hand in our lives.**

20. **Pharisees** – an ancient Jewish sect; emphasized strict observance of the law; self-righteous; refused contact with any not of their kind. **To be called a Pharisees has come to mean a hypocrite**

21. **Philistine** – The ancient Philistines were the traditional enemies of the Israelites, regarded by them as hostile barbarians. Their name has come to be people who are **indifferent to culture and to the arts and have uncultivated tastes.**

22. **Prodigal Son** – In a parable told by Jesus, a young man squandered the property his father gave him “with riotous living.” He is traditionally known as the Prodigal Son, meaning one who is spendthrift or recklessly extravagant. When, repenting his behavior, the son returned home, he was received with compassion and forgiveness by his father. “Bring forth the best robe and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat, and be merry, for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found” (Luke 15: 11-32). **The terms prodigal and prodigal son are now generally used to refer to a repentant sinner or a returned wanderer, but prodigal means spending money freely and recklessly or wastefully extravagant.**
23. **Revelation** - Last book of the New Testament, also called the *Apocalypse (meaning final catastrophe)*. Written by the Apostle John and foretells the end of the world and the coming of a “new heaven and new earth.”
   - The Tribulation – the hard times predicted before the end of the word – wars, earthquakes, etc.
   - Armageddon – the site of the final and conclusive battle between good and evil – Figuratively “Armageddon” is any great battle or destructive confrontation.
   - Antichrist – An enemy of Christ; he is the person who will appear before the Second Coming and win over many of Jesus’ followers.

24. **Ruth and Naomi** – Ruth is a book in the Old Testament. She was a widow who refused to leave her mother-in-law after the death of her husband, saying “whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God, my God”. **Ruth is the epitome of loyalty and devotion.**

25. **Samson and Delilah** – Samson was an Israelite leader renowned for his strength. He was betrayed by his lover, Delilah, who tricked him into telling her that the secret of his strength lay in his uncut hair. Delilah cut his hair while he slept and then called for the Philistines who captured and blinded Samson. During his captivity, Samson’s hair grew back, and he eventually pulled the Philistine banquet hall down on their heads. **Samson’s hair can be alluded to when referring to a strong or powerful person rendered weak and vulnerable.**

26. **Scapegoat** – The scapegoat was a goat which was sent into the wilderness after a priest had symbolically laid all the sins of the Israelites upon it so that the sins would be taken away. **The word “scapegoat’ has now come to refer to any person who takes the blame for the wrongdoings or failings of others.**

27. **Sodom and Gomorrah** – were towns in ancient Palestine, probably south of the Dead Sea. According to Genesis 19:24, they were destroyed by fire and brimstone (sulphur) from heaven as a punishment for the depravity and wickedness of their inhabitants. Lot, the nephew of Abraham, was allowed to escape from the destruction of Sodom with his family. His wife disobeyed God’s order not to look back at the burning city and was turned into a pillar of salt.

28. **Solomon** – son of David and Bathsheba, was the king of ancient Israel. He was famed for his wisdom and justice. The “judgment of Solomon” refers to his arbitration in a dispute about a baby claimed by each of two women. Solomon proposed dividing the baby in half with his sword, and then gave it to the woman who showed concern for its life.

29. **The Tower of Babel** - Tower built by the descendants of Noah, who intended for it to reach heaven, increase their reputation, and make them like God. God prevents them from completing the tower by giving them different languages. In literature, any reference to the Tower of Babel or to “babel” signifies confusion and noise, or inability to communicate.
Greek & Roman (Classical)
- Unity
- Tragedy/Comedy (Oedipus)
- Fate (man and gods)
- Immortality of Warrior/Hero
- Quest and Journey (often for knowledge)
  - Epic Poetry (Odyssey)
- Democracy
- Compilation of Bible

Medieval
- Brotherhood
- Honor
- Good and Evil
- Hierarchy (Feudalism)
- Faith (Dante’s Divine Comedy)
- Chivalry
- Epic Poetry (Beowulf)
- Epic Tales (Canterbury Tales; Gauain)
- Petrarchan Sonnets

Renaissance (15th-16th c.)
- Ambition & Power
- Romantic love
- Humanism
- Knowledge & Exploration
- Appearance v. Reality
- Superstition
- Shakespearian Tragedy/Comedy
- Sonnets (Shakespearian/ Elizabethan, Spenserian)
- Metaphysical Poetry (John Donne, Andrew Marvell)

Enlightenment/ Neo-Classical (17th-18th c.)
- Order/Structure
- Reverence for Logic and Reason (disdain for superstition)
- Satire (Candide, Gulliver’s Travels)
- Deism (man can survive on his own reason – God stepped out of the world; clockwork universe)
- Return to classical style of drama & poetry
- Letters (imitation of Horace & Virgil style)
- Beginning of “journalism”
- Didactic “teaching” poetry (Alexander Pope)
- Lack of “literature”; focus was more on social/political Improvements

Romanticism (late 18th-early 19th c.)
- Movement away from over-rationalizing/ reason
- Idealistic outlook
- Nature is man’s greatest inspiration
- Power of imagination & supernatural influence
  - Gothic literature is “dark side” of imagination, individual, supernatural
- Emotions and feelings = Truth
- Focus on Individual

Romanticism (cont’d)
- Romantic Poets (Wordsworth, Coleridge, Blake, Keats, Shelley)
- American Transcendentalism (Emerson, Thoreau)
- Women writers (Jane Austen, Mary Shelley)

Victorian (mid-19th c.)
- Industrialization and Mechanization
- Male Dominance
- Repressed Sexuality
- Heredity over Environment (social Darwinism)
- Cultural Supremacy/ Imperialism
- Sentimental Novels (Dickens, Bronte sisters)
- Aestheticism/ Decadence (Oscar Wilde)
- Pre-Raphaelites (writers who longed for morality of Medieval era)

Realism (late 19th-early 20th c.)
- Regionalism (Mark Twain)
- Naturalism (Whitman, Dickinson, Crane)
- Determinism
- Psychological Realism
- Slice of life (focus on one event)
- Subject to nature’s laws (fatalism)
- Environment controls lives
- Social criticism
- Mind influences action
- America - rejection of emotion and “dark side of humanity” as response to Civil War

Modern (mid-20th c.)
- Loss of Hope/Identity as result of two World Wars
- Existentialism (Kafka)
- Alienation/Isolation/Detachment
- Absurdity (Theatre of the Absurd)
- Disillusion/ Cynicism
- Hopelessness
- Exploitation
- Lost Generation Writers (Hemingway, Fitzgerald)
- Harlem Renaissance (Hughes, Ellison)
- Dystopian Literature/ Skepticism of Technology (Brave New World)

Post-Modern/ Contemporary (late 20th c.- 21st c.)
- Deconstruction (taking everything apart)
- Celebrating Cultural Diversity (salad bowl)
- Gender studies (Feminism and gay/lesbian)
- Technology, Science, Exploration, and Experimentation
- Science Fiction/ Dystopian Literature (Bradbury)
- Change (at rapid pace)
- Globalization/Multiculturalism (Hurston, Cisneros)
- Fragmented, Dream-like poetry (T.S. Eliot)
- Magical Realism (surrealism)- (Gabriel Garcia Marquez)
Literary Criticism:
Questions for a Variety of Approaches

I. Moral/Philosophical Approach: This approach focuses on themes, view of the world, moral statements, author’s philosophy, etc.

- According to this work’s view of life, what is mankind’s relationship to God? To the universe?
- What is the author’s attitude toward his world? Toward fate? Toward God?
- What is the author’s conception of good and evil?
- What does the work say about the nature of good or evil?
- What does the work say about human nature?
- Maturity, sincerity, honesty, sensitivity, and/or courage become important criteria in determining the worth of literature and art. Is the author and his/her treatment of subject (both character and theme) mature, sincere, honest, sensitive, or courageous? How so, and how does knowing this help us approach the text in a meaningful way?
- Does the text seek to corrupt or negatively influence the reader? How so and/or why?
- What moral lesson or ethical teaching is the text or through character, plot, or theme?
- How do characters, settings, and plot events represent or allegorize moral or ethical principles?
- Does the work in question pose a pragmatic or moral lesson or philosophical idea? What view of life does the story present? Which character best articulates this viewpoint?

II. Historical/Biographical Approach: This approach focuses on connection of work to the historical period in which it was written; literary historians attempt to connect the historical background of the work to specific aspects of the work. Biographical approach focuses on connection of work to author’s personal experiences.

- How does it reflect the time in which it was written?
- How accurately does the story depict the time in which it is set?
- What literary or historical influences helped to shape the form and content of the work?
- What does the story reflect the attitudes and beliefs of the time in which it was written or set? (Consider beliefs and attitudes related to race, religion, politics, gender, society, philosophy, etc.)
- What other literary works may have influenced the writer?
- What historical events or movements might have influenced this writer?
- How would characters and events in this story have been viewed by the writer’s contemporaries?
- Does the story reveal or contradict the prevailing values of the time in which it was written? Does it provide an opposing view of the period’s prevailing values?
- How important is the historical context (the work’s and the reader’s) to interpreting the work?
- What aspects of the author’s personal life are relevant to this story?
- What of the author’s stated beliefs are reflected in the work?
- Does the writer challenge or support the values of her contemporaries?
- Do any of the events in the story correspond to events experienced by the author?
- Do any of the characters in the story correspond to real people?

III. Cultural/Post-Colonial Approach: This approach focuses on man’s relationship to others in society, politics, business, language, values, & religion. It is a focus on PLACE in literature. Post-colonial critics are concerned with literature produced by colonial powers and works produced by those who were/are colonized. Post-colonial theory looks at issues of power, economics, politics, religion, and culture and how these elements work in relation to colonial hegemony (western colonizers controlling the colonized).

- What language/characters/events present in the work reflect the current events of the author’s day?
- How are such events interpreted and presented? How are events’ interpretation and presentation a product of the culture of the author?
- Does the work’s presentation support or condemn the event? Can it be seen to do both?
- How does this portrayal criticize the leading political figures or movements of the day?
- How does the work consider traditionally marginalized populations? How does the literary text, explicitly or allegorically, represent various aspects of colonial oppression?
- What does the text reveal about the problematic of post-colonial identity, including the relationship between personal and cultural identity and such issues as double consciousness and hybridity?
- What person(s) or groups does the work identify as “other” or stranger? How are such persons/groups described and treated?
- What does the text reveal about the politics and/or psychology of anti-colonialist resistance?
- What does the text reveal about the operations of cultural difference - the ways in which race, religion, class, gender, sexual orientation, cultural beliefs, and customs combine to form individual identity - in shaping our perceptions of ourselves, others, and the world in which we live?
- How does a literary text in the Western canon reinforce or undermine colonialist ideology through its representation of colonialization and/or its inappropriate silence about colonized peoples?
IV. Marxist Approach: This approach focuses on man’s economic relationship and hierarchy to others in society, politics, business, and sometimes even religion. Emphasis is placed on social classes, with particular focus on the “have-nots” in society and how they are treated within literature.

- Whom does it benefit if the work or effort is accepted/successful/believed, etc.?
- What is the social class of the author?
- Which class does the work claim to represent?
- What values does it reinforce? What values does it subvert?
- What social classes do the characters represent? How do characters from different classes interact or conflict?
- What is the relationship between the characters and their society?
- Does the story address societal issues, such as race, gender, and class?
- How do social forces shape the power relationships between groups or classes of people in the story? Who has the power, and who doesn’t? Why?
- How does the story reflect urban, rural, or suburban values?
- What does the work say about economic or social power? Who has it and who doesn’t? Any Marxist leanings evident?
- Does the story address issues of economic exploitation? What role does money play?
- How do economic conditions determine the direction of the characters’ lives?
- Can the protagonist’s struggle be seen as symbolic of a larger class struggle?
- How does the work reflect urban, rural, or suburban values?
- What does the work say about economic or social power? Who has it and who doesn’t? Any Marxist leanings evident?
- Does the story address issues of economic exploitation? What role does money play?
- How do economic conditions determine the direction of the characters’ lives?
- Can the protagonist’s struggle be seen as symbolic of a larger class struggle?
- How does the story reflect the hopes, fears, and expectations of entire cultures (for example, the ancient Greeks)?
- What aspects of the work create deep universal responses to it?
- How does the story reflect the experiences of death and rebirth?
- What archetypal events occur in the story? (Quest? Initiation? Scapegoating? Descents into the “underworld”? Ascents into “heaven”?)
- What archetypal images occur? (Water, rising sun, setting sun, symbolic colors)
- How and why are these archetypes embodied in the work?

VI. Feminist Criticism: This approach examines images of women and concepts of the feminine in myth and literature; uses the psychological, archetypal, and sociological approaches; often focuses on female characters who have been neglected in previous criticism. Feminist critics attempt to correct or supplement what they regard as a predominantly male-dominated critical perspective.

- How are women’s lives portrayed in the work?
- How do male and female characters relate to one another? Are these relationships sources of conflict? Are these conflicts resolved?
- What are the power relationships between men and women (or characters assuming male/female roles)?
- Does the work challenge or affirm traditional views of women?
- What marital expectations are imposed on the characters? What effect do these expectations have?
- What behavioral expectations are imposed on the characters? What effect do these expectations have?
- If a female character were male, how would the story be different (and vice versa)?
- What does the work reveal about the operations (economically, politically, socially, or psychologically) of patriarchy?
- What does the work imply about the possibilities of sisterhood as a mode of resisting patriarchy?
**THE GREAT QUESTIONS**

Great literature of all cultures deals with one or more of the following questions:

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**I. What is the nature of the universe – the cosmos?**

- Is the universe hostile / beneficent / indifferent to humanity?
- What is the nature of evil? What is the source of evil?
- Why, if God is good, does He allow evil to exist? (The Problem of Evil)
- Why, if God is just, does He allow the good to suffer? (The Problem of Pain)

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**II. What is God’s relationship to humans?**

- Does God exist?
- Is God the Creator?
- Is God concerned about humanity?
- Is God indifferent toward humanity?
- Should humans fear / obey / love / sacrifice to / praise/ propitiate / pray to God?

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**What is the nature of God?**

- Is God (gods) basically:
- Is God all good?
- Does God Himself bring evil to humanity and cause suffering?
- Is evil a result of humanity turning away from God?

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**III. What is the nature of human beings?**

- Are humans basically good or evil?
- Are people determined or do we have free will?
- Are people noble – more divine than animal?
- Are people degraded, corrupt – more animal than spirit?
- Are people a balance? If so, how is the balance preserved?
- What is the human being’s greatest faculty: reason? imagination?
- Do humans have a soul? Can they achieve immortality? How?
- Are humans in the universe by design or by chance? If by design, why?
- What is a human’s basic purpose in life? Is there a purpose?
  - To save the human soul?
  - To find happiness? If so, what is happiness and how are we to achieve it?
  - Is everything futile?
- What is the “good” life for humans? How can life gain significance?
- How can people give value to their lives?
- How can people find their greatest satisfaction, completeness, fulfillment?
- How do people establish values, ethics, morals? What are their bases?

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**IV. What is the relationship of one human to another?**

- How are we to treat people? Are all people to be treated as equals?
- On what basis should / do we evaluate our fellow humans?
- Are we basically social animals or anti-social ones?
- How are we to establish an orderly existence with other humans?
- What is the “ideal” or “good” society? How can it be established?
- What must be sacrificed for a “perfect” society?
- Under what social system can people best flourish?
- On what basis should we regulate our association with other people?

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Adapted from Dr. Dorothy Kiker, California State University, Fullerton
THEME VOCABULARY

Adapted from "Brendan Kenny's List of Abstract Ideas for Forming Theme Statements":

Alienation
Ambition
Appearance v. Reality
Betrayal
Bureaucracy
Chance/ Fate/ Luck
Children/ Youth
Cruelty/ Cowardice
Cruelty/ Violence
Custom/ Tradition
Death/ Rebirth
Defeat/ Failure
Despair/ Discontent/
Disillusionment
Domination/ Suppression
Dreams/ Fantasies
Education
Escape
Exile
Faith/ Loss of Faith
Falsity/ Pretense
Family/ Parenthood/
Marriage
Freedom
Free Will/ Fate
Friendship
Game/ Contests/ Sports
Greed
Growth/ Maturity
Guilt
Heart v. Reason
Heaven/ Paradise/ Utopia
Hell/ Dystopia
Homosexuality
Home
Identity
Initiation
Instinct
Journey (literal or psychological)
Jealousy
Lust
Loyalty/ Disloyalty
Love/ Hate
Loyalty/ Disloyalty
Memory/ The Past
Men/ Patriarchy
Mob Psychology
Morality/ Right v. Wrong
Music/ Dance
Mystery
Nature
Patriotism
Persistence/ Perseverance/
Willpower
Poverty
Prejudice
Pride/ Hubris
Prophecy
Rage/ Anger
Redemption/ Forgiveness
Repentance
Resistance/ Rebellion
Revenge/ Retribution
Ritual/ Ceremony
Sacredness/ Sanctity
Sacrifice
Scapegoat/ Victim
Social Status (class)
Society
Supernatural
Technology
Time/ Eternity
Vice
War
Women/ Feminism

IDENTIFYING & EXPRESSING THEME

Method A (sample from Writing Essays about Literature by Kelley Griffith):

Subject

1. What is the work about? Provide a one-to-three-word answer. See “Theme Vocabulary” above.

Theme

2. What is the author’s message with regard to #1 as it pertains to the human condition? In other words, what comment does the work make on human nature, the human condition, human motivation, or human ambition?

3. In identifying and stating theme, be sure that the observation

   a) Is not too terse to express the complexity of human experience
   b) Avoids moralizing words such as should and ought
   c) Avoids specific reference to plot and characters
   d) Avoids absolute words such as anyone, all, none, everything, and everyone

4. Using both dependent and independent clauses, write a complex sentence which fulfills the requirements above and which explains one of the major themes of the work.

Sample for Anna Karenina:

Subject: Sacred versus Profane love

Theme: Although people can, through no fault of their own, become entrapped in long-lasting and destructive relationships, “sacred” commitments, like marriage and parenthood, take precedence over extramarital “loves,” no matter how passionate and deeply felt they may be.
YELLOW PAGES OF LITERATURE

**TONE (POSITIVE)**

**Happiness**
- amiable*
- elevated*
- sprightly*
  - cheery
  - contented*
  - ecstatic
  - elevated*

**Pleasure**
- cheerful
- satisfied
  - enraptured*
  - peaceful
  - playful
  - whimsical*

**Friendliness, Courtesy**
- accommodating*
- confiding
- helpful
- polite
- tender
  - approving
  - caressing
  - comforting
  - forgiving
  - obliging*
  - soothing
  - compassionate
  - gracious*
  - pitying
  - sympathetic

**Animation**
- ardent*
- excited
- feverish*
- lively
  - breathless
  - brisk
  - crisp
  - eager
  - energetic
  - exalted*

**Romance**
- affectionate
- lustful
  - amorous*
  - erotic*
  - fanciful*
  - ideal*

**Tranquility**
- calm
- relaxed
  - hopeful
  - meditative*
  - optimistic
  - serene
  - spiritual
  - dreamy

**TONE (NEUTRAL)**

**General**
- authoritative*
- disbeliefing
- matter-of-fact
  - baffled*
  - formal
  - objective*
  - shocked
  - detached*
  - learned
  - reminiscence*
  - urgent

**Rational/Logical**
- admonitory*
- curious
- frank*
  - argumentative
  - candid*
  - coaxing
  - critical
  - doubting
  - explanatory
  - insinuating*
  - pleading
  - thoughtful

**Self-Control**
- solemn*
- gentle
- wary*
  - serious
  - temperate*
  - imperturbable*
  - simple
  - mild
  - cool

**Apathy**
- blase*
- dry*
- indifferent*
- sluggish*
  - bored
  - colorless
  - defeated
  - dispassionate*
  - dull
  - feeble*
  - helpless
  - hopeless
  - inert*
  - languid*
  - monotonous*
  - resigned*
  - stoical*
  - sophisticated*
  - vacant
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<td>flippant*</td>
<td>giddy*</td>
<td>humorous</td>
<td>insolent*</td>
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<td>irreverent*</td>
<td>joking</td>
<td>malicious*</td>
<td>mock-heroic*</td>
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<tr>
<td>mocking</td>
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<td>patronizing*</td>
<td>pompous*</td>
<td>quizical*</td>
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<td>sarcastic</td>
<td>sardonic*</td>
<td>satiric*</td>
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<td>sharp</td>
<td>silly</td>
<td>taunting</td>
<td>teasing</td>
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<td>whimsical*</td>
<td>wry*</td>
<td>belittling</td>
<td>haughty*</td>
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<td>playful</td>
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<td>uproarious</td>
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<table>
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<td>disgruntled*</td>
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<tr>
<td>harsh</td>
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<tr>
<td>insulting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shameful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uninterested</td>
</tr>
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</table>

| **Sadness**      |
| despairing       | despondent* | foreboding* | gloomy | bleak |
| melancholy*      | maulin* | regretful | tragic |         |

| **Pain**         |
| annoyed          | biter | bored | crushed | disappointed |
| disgusted        | dismal* | fretful* | irritable | sore |
| mournful         | pathetic | plaintive* | querulous* |         |
| sorrowful        | sour | sulky | sullen* |         |
| uneasy*          | vexed* | worried |         |         |

| **Unfriendliness** |
| accusing         | belittling | boorish* | cutting | densive* |
| disparaging*     | impudent* | pitiless | reproving* | scolding |
| severe           | spiteful | suspicious | unsocial | reproachful* |

| **Anger**        |
| belligerent*     | furious | livid* | wrathful* | savage |
| indignant*       | enraged |         |         |         |

| **Passion**      |
| fierce           | frantic* | greedy | voracious* | hysterical |
| insane           | impetuous* | impulsive* | jealous | nervous |
| reckless         | wild |         |         |         |

| **Arrogance/Self-Importance** |
| boastful          | bold | condescending | contemptuous | pretentious* |
| pompous*          | supercilious* | pedantic* | didactic* | bombastic* |
| self-righteous*   | assured | confident | defiant | dignified |
| domineering       | egotistical | imperious* | impressive |         |
| knowing           | lofty | peremptory* | profound* |         |
| resolute*         | sententious* | stiff | saucy* | proud |
### Sorrow/Fear/Worry
- agitated
- confused
- grave*
- ominous*
- serious
- compromised
- anxious
- depressed
- hollow*
- paranoid*
- staid*
- apologetic*
- disturbed
- morose*
- pessimistic
- enigmatic*
- apprehensive*
- embarrassed
- nervous
- poignantly
- regretful
- concerned
- fearful
- numb
- remorseful*

### Submission/Timidity
- aghast*
- alarmed
- contrite*
- ingratiating*
- resigned
- submissive*
- tremulous*
- ashamed
- self-deprecatory*
- meek*
- respectful
- surprised
- unpretentious*
- astonished
- docile*
- modest*
- reverent*
- sycophantic*
- willing
- astounded
- obedient
- servile*
- terrified
- fawning*
- ingratiation*
- meek*
- obedient
- servile*

### Confusion
- baffled
- concerned
- bewildered
- disbelief
- perturbed
- disconcerted
- disillusioned
- bemused
- befuddled

### VERBS
These verbs will be especially effective when the subject is the author or a character. They are excellent replacements for “be” verbs and instrumental in the formulation of thesis and theme statements. Careful use of these verbs can result in precise identification of an author’s purpose. Follow your teacher’s directions to categorize the verbs as transitive, intransitive, positive, negative, or neutral.

### VERBS FOR LITERARY ANALYSIS

<table>
<thead>
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<th>intransitive</th>
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<td>adopts</td>
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<td>allows</td>
<td>alludes*</td>
<td>alters*</td>
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<td>analyzes</td>
<td>approaches</td>
<td>argues</td>
<td>ascertains*</td>
<td>assesses*</td>
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<td>attempts</td>
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<td>characterizes</td>
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<td>completes</td>
<td>concerns</td>
<td>concludes</td>
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<td>considers</td>
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<td>disputes</td>
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<td>dramatizes</td>
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<td>elicits*</td>
<td>emphasizes</td>
<td>encounters</td>
<td>enhances</td>
<td>enriches</td>
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<td>excludes</td>
<td>expands</td>
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<td>explains</td>
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<td>extends</td>
<td>extrapolates*</td>
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<td>foreshadows</td>
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<td>heights</td>
<td>highlights</td>
<td>hints</td>
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<td>honors</td>
<td>identifies</td>
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<td>includes</td>
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<td>interprets</td>
<td>interrupts</td>
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<td>justifies</td>
<td>juxtaposes*</td>
<td>lambasts*”</td>
<td>laments*</td>
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<td>maintains</td>
<td>makes</td>
<td>manages</td>
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<td>manipulates</td>
<td>minimizes</td>
<td>moralizes*</td>
<td>muses*</td>
<td>notes</td>
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<td>opposes</td>
<td>organizes</td>
<td>overstates</td>
<td>outlines</td>
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<td>patronizes*</td>
<td>performs</td>
<td>permits</td>
<td>personifies*</td>
<td>persuades</td>
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<tr>
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<td>portrays</td>
<td>postulates*</td>
<td>prepares</td>
<td>presents</td>
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<tr>
<td>presumes</td>
<td>produces</td>
<td>projects</td>
<td>promotes</td>
<td>proposes</td>
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<td>provides</td>
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<td>questions</td>
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<td>refers</td>
<td>regards</td>
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<td>rejects</td>
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<td>results</td>
<td>reveals</td>
<td>ridicules</td>
<td>satirizes*</td>
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<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
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<td>seems</td>
<td>sees</td>
<td>selects</td>
<td>specifies</td>
<td>supplies</td>
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<tr>
<td>states</td>
<td>strives*</td>
<td>suggests</td>
<td>summarizes</td>
<td>sympathizes</td>
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<tr>
<td>supports</td>
<td>suppresses*</td>
<td>symbolizes</td>
<td>verifies*</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>understands</td>
<td>vacillates*</td>
<td>values</td>
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**VERBS TO USE INSTEAD OF EXEMPLIFIES**

<table>
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<th>appears</th>
<th>asserts</th>
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<th>certifies</th>
<th>confirms</th>
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<tr>
<td>connotes*</td>
<td>corroborates*</td>
<td>defines</td>
<td>demonstrates</td>
<td>denotes*</td>
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<td>depicts</td>
<td>discloses*</td>
<td>elucidates*</td>
<td>endorses*</td>
<td>establishes</td>
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<tr>
<td>evinces*</td>
<td>exhibits</td>
<td>expounds*</td>
<td>exposes</td>
<td>intimates*</td>
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<tr>
<td>manifests*</td>
<td>points to</td>
<td>proves</td>
<td>ratifies*</td>
<td>relates</td>
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<td>substantiates*</td>
<td>suggests</td>
<td>typifies*</td>
<td>upholds</td>
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<tr>
<td>validates*</td>
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**ADJECTIVES FOR USE IN LITERARY/RHETORICAL DISCUSSION**

**DESCRIBING THE AUTHOR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>cultured</th>
<th>intellectual</th>
<th>erudite*</th>
<th>well-read</th>
<th>sagacious*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sensible</td>
<td>rational</td>
<td>philosophic*</td>
<td>analytical</td>
<td>imaginative</td>
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<td>perceptive</td>
<td>visionary*</td>
<td>prophetic*</td>
<td>optimistic</td>
<td>broad-minded*</td>
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<tr>
<td>idealistic*</td>
<td>spiritual</td>
<td>orthodox*</td>
<td>unorthodox*</td>
<td>sympathetic</td>
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<td>original</td>
<td>whimsical*</td>
<td>humorous</td>
<td>conservative*</td>
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<tr>
<td>liberal*</td>
<td>progressive*</td>
<td>radical*</td>
<td>reactionary*</td>
<td>unprejudiced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>realistic*</td>
<td>romantic*</td>
<td>shallow</td>
<td>superficial</td>
<td>bigoted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opinionated*</td>
<td>intolerant</td>
<td>hypocritical*</td>
<td>fanatical*</td>
<td>provincial*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>narrow-minded*</td>
<td>sentimental</td>
<td>skeptical*</td>
<td>cynical*</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**DESCRIBING STYLE/CONTENT**

| lucid* | graphic* | intelligible* | explicit* | precise |
| exact | concise* | succinct* | condensed* | pithy* |
| piquant* | aphoristic* | syllogistic* | allusive* | metaphorical |
| poetic | prosaic* | plain | simple | homespun* |
| pure | vigorous* | forceful | eloquent* | sonorous* |
| fluent | glib* | natural | restrained* | smooth |
| polished* | classical | artistic | bombastic* | extravagant |
| rhetorical* | turgid* | pompous* | grandiose* | obscure* |
| vague | diffuse* | verbose* | pedantic* | ponderous* |
| ungraceful | harsh | abrupt* | labored* | awkward |
| unpolished | crude* | vulgar* | formal | artificial |
| utilitarian* | humanistic* | pragmatic* | naturalistic* | impressionistic* |
| subjective* | melodramatic* | fanciful* | authentic* | plausible* |
| credible* | recondite* | controversial | mystical* | improbable* |
| absurd | trivial | commonplace | heretical* | scholarly |
| didactic | philosophical | spiritual | realistic | expressionistic |
| objective | esoteric | piquant | orthodox | ironic |
| satirical | heretical | absurd |          |         |

**DESCRIBING DICTION**

| high or formal | low or informal | neutral | precise | exact |
| concrete | abstract* | plain | simple | homespun |
| esoteric | learned | cultured | literal* | figurative* |
| connotative* | symbolic | picturesque* | sensuous* | literary |
| provincial* | colloquial* | slang* | idiomatic* | neologistic* |
| inexact | euphemistic* | trite* | obscure* | pedantic* |
| bombastic* | grotesque | vulgar* | jargon* | emotional |
| obtuse* | moralistic* | ordinary | scholarly | insipid* |
| proper | pretentious* | old-fashioned |          |         |
**DESCRIBING SYNTAX**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>loose*</th>
<th>compound*</th>
<th>imperative*</th>
<th>euphonic*</th>
<th>rambling</th>
<th>spare</th>
<th>obscurating*</th>
<th>musical</th>
<th>thudding</th>
<th>erudite*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>periodic*</td>
<td>complex*</td>
<td>exclamatory*</td>
<td>rhythmical</td>
<td>tortuous</td>
<td>austere*</td>
<td>journalistic*</td>
<td>lilt*</td>
<td>dry</td>
<td>grating*</td>
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<tr>
<td>balanced*</td>
<td>compound-complex*</td>
<td>telegraphic*</td>
<td>epigrammatic*</td>
<td>jerky</td>
<td>unadorned*</td>
<td>terse*</td>
<td>lyrical*</td>
<td>ornate*</td>
<td>staccato*</td>
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<td>declarative*</td>
<td>antithetic*</td>
<td>emphatic</td>
<td>cacophonous*</td>
<td>jumbled</td>
<td>laconic*</td>
<td>elegant</td>
<td>elaborate</td>
<td>abrupt*</td>
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<tr>
<td>simple*</td>
<td>interrogative*</td>
<td>incoherent</td>
<td>monotonous</td>
<td>chaotic</td>
<td>solid</td>
<td>flowery</td>
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**DESCRIBING ORGANIZATION/STRUCTURE/POINT OF VIEW**

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<th>contemplative*</th>
<th>omniscient*</th>
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<td>objective*</td>
<td>subjective*</td>
<td>clinical*</td>
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<tr>
<td>flashback</td>
<td>nostalgic*</td>
<td>impersonal*</td>
<td>dramatic*</td>
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</table>

**DESCRIBING IMAGERY** (Substitute these precise adjectives for less precise ones such as *vivid*, *colorful*, and *powerful*.)

<table>
<thead>
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<th>auditory*</th>
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<td>religious</td>
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<tr>
<td>gustatory*</td>
<td>sensual*</td>
<td>animal</td>
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<tr>
<td>olfactory*</td>
<td>sacred</td>
<td>war/military</td>
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</table>

of death, decay, decomposition

**DESCRIBING CHARACTERS**

**Physical Qualities** (Great substitutions for *pretty* and *ugly*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>manly</th>
<th>strapping*</th>
<th>fair</th>
<th>graceful</th>
<th>ravishing*</th>
<th>adept*</th>
<th>lively</th>
<th>sickly</th>
<th>effeminate*</th>
<th>unkempt*</th>
<th>graceless</th>
<th>repellent*</th>
<th>loathsome*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>virile*</td>
<td>strapping*</td>
<td>comely*</td>
<td>elegant</td>
<td>dapper*</td>
<td>skillful</td>
<td>spirited*</td>
<td>frail</td>
<td>unwomanly</td>
<td>slovenly*</td>
<td>bizarre*</td>
<td>repugnant*</td>
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<tr>
<td>robust*</td>
<td>muscular</td>
<td>handsome</td>
<td>shapely</td>
<td>immaculate</td>
<td>agile*</td>
<td>vivacious*</td>
<td>decrepit*</td>
<td>hideous</td>
<td>awkward</td>
<td>grotesque</td>
<td>repulsive</td>
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<tr>
<td>hardy*</td>
<td>brawny*</td>
<td>dainty</td>
<td>attractive</td>
<td>adroit*</td>
<td>nimble*</td>
<td>weak</td>
<td>emaciated*</td>
<td>homely*</td>
<td>clumsy</td>
<td>incongruous*</td>
<td>odious*</td>
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<tr>
<td>sturdy</td>
<td>lovely</td>
<td>delicate</td>
<td>winsome*</td>
<td>dexterous*</td>
<td>active</td>
<td>feeble*</td>
<td>cadaverous*</td>
<td>course*</td>
<td>ungainly*</td>
<td>ghastly</td>
<td>invidious*</td>
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**Mental Qualities** (Great substitutions for *smart* and *stupid*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>apt*</th>
<th>prudent*</th>
<th>subtle*</th>
<th>unschooled*</th>
<th>irrational</th>
<th>simple</th>
<th>deranged*</th>
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<td>precocious*</td>
<td>rational</td>
<td>observer</td>
<td>cunning*</td>
<td>unlettered*</td>
<td>puerile*</td>
<td>thick-skulled*</td>
<td>demented*</td>
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<td>reasonable</td>
<td>clever</td>
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<td>foolish</td>
<td>idiotic</td>
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<td>sensible</td>
<td>ingenious*</td>
<td>wily*</td>
<td>illiterate*</td>
<td>fatuous*</td>
<td>imbecilic*</td>
<td>eloquent*</td>
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<tr>
<td>astute*</td>
<td>gifted</td>
<td>shrewd*</td>
<td>inventive</td>
<td>unintelligent</td>
<td>inane*</td>
<td>vacuous*</td>
<td>witless*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Moral Qualities** (Great substitutions for *good* and *bad*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>idealistic*</th>
<th>guileless*</th>
<th>undefiled*</th>
<th>puritanical*</th>
<th>decent</th>
<th>notorious*</th>
<th>immoral*</th>
<th>ribald*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>innocent</td>
<td>upright*</td>
<td>temperate*</td>
<td>truthful</td>
<td>respectable</td>
<td>vicious</td>
<td>unprincipled*</td>
<td>vulgar*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>virtuous*</td>
<td>exemplary</td>
<td>abstentious*</td>
<td>honorable</td>
<td>wicked</td>
<td>incorrigible*</td>
<td>reprobate*</td>
<td>intertemperate*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faultless</td>
<td>chaste*</td>
<td>austere*</td>
<td>trustworthy</td>
<td>corrupt*</td>
<td>dissembling*</td>
<td>depraved*</td>
<td>indecent*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>righteous*</td>
<td>pure</td>
<td>ascetic*</td>
<td>straightforward*</td>
<td>degenerate*</td>
<td>infamous*</td>
<td>dissolute*</td>
<td>dissolute*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deceitful</td>
<td>Dishonest</td>
<td>Unscrupulous*</td>
<td>Dishonorable*</td>
<td>Base*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vile*</td>
<td>Foul*</td>
<td>Recalcitrant*</td>
<td>Philandering*</td>
<td>Opportunistic*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Spiritual Qualities** *(More great substitutions for good and bad)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious</th>
<th>Reverent</th>
<th>Pious*</th>
<th>Devout*</th>
<th>Faithful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regenerate*</td>
<td>Holy</td>
<td>Saintly</td>
<td>Angelic</td>
<td>Skeptical*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agnostic*</td>
<td>Atheistic*</td>
<td>Irreligious*</td>
<td>Impious*</td>
<td>Irreverent*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profane*</td>
<td>Sacrosanct*</td>
<td>Materialistic</td>
<td>Carnal*</td>
<td>Godless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diabolic*</td>
<td>Fiendlike*</td>
<td>Blasphemous*</td>
<td>Unregenerate*</td>
<td>Altruistic*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charitable*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Social Qualities** *(Terrific substitutions for nice and mean)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Civil*</th>
<th>Amicable*</th>
<th>Contentious*</th>
<th>Unpolished*</th>
<th>Sullen*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taciturn*</td>
<td>Courteous</td>
<td>Cooperative</td>
<td>Cordial*</td>
<td>Affable*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitable*</td>
<td>Gracious*</td>
<td>Amiable*</td>
<td>Urbane*</td>
<td>Congenial*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convivial*</td>
<td>Jovial*</td>
<td>Jolly</td>
<td>Antagonistic*</td>
<td>Suave*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-social*</td>
<td>Acrimonious*</td>
<td>Quarrelsome</td>
<td>Insolent*</td>
<td>Ill-bred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discourteous</td>
<td>Impudent*</td>
<td>Impolite</td>
<td>Insolent*</td>
<td>Ill-bred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ill-mannered</td>
<td>Unrefined</td>
<td>Rustic*</td>
<td>Impolite</td>
<td>Courteous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brusque*</td>
<td>Churlish*</td>
<td>Fawning*</td>
<td>Polite</td>
<td>Courteous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grumpy</td>
<td>Fructious*</td>
<td>Crusty*</td>
<td>Polite</td>
<td>Courteous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waspish*</td>
<td>Taciturn*</td>
<td>Reticent*</td>
<td>Polite</td>
<td>Courteous</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**General Personal Qualities** *(possibilities are endless, but any of these serve a purpose to characterize succinctly)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distinguished</th>
<th>Noble</th>
<th>Eminent</th>
<th>Illustrious</th>
<th>Admireable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Influential</td>
<td>Impressive</td>
<td>Imposing</td>
<td>Well-bred</td>
<td>Gentle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refined</td>
<td>Aristocratic</td>
<td>Cultured</td>
<td>Generous</td>
<td>Benevolent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charitable</td>
<td>Magnanimous</td>
<td>Munificent</td>
<td>Altruistic</td>
<td>philanthropic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humane</td>
<td>Merciful</td>
<td>Gentle</td>
<td>Kindly</td>
<td>Patient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-suffering</td>
<td>Sympathetic</td>
<td>Compassionate</td>
<td>Tolerant</td>
<td>Indulgent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forbearing</td>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>Radical</td>
<td>Reactionary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambitious</td>
<td>Conscientious</td>
<td>Persevering</td>
<td>Industrious</td>
<td>Persistent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficient</td>
<td>Assiduous</td>
<td>Diligent</td>
<td>Resourceful</td>
<td>Uncompromising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scrupulous</td>
<td>Punctual</td>
<td>Earnest</td>
<td>Zealous</td>
<td>Enthusiastic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong-willed</td>
<td>Determined</td>
<td>Resolve</td>
<td>Confident</td>
<td>Self-reliant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plucky</td>
<td>Valorous</td>
<td>Intrepid</td>
<td>Audacious</td>
<td>Courageous</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indomitable</td>
<td>Demure</td>
<td>Sober</td>
<td>Staid</td>
<td>Solemn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Serious</td>
<td>Sedate</td>
<td>Discreet</td>
<td>Caution</td>
<td>Wary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Circumspect</td>
<td>Garrulous</td>
<td>Elloquent</td>
<td>Persuasive</td>
<td>Reserved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taciturn*</td>
<td>Laconic</td>
<td>Thirsty</td>
<td>Witty</td>
<td>Sensitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considerate</td>
<td>Responsive</td>
<td>Flippant</td>
<td>Frugal</td>
<td>Misanthropic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coy</td>
<td>Pert</td>
<td>Naive</td>
<td>Artless</td>
<td>Ingenious</td>
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<tr>
<td>Candid</td>
<td>Unaffected</td>
<td>Reticent</td>
<td>Diffident</td>
<td>Timid/meek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gullible</td>
<td>Shy</td>
<td>Modest</td>
<td>Unassuming</td>
<td>Docile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humble</td>
<td>Self-effacing</td>
<td>Placid</td>
<td>Serene/tranquil</td>
<td>Impassive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amenable</td>
<td>Tractable</td>
<td>Phlegmatic</td>
<td>Imperturbable</td>
<td>Stoical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonchalant</td>
<td>Indifferent</td>
<td>Melancholic</td>
<td>Moody</td>
<td>Saturnine</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philosophical</td>
<td>Pensive</td>
<td>Insignificant</td>
<td>Petty</td>
<td>Parsimonious</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mediocore</td>
<td>Ordinary</td>
<td>Pomposus</td>
<td>Contemptuous</td>
<td>Disdainful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stingy</td>
<td>Niggardly</td>
<td>Oppressive</td>
<td>Cruel</td>
<td>Vindictive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominering</td>
<td>Impeccable</td>
<td>Truculent</td>
<td>Intolerant</td>
<td>Dogmatic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruthless</td>
<td>Brutish</td>
<td>Slothful</td>
<td>Listless</td>
<td>Lethargic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prejudiced</td>
<td>Lazy</td>
<td>Inefficient</td>
<td>Incompetent</td>
<td>Bungling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lackadaisical</td>
<td>Parasitic</td>
<td>Dilatory</td>
<td>Remiss</td>
<td>Fickle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worthless</td>
<td>Unambitious</td>
<td>Irresolute</td>
<td>Capricious</td>
<td>Unstable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unreliable</td>
<td>Erratic</td>
<td>Timorous</td>
<td>Craven</td>
<td>Mikeous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irresponsible</td>
<td>Cowardly</td>
<td>Headstrong</td>
<td>Impulsive</td>
<td>Willful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frivolous</td>
<td>Silly</td>
<td>Headstrong</td>
<td>Impudent</td>
<td>Reckless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impetuous</td>
<td>Rash</td>
<td>Indiscreet</td>
<td>Apathetic</td>
<td>Callous</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
prodigal | extravagant | decadent | profligate | affected
pretentious | insincere | artificial | hypocritical | pharisaical
sanctimonious | overconfident | self-centered | vain | boastful
egotistical | haughty | conceived | bumptious | arrogant
obstinate | stubborn | unruly | rebellious | obdurate
mulish | recalcitrant | refractory | squeamish | fastidious
self-indulgent | mercenary | venal | avaricious | envious
gluttonous | voracious | pernicious | treacherous | traitorous
eccentric | quixotic | smug | complacent | obnoxious
reprehensible | contemptible | malicious | scurrilous | insidious
malignant

**NOUNS FOR USE IN LITERARY/RHETORICAL DISCUSSION**

**ANALYZING CHARACTERS**
foil* | nemesis* | adversary* | protagonist* | antagonist*
confidante* | doppelganger* | narrator (unknown, reliable, naïve)

**ANALYZING STRUCTURE/ORGANIZATION/POINT OF VIEW**
foreshadowing | epiphany* | analogy* | extended metaphor* | shifts
parallel structure | comparison/contrast | transition | sequence | definition
juxtaposition* | anecdote* | frame story* | arrangement | classification
categorization | placement | person (first, second, third)*
perspective (chronological, geographic, emotional, political)*

**ANALYZING SYNTAX**
repetition | parallelism | anaphora* | asyndeton* | polysyndeton*
sentence* | predicate* | object* | direct object* | indirect object*
phrase* | clause* | infinitive* | participle* | gerund*
modifier* | dependent clause* | independent clause* | subordinate clause* | preposition*
conjunction* | interjection* | deliberate fragment* | appositive* | emphatic
appositive* | semicolon* | colon* | rhetorical question* | noun*
comma | pronoun* | proper noun* | common noun* | collective noun*
abstract noun* | concrete noun* | dialogue* | apostrophe* | chiasmus*
parenthetical expression | footnote | capitalization for effect | inversion* | antecedent*
hyphen* | dash* | active voice* | passive voice* | tense
catalogue* | compound nouns/adjectives

**IDENTIFYING GENRE/PURPOSE**

novel | novella* | autobiography* | memoir* | biography
letter | sermon | speech | treatise* | abstract*
pérec* | synopsis | critique* | personal narrative | journey
tavelogue | essay* | distribute* | polemic* | commentary*
farce* | conceit* | editorial* | tirade* | review
assessment | eulogy* | elegy* | parody* | allegory*
apology | soliloquy* | monologue* | portrayal | archetype*
fable* | argument | verse

**IDENTIFYING SOUND DEVICES**
alliteration* | assonance* | consonance* | repetition* | rhyme*
end rhyme* | feminine rhyme* | masculine rhyme* | meter* | slant rhyme*
incremental rhyme*