**English Pre- IB/IB**

Glossary of Literary Terms

Note: Knowledge of the following literary terms is required of **all** English II students.

Students are required to keep this packet in their binder at all times. These terms are “fair game” for any quiz; announced or unannounced. Students are responsible for studying and learning these terms. We will be addressing them in conjunction with literature selections throughout the school year.

**Literary Elements**

**Archetype**- a character, action, or situation that is a prototype or pattern of human life generally; a situation that occurs over and over again in literature, such as a quest, an initiation, or an attempt to overcome evil.

**Archetypal characters**- characters who embody a certain kind of universal human

experience. *For example, a femme fatale, a siren, or temptress figure is a character*

*that purposefully lures men to disaster through her beauty.*

**Characters**- people or animals who take part in the action of a literary work. Readers learn about the characters from what they say (dialogue), what they do (actions), what they think (interior dialogue), what others say about them, and through the author’s direct statements.

**Protagonist**- the main character/ central figure in a literary work with whom readers identify.

**Antagonist**- the adversary of the protagonist

**Flat character**- one who exhibits a single dominant quality or trait

**Round character**- one who exhibits the complexity of traits associated with actual human beings

**Static character**- a character that changes little over the course of a narrative; things happen to these characters, but little happens in them

**Dynamic character**- a character that changes in response to the actions through which he or she passes

**Foil**- a character, usually minor, is designed to highlight qualities of a major character

**Stock**- a flat character in a standard role with standard traits, e.g. a wicked stepmother

**Conflict**- the struggle between opposing forces that is the basis of the plot of a story.

***External conflict*** occurs between a character and any force outside him/herself; such as another character, society, or some force of nature.

***Internal conflict*** occurs when a character has an inner struggle within him/herself, such as trying to make an important decision.

**Details**- the facts revealed by the author or speaker that support the attitude or tone in a piece of poetry or prose.

**Diction**- word choice intended to convey a certain effect; the denotative and connotative meanings or words must also be considered.

**Denotation**- refers to the dictionary definition of a word

**Connotation**- refers to the feelings and attitudes associated with a word

**Dialect**- the speech of a particular region or group as it differs from those of a real or imaginary standard speech. EX: servants in a story may speak in a lower-class dialect to distinguish their position in society.

**Epiphany**- an unfolding in which a character proceeds from ignorance to knowledge and experience

**Euphemism**- the use of a word or phrase that is less expressive or direct but considered less distasteful or offensive than another. EX: when a character is dying and the doctor’s says, “she’ll not be here for long.”

**Flashback**- a scene that interrupts the action of a work to show a previous event

**Foreshadowing**- the use of hints or clues in a narrative to suggest future action

**Imagery**- consists of the words or phrases a writer uses to represent persons, objects, actions, feelings, and ideas descriptively by appealing to the senses.

**Mood**- the atmosphere or predominant emotion in a literary work

**Plot**- the sequence of events or actions in a short story, novel, play, or narrative poem; Freytag’s Pyramid is a convenient diagram that describes the typical pattern of a dramatic or fictional work.

**Exposition**- first plot stage in which the author pays the groundwork for the reader by revealing the setting, the relationships between the characters, and the situation as it exists before conflict begins

**Inciting Incident**- event that introduces the central conflict; interrupts the harmony and balance of the situation and one or more of the characters comes into the conflict with an outside force, with his or her own nature, or with another character

**Rising action**- develops the conflict to a high point of intensity

**Climax**- irreversible, pivotal point of highest interest or suspense in the plot

**Falling action**- events that follow as a result of the climax

**Resolution**- the point at which the central conflict is ended or resolved

**Denouement**- any material that follows the resolution and ties up “loose ends”

**Point of View**- the perspective from which a story is told

-**First- person POV**- point of view in which the narrator is usually a character in the story and uses pronouns “I” and “me”

-**Third-person POV**- point of view in which the narrator is outside the story and uses the pronouns “he/she” and “they”

-*Third-person limited POV*- point of view in which the narrator tells what only one character sees, thinks, and feels

-*Third-person omniscient POV*- point of view in which the narrator sees into the minds of all the characters

-**Second-person POV**- point of view in which the story gets told solely, or at least primarily, as an address by the narrator to someone he calls by the pronoun “you.”

**Rhetorical shift**- refers to a change or movement in a piece resulting from an epiphany, realization, or insight gained by the speaker, a character, or the reader

**Setting**- the time and place in which events in a short story, novel, play, or narrative poem takes place

**Suspense**- the quality of a short story, novel, play, or narrative poem that makes the reader or audience uncertain or tense about the outcome of events

**Style**- the writer’s characteristic manner of employing language

**Tone**- the writer’s or speaker’s attitude toward a subject, character, or audience which is conveyed through the author’s choice of words and detail; tone can be serious, humorous, sarcastic, contemptuous, etc…

**Theme**- the central message of a literary work. It is not the same as a subject, which can be expressed in a word or two: courage, survival, war, pride, etc. The theme is the idea that author wishes to convey about the subject. It is expressed as a sentence or general statement about life or human nature. A literary work can have more than one theme, and most themes are not directly stated but are implied. EX: The theme on a subject such as pride could be “Pride often precedes a fall.”

**Literary Techniques**

**Allusion**- a reference to a mythological, literary, or historical person, place or thing. EX: He met his *Waterloo*.

**Antithesis**- a contrast of opposition. EX: In Jane Eyre, St. John with his icy disposition is the antithesis of the fiery-natured Rochester.

**Characterization**- the use of literary techniques to create a character

**Direct characterization**-the author directly describes the person’s traits, or special qualities

**Indirect characterization**- the author reveals characters and their traits through indirect methods such as appearance, actions, speech, private thoughts, or the reactions of other characters

**Hyperbole**- a deliberate, extravagant, and often outrageous exaggeration. It may be used for either serious or comic effect. EX: “It’s raining cats and dogs.”

**Irony**- occurs is 3 ways:

**Verbal irony**- occurs when a speaker or narrator says one thing which meaning the opposite. Its purpose is usually to criticize. EX: In Shakespeare’s *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar,* Antony repeats several times that “Brutus is an honorable man,” when he means the exact opposite

**Situational irony**- occurs when a situation turns out differently from what one would normally expect- though often the “twist” is oddly appropriate. EX: A deep-sea diver drowning in his own bathtub

**Dramatic irony**- occurs when a character says or does something that has more or different meanings from what he/she thinks it means, though the audience and/or other characters do understand the full ramifications of the speech or action. EX: In Shakespeare’s *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*, Romeo kills himself because he believes Juliet is already dead; which some of the characters and the audience know is untrue.

**Motif**- a term that describes a pattern or strand of imagery or symbolism in a work of literature. EX: Fire recurs throughout Jane Eyre- -Bertha Mason sets Rochester’s bedroom on fire and later all of Thornfield Hall. Rochester’s suffering from his burns brings about redemption and the return of his true love.

**Sarcasm**- the use of verbal irony in which a person appears to be praising something but is actually insulting it. Its purpose is to injure or hurt. EX: As I fell down the stairs headfirst, I heard her say, “Look at that coordination!”

**Satire**- refers to the use of humorous devices like irony, understatement, and exaggeration to highlight a human folly or a social/societal problem. The purpose of satire is to bring the flaw to the attention of the reader(s) in order that it may be addressed, remedied, or eradicated. EX: George Orwell’s Animal Farm is an example of political satire.

**Symbolism-** the use of any object, person, place, or action that both has a meaning in itself and that stand for something larger than itself. It may be a quality, attitude, belief, or value. There are two basic types of symbols:

**Universal**- a symbol that is common to all human beings

**Contextual**- a symbol used in a particular way by an individual author. EX: In Harper Lee’s To Kill a Mockingbird, the mockingbird represents innocence (as later demonstrated by the characters of Boo Radley and Tom Robinson).

**Understatement** (meiosis, litotes)- the opposite of hyperbole. It is a kind of irony that deliberately represents something as being much less than it really is. EX: “I *might* be able to survive on a salary of two million dollars per year.”

**Figures of Speech**

**Figures of speech** are words or phrases that describe one thing in terms of something else. They always involve some sort of imaginative comparison between seemingly unlike things. Not meant to be taken literally, figurative language is used to produce images in a reader’s mind and to express ideas in fresh, vivid, and imaginative ways.

**Apostrophe**- a form of personification in which the absent or dead are spoken to as if they are present, and the inanimate as though animate. These are all addressed directly. EX: In Shakespeare’s *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar*:

Antony: “O judgment, thou are fled to brutish beast, and men have lost their reason!”

**Metaphor**- a comparison of two unlike things NOT using the words “like” or “as.” EX: Life is but a dream.

**Extended metaphor**- differs from a regular metaphor in that it is sustained for several lines or sentences throughout a work

**Metonymy**- a form of metaphor. In metonymy, the name of one thing is applied to another thing with which it is closely associated. EX: We call the head of a committee a “chair,” a king the “crown,” and the newspaper the “press.”

**Oxymoron**- a form of paradox that combines a pair of opposite terms into a single unusual expression. EX: Sweet sorrow, silent cry, fiery ice.

**Paradox**- a statement that contradicts itself. It may seem almost absurd. Although the statement may seem to be at-odds with ordinary experience, it usually turns out to have a coherent meaning and reveals a truth that is normally hidden. EX: “The more you know, the more you know you don’t know” –Socrates.

**Personification**- a kind of metaphor that gives inanimate objects or abstract ideas human characteristics. EX: “The wind howled through the trees.”

**Pun**- a play on words that are identical or similar in sound but have a sharply different meaning. Puns can have serious as well as humorous uses. EX: When Mercutio is bleeding to death in *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet*, he says to his friends, “Ask for me tomorrow, and you shall find me a grave man.”

**Simile**- a comparison of two different things or ideas through the use of the words “*like”* or “*as*.” It is a stated comparison in which the writer says one thing is like another. EX: In Barbara Kingsolver’s The Bean Trees, “She didn’t miss the books so much as she was hurt by the ugly empty spaces left behind, like missing teeth, the books on either side falling and crowding into the gaps.”

**Synecdoche**- a form of metaphor. In synecdoche, a part of something is used to signify the whole. EX: “All hands on deck.” Also, the reverse, whereby a whole can represent a part, is synecdoche as well, EX: “Canada played the U.S. in the Olympic hockey finals.” The entire populations of both countries did not actually play each other, only the teams.

**Sound Devices**

**Sound devices** are stylistic techniques that convey meaning through sound.

**Alliteration**- the practice of beginning several consecutive or neighboring words with the same sound. EX: In Karl Shapiro’s “Auto Wreck”:

The doors **l**eap open, emptying **l**ight

Stretchers are **l**aid out, the mang**l**ed **l**ifted

And stowed into the **l**ittle hospita**l**

The repeated “L” sounds emphasize the sense of urgency created by the words beginning with that consonant. The pronunciation of “L” mimics a gasp or expression of surprise.

**Assonance**- the repetition of vowel sounds in a series of words. EX: the words “cry” and “side” have the same vowel sound and so are said to be in assonance. EX: In Annie Dillard’s *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*:

“When it’s all **o**ver and the white-suited players l**o**pe off the gr*ee*n f*ie*ld to their shad**o**wed dugouts, I l*ea*p to my f*ee*t; I ch*ee*r and ch*ee*r.”

**Consonance**- the repetition of a consonant sounds within a series of words to produce a harmonious effect. EX: In Robert Browning’s “Meeting at Night”:

“A **t**a*p* at the *p*ane, the quick shar*p* scra**t**ch

And blue s*p*urt of a ligh**t**ed ma**t**ch.”

**Onomatopoeia**- the use of words that mimic the sounds that they describe. EX: hiss, buzz, bang

**Rhyme**- the repetition of sounds in two or more words or phrases that appear close to each other in a poem.

**End rhyme**- occurs at the end of lines

**Internal rhyme**- occurs within a line

**Rhyme scheme**- the pattern of end rhymes

The following lines from James W. Johnson’s poem “The Glory of the Day Was in Her Face” illustrate end rhyme, and the rhyme scheme is labeled:

The glory of the day was in her face (a)

The beauty of the night was in her eyes (b)

And over all her loveliness, the grace (a)

Of morning blushing in the early shies (b)

Rhyme can enhance the experience of reading a poem and can promote memory through the pattern of sounds.

**Rhythm**- the varying speed, intensity, elevation, pitch, loudness, and expressiveness of speech, especially in poetry.

**Syntax Techniques**

**Syntax** means the arrangement of words and the order of grammatical elements in a sentence.

**Juxtaposition**- a poetic and rhetorical device in which normally unassociated ideas, words, or phrases are placed next to one another, often creating an effect of surprise and wit. EX: “The *saints prayed* within their church while the *sinners sinned* outside their doors.”

**Natural order of a sentence**- involves constructing a sentence so the subject comes from the predicate. EX: The students listened attentively to the teacher’s lesson.

**Omission**- there are 2 types of omission:

**Asyndeton**- a deliberate omission of conjunctions in a series of related clauses. It speeds-up the pace of a sentence. EX: “We shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardships, support any friend, oppose any foe- to assure the survival and success of liberty.” –JFK

**Ellipsis**- the deliberate omission of a word or words which are readily implied by the context; it creates an elegant or daring economy of words. EX: “My couch had no thorns in it that night; my solitary room no fears.”

**Parallel structure (parallelism)**- refers to a grammatical or structural similarity between sentences or parts of a sentence; it involves an arrangement of words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs so that elements of equal importance are equally developed and similarly phrased. EX: “The boxer caught him by his wrists, tore his hands from his shoulders, and thrust him away at arm’s length.”

**Polysyndeton**- the deliberate use of many conjunctions for special emphasis- to highlight quantity or mass of detail or to create a flowing, continuous sentence pattern; it slows the pace of the sentence.

EX: “When the shining city, too, fades, I will see only those forested mountains and hills, and the way the rivers lie flat and moving among them, and the way the low land lies wooded among them, and the blunt mountains rise in darkness from the rivers’ banks.” (Anne Dillard, *An American Childhood)*

**Types of Repetition:**

**Anaphora**- the repetition of the same word or group of words at the beginning of successive clauses; it helps to establish a strong rhythm and produces a powerful emotional effect. EX: “We shall not fail. We shall go on to the end. We shall fight in France, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills. We shall never surrender.” –Winston Churchill

**Anadiplosis**- the repetition of the last word of one clause at the beginning of the following clause; it ties the sentence to its surroundings. EX: “She brightens up a room, a room that before her entrance was shamefully pale.”

**Epanalepsis**- the repetition at the end of a clause of the word that occurred at the beginning of the clause; it tends to make the sentence or clause in which occurs stand apart from its surroundings. EX: “Believe not all you hear, tell not all you believe”

**Epistrophe**- the repetition of the same word or groups of words at the end of successive clauses; it sets up a pronounced rhythm and gains a special emphasis both by repeating the word and by putting the word in the final position. EX: “We are born to joy, pass our time in joy, end our days in joy.”

**Types of Reversal**-

**Inverted order of a sentence (sentence inversion)**- involves constructing a sentence so the predicate comes before the subject; it creates an emphatic or rhythmic effect. EX: The channel wound between precipitous banks, and slating from one wall to the other across the valley ran a streak of green—the river and its fields.

**Antimetabole**- a sentence strategy in which the arrangement of ideas in the second clause is a reversal if the first; it adds power through its inverse repetition. EX: Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country. –JFK

**Rhetorical Question**- a question that requires no answer. It is used to draw attention to a point and is generally stronger than a direct statement. EX: “Who knows?” or “Why not?”

**Rhetorical Fragment**- a sentence fragment used deliberately for a persuasive purpose or to create a desired effect. EX: “Because it’s the truth”

**Sentence Structure**-

**Antithetical sentence**- an antithetical sentence contains two statements which are balanced, but opposite; it creates a stark, dramatic contrast. EX: “But as I make the laws here, I can also break them.”

**Balanced sentence**- the phrases or clauses balance each other by virtue of their likeness of structure, meaning or length. EX: “He shut his eyes; he rubbed his cheek against his arm.”

**Loose or cumulative sentence**- his its main clause at the beginning of the sentence. EX: “Laughter broke out, enormous, almost hysterical, peal after peal, as though it would never stop.”4

**Periodic sentence**- has is main clause at the end of the sentence. It forces the reader to retain information from the beginning of the sentence and often builds to a climactic statement with meaning unfolding slowly. EX: “Renewable energy resources, like wind, solar, and geothermal, will be the answers to Earth’s energy problems.”