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| **Literary Term** | **Definition** |
| **Allegory** | A story, poem, or picture that can be interpreted to reveal a hidden meaning, typically a moral or political one.  Ex, The Crucible; Avatar (2009 film) |
| **Alliteration** | The repetition of initial sounds in neighbouring words.  Ex. The lady lounges lazily. |
| **Allusion** | A brief reference to a person, event, place, or work of art. Can refer to a literary figure or historical event.  Ex. The story “By the Waters of Babylon” contains a direct reference to the bible. |
| **Archetype** | The term "archetype" has its origins in ancient Greek. The root words are *archein*, which means "original or old"; and *typos*, which means "pattern, model or type". The combined meaning is an "original pattern" of which all other similar persons, objects, or concepts are derived, copied, modeled, or emulated.  e.g. the hero, the damsel in distress, the villain |
| **Aside** | A brief set of words spoken by the character to him/herself when other characters are present onstage. Other characters ‘cannot’ hear him, but the audience can. |
| **Catastrophe** | The sin of pride. According to the Greeks, too much happiness or success would lead to the Gods becoming jealous and destroying a person for thinking they were as powerful as the Gods. |
| **Connotation** | An idea or feeling that a word invokes for a person in addition to its literal or primary meaning  Ex. Slim, scrawny, svelte each have different connotations or meanings. |
| **Denotation** | The literal or primary meaning of a word, in contrast to the feelings or ideas that the word suggests.  Ex. Slim, scrawny, and svelte all literally mean “thin.” |
| **Foil** | A minor character whose situation or actions parallel those of a major character, and thus by contrast sets off or illuminates the major character  Ex. Cinderella’s beauty and grace is highlighted and opposed to her ugly, nasty step-sisters. |
| **Hyperbole** | Words and phrases that exaggerate and overemphasize the basic crux of the statement in order to produce a grander, more noticeable effect. The purpose of hyperbole is to create a larger-than-life effect and overly stress a specific point.  Ex. I’m so hungry I could eat a horse |
| **Imagery** | Language that evokes one or all of the 5 senses (sight, taste touch, hear, smell).  Ex. Her eyelashes were coated in mascara and looked like the legs of a hairy spider that brushed against my cheek, sending an icy chill up my spine. |
| **Juxtaposition** | The fact of two things being seen or placed close together with contrasting effect.  Ex. light and dark; guilt and innocence; chaos and calm |
| **Metaphor** | A metaphor is a comparison between two objects or ideas. The comparison is conveyed by the use of a metaphorical word in place of some other word. *Think: a comparison not using “like” or “as.”*  Ex: "Her eyes were glistening jewels.” |
| **Onomatopoeia** | Words whose sound is very close to the sound they are meant to depict.  Ex. Buzz, snap, huff |
| **Paradox** | It is a statement that appears to be self-contradictory or silly but may include a latent truth. It is also used to illustrate an opinion or statement contrary to accepted traditional ideas. A paradox is often used to make a [reader](http://literarydevices.net/community/tag/reader/) think over an idea in an innovative way.  Ex. Your enemy’s friend is your enemy; Fair is foul and foul is fair |
| **Pathetic Fallacy** | The attribution of human emotions or characteristics to inanimate objects or to nature. Often linked to weather as it mirrors the events occurring in a text.  Ex. Angry clouds, a cruel wind. Or, one of the many storms that occur in *Shakespeare’s* plays. |
| **Personification** | The act of attributing human characteristics to abstract ideas or inanimate objects  Ex. A “babbling brook,” Nintendo Game Boy, or Mr. Clean. |
| **Pun** | A witty play on words  Ex. I tried to catch some fog. I mist. |
| **Simile** | A simile is a figure of SPEECH comparing two UNLIKE things, often introduced with the words "like" or "as.”  Ex: "He sounded like a broken record." |
| **Soliloquy** | The thoughts of a character spoken aloud onstage to no apparent listener (or themselves).The purpose is to reveal the character’s present thoughts and purposes, which allows the audience to anticipate and understand their later actions. |