

ELA Glossary

“Since the introduction of the Keystone Exams, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) has been working to create a set of tools designed to help educators improve instructional practices and better understand the Keystone Exams. The Assessment Anchors, as defined by the Eligible Content, are one of the many tools the Department believes will better align curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices throughout the Commonwealth. Without this alignment, it will not be possible to significantly improve student achievement across the Commonwealth.”

–PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
General Introduction to the Keystone Exam Assessment Anchors

This “ELA Glossary” is intended to be a tool to align curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices in ELA, grades 6-10.

*The terms are derived from the PA Department of Education’s Keystone Glossary, PA ELA state standards, Keystone anchors and eligible content, and the definitions of other terms (terms within definitions that need to be defined separately), as well as terms derived from the 9th grade literature anthology’s “Handbook of Literary Terms” (*Elements of Literature*, Third Course) and terms identified by the grade level teacher as useful in constructing meaning for particular works.

Note: The Keystone Glossary is the foundation to this resource. The Keystone Glossary includes terms and definitions associated with the Keystone Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content. The terms and definitions included in the Keystone Glossary are intended to assist Pennsylvania educators in better understanding the Keystone Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content. The glossary *does not define all possible terms included on an actual Keystone Exam*, and it is not intended to define terms for use in classroom instruction for a particular grade level or course. **Therefore, cross-referencing the Keystone Glossary with PA ELA standards, grade-level specific resources, and teacher-identified terminology was necessary to create the more comprehensive glossary of terms below.**

*The terms are also derived from the PA Department of Education’s PSSA English Language Arts Glossary to the Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content Aligned to the Pennsylvania Core Standards.

Note: The PSSA English Language Arts Glossary includes terms and definitions associated with the ELA Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content aligned to the Pennsylvania Core Standards. The terms and definitions included in the glossary are intended to assist Pennsylvania educators in better understanding the PSSA Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content. The glossary does not define all possible terms included on an actual PSSA administration, and it is not intended to define terms for use in classroom instruction for a particular grade level or course. This glossary provides definitions for terms in Grades 3-8.

*Text in black is derived directly from the Keystone Glossary.

*Text in blue represents additional terms addressed in 9th grade English—determined by their usefulness in constructing and conveying meaning OR definitions of terms presented in the PA ELA standards or Keystone anchors but not provided in the Keystone Glossary.

*Text in green represents additional terms or preferred definitions from the 9th grade literature anthology’s “Handbook of Literary Terms.”

*Terms in red are used in standards, assessment anchors, or eligible content but are not listed in the Keystone Glossary. Many of these terms also appear in the literature anthology’s “Handbook.”

Affix One or more letters occurring as a bound form attached to the beginning, end, or base of a word and serving to produce a derivative word or an inflectional form (e.g., a **prefix** or **suffix**).

Allegory A form of **extended metaphor** in which objects, persons, and actions in a narrative are equated with meanings that lie outside the narrative itself. The underlying meaning may have moral, social, religious, or political significance, and characters are often **personifications** of abstract ideas such as charity, greed, or envy. Characters may be given names such as Hope, Pride, Youth, and Charity; they have few if any personal qualities beyond their abstract meanings. These personifications are not symbols because, for instance, the meaning of a character named Charity is precisely that virtue. See symbol.

Alliteration The repetition of initial sounds in neighboring words. The repetition of the same consonant sounds in a sequence of words, usually at the beginning of a word or stressed syllable: “descending dew drops”; “luscious lemons.” Alliteration is based on the sounds of letters, rather than the spelling of words; for example, “keen” and “car” alliterate, but “car” and “cite” do not. Used sparingly, alliteration can intensify ideas by emphasizing key words, but when used too self-consciously, it can be distracting, even ridiculous, rather than effective. See also assonance, consonance.

Allusion A reference in literature to a familiar person, place, event, or thing from literature, history, religion, mythology, politics, sports, science, or pop culture. Allusions conjure up biblical authority, scenes from Shakespeare’s plays, historic figures, wars, great love stories, and anything else that might enrich an author’s work. Allusions imply reading and cultural experiences shared by the writer and reader, functioning as a

kind of shorthand whereby the recalling of something outside the work supplies an emotional or intellectual context, such as a poem about current racial struggles calling up a memory of Abraham Lincoln.

Ambiguity—A technique that allows for two or more simultaneous interpretations—even if incompatible—of a word, phrase, action or situation, all of which can be supported by the context of a work. Deliberate ambiguity can contribute to the effectiveness and richness of a work. However, unintentional ambiguity obscures meaning and can confuse readers.

Anachronism—The misplacing of any person, thing, custom, or event outside its proper historical time.

Analogy Comparison made between two things to show how they are alike in some respects. [Note: Similes are a kind of analogy. However, an analogy usually clarifies something, while a simile shows imaginatively how two different things are alike in some unusual way.]

Analysis The process or result of identifying the parts of a whole and their relationships to one another.

Anaphora The repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of successive clauses

Anecdote A short account (story) of a particular incident or event, especially of an interesting or amusing nature. Anecdotes often point out or illustrate a truth about life.

Antagonist In literature, the principal opponent or foil of the main character, who is referred to as the protagonist, in a drama or narrative. The antagonist works in opposition to the needs and desires of the protagonist. The struggle between the two, or central conflict, is the foundation of the story's plot.

Antecedent—That which goes before, especially the word, phrase, or clause to which a pronoun refers. In the sentence “The witches cast their spells,” the antecedent of the pronoun “their” is the noun “witches.”

Anthropomorphism—In literature, when inanimate objects are given human characteristics. Anthropomorphism is often confused with personification. Personification requires that the non-human quality or thing take on human shape.

Anticlimax—An anticlimax occurs when an action produces far smaller results than one had been led to expect. Anticlimax is frequently comic.

Antithesis—Antithesis is used when the writer puts two sentences of contrasting meanings close to one another.

Antihero—A protagonist who is markedly unheroic: morally weak, cowardly, dishonest, or any number of other unsavory qualities. The antihero blurs the line between hero and villain.

Antonym A word that is the opposite in meaning to another word.

Apostrophe—An address, either to someone who is absent and therefore cannot hear the speaker or to something nonhuman that cannot comprehend. Apostrophe often provides a speaker the opportunity to think aloud.

Archaic language—Words and phrases that were used regularly in a language, but are now less common are *archaic*. Such words and phrases are often used deliberately to refer to earlier times. For instance, the pronoun 'thou', which is very rarely used nowadays is an *archaism*, which is sometimes used to suggest biblical language or a dialect.

Archetype In literature, an image, story-pattern, or character type that recurs frequently and evokes strong, often unconscious, associations in the reader. In literature, characters, images, and themes that symbolically embody universal meanings and basic human experiences, regardless of when or where they live, are considered archetypes. Common literary archetypes include stories of quests, initiations, scapegoats, descents to the underworld, and ascents to heaven. See also mythological criticism.

Argument Form of persuasion that uses reason to lead a reader or listener to think or act in a certain way. Argument in its most basic form consists of three parts: a claim; evidence to support the claim; and warrants that demonstrate how the evidence supports the claim (i.e., reasons). Argument uses only facts and logical reasoning to achieve its purpose. Other persuasive writing may use different methods, including appeals to the emotions.

THE ARISTOTELIAN APPEALS

ETHOS : Appeal to balance, fairness, addressing the opposition

LOGOS : Appeal to reader's or viewer's reason or logic

MYTHOS: sensitivity to traditional viewpoints

PATHOS : appeal to emotions; esp. pity, compassion, sympathy

Aside Words that are spoken by a character in a play to the audience or to another character but that are not supposed to be overheard by the others onstage. They are useful for giving the audience special information about the other characters onstage or the action of the plot.

Assonance Repetition of similar sounding vowel sounds that are followed by different consonant sounds, especially in words that are close together in a poem. The repetition of internal vowel sounds in nearby words that do not end the same, as in “asleep under a tree,” or “each evening.” Similar endings result in **rhyme**, as in “asleep in the deep.” Assonance is a strong means of emphasizing important words in a line. See also alliteration, consonance.

Atmosphere—Atmosphere is created when the setting or scene elicits an emotional response in the reader/viewer.

Audience An audience is a group of readers who reads a particular piece of writing. As a writer, you should anticipate the needs or expectations of your audience in order to convey information or argue for a particular claim.

Author’s Purpose The author’s intent either to inform or teach someone about something, to entertain people or to persuade or convince his/her audience to do or not do something.

Authority—Signifies believability

Autobiography The biography of oneself narrated by oneself. Autobiographical works can take many forms, from the intimate writings made during life that were not necessarily intended for publication (including letters, diaries, journals, memoirs, and reminiscences) to a formal book-length autobiography.

Ballad Song that tells a story. Folk ballads are composed by unknown singers and are passed on for generations before they are written down. Literary ballads are composed by known individuals and are written down in imitation of the old folk ballads. As such, ballads usually cannot be traced to a particular author or group of authors. Typically, ballads are dramatic, condensed, and impersonal narratives, such as “Bonny Barbara Allan.” A literary ballad is a narrative poem written in deliberate imitation of the language, form, and spirit of the traditional ballad, such as John Keats’s “La Belle Dame sans Merci.” See also ballad stanza, quatrain.

Bias The subtle presence of a positive or negative approach toward a topic.

Bildungsroman: A story in which the young protagonist experiences a loss of innocence and matures as a result. Also known as *coming of age* narrative.

Biography A written account of another person's life.

Black humor—**Black humor**, also called **black comedy** or **dark comedy**, is writing that juxtaposes morbid or ghastly elements with comical ones that underscore the senselessness or futility of life. Black humor often uses farce and low comedy to make clear that individuals are helpless victims of fate and character.

Blank verse Poetry written in unrhymed iambic pentameter. Blank means the poetry is not rhymed. Iambic pentameter means that each line contains five iambs, or metrical feet, that consist of an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable. **Blank verse is the English verse form closest to the natural rhythms of English speech and therefore is the most common pattern found in traditional English narrative and dramatic poetry from Shakespeare to the early twentieth century.** Blank verse is the most important poetic form in English epic and dramatic poetry. It is the major verse form in Shakespeare's plays.

Cacophony a literary term that describes a blend of unharmonious sounds. It's used often in poetry, usually to emphasize disorder, harshness, or violence (see the opposite, **euphony**). **Language that is discordant and difficult to pronounce, such as this line from John Updike's "Player Piano": "never my numb plunker fumbles."** Cacophony ("bad sound") may be unintentional in the writer's sense of music, or it may be used consciously for deliberate dramatic effect.

Cause/Effect An organizational strategy for information and explanatory writing. Cause and effect papers use analysis to examine the reasons for and the outcomes of situations. They are an attempt to discover the origins of something, such as an event or a decision, the effects or results that can be properly attributed to it, or both.

Cadence—The natural, rhythmic rise and fall of a language as it is normally spoken. Cadence is different from meter, in which the stressed and unstressed syllables of a poetic line are carefully counted to conform to a regular pattern.

Canon—Those works generally considered by scholars, critics, and teachers to be the most important to read and study, which collectively constitute the “masterpieces” of literature. Since the 1960s the traditional English and American literary canon, consisting mostly of works by white male writers, has been rapidly expanding to include many female writers and writers of varying ethnic backgrounds.

Caesura—A pause or break within a line of poetry. Some pauses are indicated by punctuation; others are suggested by phrasing or meaning.

Caricature—A caricature is a simple image showing the features of its subject in a simplified or exaggerated way. In literature, a caricature is a description of a person using exaggeration of some characteristics and oversimplification of others.

Catalogue—A list of things, people, or events.

Catharsis—This is a term drawn from Aristotle’s writings on tragedy. Catharsis refers to the “cleansing” of emotion an audience member experiences, having lived (vicariously) through the experiences presented on stage.

Character A person, animal or inanimate object portrayed in a literary work.

Types of Characters

Protagonist—The protagonist is the main character in a literary work; normally, the reader sympathizes with or at least learns to understand the protagonist

Flat character a flat character seems to possess only one or two personality traits and little, if any, personal history

Round character a round character is fully developed; the writer reveals the character’s background and his/her personality traits, both good and bad

Dynamic character a dynamic character changes or has a realization in the course of the story (usually the philosophy or approach)

Static character a static character does not change (no realization occurs)

Main character (protagonist) is the most important character in the story, the focus of the reader’s attention

Minor character takes part in the story's events but is not the main focus of attention; minor character sometimes help the reader learn about the main character

Characterization The method an author uses to reveal characters and their various traits and personalities (e.g., **direct, indirect**).

Direct characterization: The method in which the author directly tells us what the character is like: cruel, sneaky, brave, and so on.

Indirect characterization: The reader infers what a character is like based on evidence the writer gives. A writer uses indirect characterization by

1. Letting us hear the character speak
2. Describing how the character looks and dresses
3. Letting us listen to the characters inner thoughts and feelings
4. Revealing what other characters in the story think or say about the character
5. Showing us what the character does—how he or she acts
6. By telling us directly what the character is like: sneaky, generous, mean to pets...

Static character: A character that does not change much in the course of a story

Dynamic character: A character that changes as a result of the story's events

Flat character: A character that has only one or two traits and therefore lacks depth

Round character: A round character, like a real person, has many different character traits, which sometimes contradict each other.

Motivation: The fears or conflicts or needs that drive a character.

Chorus—A group of performers who sing, dance, and at times take part in the action of a play. The number of persons in a chorus may be a group to a single person.

Clause—A group of words containing a subject and its verb that may or may not be a complete sentence. In the sentence “When you are old, you will be beautiful,” the first clause (“When you are old”) is a dependent clause and not a complete sentence. “You will be beautiful” is an independent clause and could stand by itself.

Cite/Citation A “citation” is the way you tell your readers that certain material in your work came from another source. It also gives your readers the information necessary to find the location details of that source on the reference or Works Cited page.

Claim A claim statement is a type of thesis statement in which you present the main idea of what you are writing in the form of an argument.

A claim is a debatable statement advanced in support of an argument a conclusion whose merit must be established

Climax The **turning point** in a narrative; the moment when the **conflict** is at its most intense. Typically, the structure of stories, novels, and plays is one of rising action, in which tension builds to the climax. The major climax in a story or play usually marks the moment when the conflict is decided one way or another.

Clause A group of words that contains both a subject and a predicate. Every complete sentence is made up of at least one clause.

Dependent clause A group of words that contains a subject and verb but does not express a complete thought. A dependent clause cannot be a sentence.

Independent clause A group of words that contains a subject and verb and expresses a complete thought. An independent clause is a sentence.

Cliche —A cliché is an expression, idea, or element which has become overused to the point of losing its original meaning, even to the point of being trite or irritating.

Cliffhanger —A cliffhanger or cliffhanger ending is a plot device in fiction which features a main character in a precarious or difficult dilemma (or confronted with a shocking revelation) at the end of an episode of serialized fiction. A cliffhanger is used to ensure the audience will return to see how the characters resolve the dilemma.

Coherence A quality of well-organized writing, coherence is the logical bridge between words, sentences, and paragraphs. Coherence itself is the product of two factors — paragraph unity and sentence cohesion.

Colloquialism—A type of informal diction that reflects casual, conversational language and often includes slang expressions. See also diction.

Comedy: In general, a story that ends happily. The hero or heroine of a comedy is usually an ordinary character who overcomes a series of obstacles that block what he or she wants. In structure and characterization, a comedy is the opposite of a tragedy.

Comic relief: A comic scene or event that breaks up a serious play or narrative. Comic relief allows writers to lighten the tone of a work and show the humorous side of a dramatic theme.

Coming of Age: A story in which the young protagonist experiences a loss of innocence and matures as a result. Also known as *bildungsroman*.

Compare/Contrast Place together characters, situations, or ideas to show common and/or differing features in literary selections. *an organizational strategy for information and explanatory writing

Conceit—An elaborate metaphor that compares two things that are startlingly different.

Concession—A statement that agrees with a portion of an opposing argument

Confessional—A twentieth-century term used to describe poetry or prose that uses intimate material from the writer's life. The material is usually painful, disturbing, or sad.

Conflict/Problem A struggle or clash between opposing characters, forces, or emotions; conflict is one of the most important elements of stories, novels, and dramas because it causes the actions that form the plot

. In an **external conflict**, a character struggles against an outside force. This outside force might be another character, or society as a whole, something in nature, something supernatural, or something technological. By contrast, an **internal conflict** takes place entirely within a character's own mind. An internal conflict is a struggle between opposing needs or desires or emotions within a single person.

Central Conflict- the most important conflict in a work. The development of the central conflict shows how the main characters are affected by the inciting incident.

Internal Conflict-in an internal conflict the struggle takes place within the protagonist's mind; the character struggles to reach some new understanding or to make an important decision

External Conflict-in an external conflict the character struggles against some outside person or force, such as a storm, a jealous enemy, or a social convention

person vs. self

person vs. nature

person vs. person

person vs. society (think of societal norms – lying/cheating/stealing, etc.)

person vs. technology

person vs supernatural

person vs God / gods

person vs fate

Connotation The range of associations that a word or phrase suggests in addition to its dictionary meaning. (All the meanings, associations, or emotions that a word suggests.) Connotations, or the suggestive power of certain words, play an important role in creating **mood**. For example, the word “eagle” connotes ideas of liberty and freedom that have little to do with the word’s literal meaning. See also **denotation**.

Consonance A stylistic literary device identified by the repetition of identical or similar consonants in neighboring words whose vowel sounds are different (e.g. coming home, hot foot; home, same; worth, breath). Consonance may be regarded as the counterpart to the vowel-sound repetition known as **assonance**.

Context Clues Words and phrases in a sentence, paragraph, and/or whole text, which help reason out the meaning of an unfamiliar word.

Convention—A characteristic of a literary genre (often unrealistic) that is understood and accepted by readers because it has come, through usage and time, to be recognized as a familiar technique. For example, the use of meter and rhyme as poetic conventions.

Counterargument—An opposing argument to the one a writer is putting forward

Counterclaim In argumentative writing, the counterclaim is the opposing claim or the opposite of the writer's position. A counterclaim acknowledges standpoints that go against your argument for the purposes of clarifying and re-affirming your argument.

Couplet Two consecutive lines of poetry that rhyme.

Cultural Significance The generally accepted importance of a work representing a given culture.

Deductive reasoning—A logical process wherein one reaches a conclusion by starting with a general principle of universal truth (a major premise) and applying it to a specific case (a minor premise).

Defense of a Claim Support provided to mark an assertion as reasonable.

Describe/Description Type of writing intended to create a mood or emotion or to re-create a person, a place, a thing, an event, or an experience. Description is one of the four major techniques used in writing. (The others are narration, exposition, and persuasion.) Description works by creating images that appeal to the senses of sight, smell, taste, hearing, or touch.

Delineate To describe or portray something in detail.

Denotation The literal, dictionary definition of a word, without any emotional and/or implied meaning hidden beyond the literal. Denotation is best understood in contrast to its opposite, **connotation**.

Dialect A variety of a language distinct from the standard variety in pronunciation, grammar, or vocabulary. **Dialect** is a way of speaking that is characteristic of a particular region or a particular group of people.

Dialogue In its widest sense, dialogue is simply conversation between characters or speakers in a literary work; in its most restricted sense, it refers specifically to the speech of characters in a drama.

Diction An author's choice of words, phrases, sentence structures and figurative language, which combine to help create meaning and **tone**. **Diction** is an essential element of a writer's **style**. The **connotations** of words are an important aspect of diction. **Formal diction** consists of a dignified, impersonal, and elevated use of language; it follows the rules of syntax exactly and is often characterized by complex words and lofty tone. **Middle diction** maintains correct language usage but is less elevated than formal diction; it reflects the way most educated people speak. **Informal diction** represents the plain language of everyday use and often includes idiomatic expressions, slang, contractions, and many simple, common words. **Poetic diction** refers to the way poets sometimes use an elevated diction that deviates significantly from the

common speech and writing of their time, choosing words for their supposedly inherent poetic qualities. Since the eighteenth century, however, poets have been incorporating all kinds of diction in their work, and so there is no longer an automatic distinction between the language of a poet and the language of everyday speech.

Differentiate Distinguish, tell apart, and recognize differences between two or more items.

Digression—The use of material unrelated to a subject of a work.

Doggerel—A derogatory term used to describe poetry whose subject is trite and whose rhythm and sounds are monotonously heavy-handed.

Drama The genre of literature represented by works intended for the stage; a work to be performed by actors on stage, radio, or television; play.

Dramatic monologue—A type of lyric poem in which a character (the speaker) addresses a distinct but silent audience imagined to be present in the poem in such a way as to reveal a dramatic situation and, often unintentionally, some aspect of his or her temperament or personality. See also lyric.

Dramatic Script The written text of a play, which includes the **dialogue** between characters, **stage directions** and often other **expository** information.

Draw Conclusion To make a judgment or decision based on reasoning rather than direct or implicit statement.

Dystopia —An imagined setting in which everything is unpleasant or bad. This could be a totalitarian, apocalyptic, or environmentally- degraded society.

Elegy—A mournful, contemplative lyric poem written to commemorate someone who is dead, often ending in a consolation. Elegy may also refer to a serious meditative poem produced to express the speaker's melancholy thoughts.

Elements of Fiction Traits that mark a work as imaginative or **narrative discourse** (e.g., **plot, theme, symbol**).

Elements of Nonfiction Traits that mark a work as reportorial, analytical, informative or argumentative (e.g., facts, data, charts, graphics, headings).

Ellipsis—The omission of a word or several words necessary for a complete construction that is still understandable. “If rainy, bring an umbrella” is clear though the words “it is” and “you” have been left out.

End-stopped—A line of poetry with a pause at the end. Lines that end with a period, comma, colon, semi-colon, exclamation point, or question mark are end-stopped lines.

Enjambment—In poetry, when one line ends without a pause and continues into the next line for its meaning. This is also called a run-on line.

Epic Long story told in elevated language (usually poetry), which relates the great deeds of a larger-than-life hero who embodies the values of a particular society. Most epics include elements of myth, legend, folk tale, and history. Their tone is serious and their language is grand. Most epic heroes undertake quests to achieve something of tremendous value to themselves or their people.

A lengthy narrative poem typically about the extraordinary deeds of extraordinary characters who, in dealings with gods or other superhuman forces, reflect the values of the culture from which it was born

Epigram—A pithy saying, often using contrast. The epigram is also a verse form, usually brief and pointed.

Epigraph A short quotation, phrase, or poem that is placed at the beginning of another piece of writing to encapsulate that work's main themes and to set the tone.

Epilogue—A piece of writing at the end of a work of literature, usually used to bring closure to the work. It is presented from the perspective of a narrator character addressing the audience directly.

Epiphany—Simply put it is an “Aha!” moment. As a literary device, it is the moment when a character is suddenly struck with a life-changing realization which changes the rest of the story.

Epithet Adjective or descriptive phrase that is regularly used to characterize a person, place, or thing. It is usually used to add to a person's or place's regular name and attribute some special quality to it. Epithets are remarkable in that they become a part of common usage over time.

Essay Short piece of nonfiction that examines a single subject from a limited point of view. Most essays can be categorized as either **personal or formal**. A **personal essay** generally reveals a great deal about the writer's personality and tastes. Its tone is often conversational. A **formal essay** is usually serious, objective, and impersonal in tone. Its purpose is to inform or persuade. The statements in a formal essay should be supported by facts and logic.

Ethos (ethical appeal) The moral character of a speaker or writer. The speaker or writer must demonstrate that they are trustworthy, credible, experienced, and well-intentioned to establish and maintain ethos. Ethos is one of the three primary modes of persuasion, along with logos and pathos.

Euphemism—The term euphemism is used to refer to the use of a comparatively milder or less harsh form of a negative description instead of its original form. This device is used when writing about matters such as sex, violence, death, crimes, and anything "embarrassing."

Euphony a literary term that refers to the combining of words to create a pleasing sound. It can be found in poetry, literature, songs, and every day speech.

Evaluate Examine and judge carefully. To judge or determine the significance, worth or quality of something; to assess.

Evidence The facts or sources that support a written argument. In a literature course, for instance, evidence would be a quotation from the text that helps you support your point. In a write-up of a scientific experiment, evidence would be the data you collected in your experiment that prove or disprove a thesis. Evidence can be separated into two categories, **primary and secondary sources**.

Primary sources are first-hand experiences, accounts, observations, reports, or narratives. Primary sources could include diaries, letters, contemporary newspapers, or eyewitness accounts of events. Official documents, data collected from surveys, and lab results are also primary sources. In the humanities, the text you are writing about is also considered your primary text. So, for example, if you are writing a paper on *Macbeth*, then the play is your primary source.

Secondary sources are critiques written by academics and scholars. These sources are considered secondary because they examine primary sources to present an argument or support a point of view; as such, they may be selective with their evidence or insert themselves in a debate happening among a number of scholars. It is a good idea to be aware of the bias in secondary sources when employing them as evidence.

Explain To make understandable, plain or clear.

Explicit Clearly expressed or fully stated in the actual text.

Exposition (1) A narrative device, often used at the beginning of a work, that provides necessary background information about the characters, their circumstances, and their conflicts.

Exposition (2) A type of writing that explains, gives information, defines, or clarifies an idea. Exposition is one of the four major techniques used in writing.

Extended metaphor—a sustained comparison in which part or all of a poem consists of a series of related metaphors.

Extended simile—a sustained comparison in which part or all of a poem consists of a series of related similes.

Fable Very brief story in prose or verse that teaches a moral, or a practical lesson about how to get along in life. The characters of most fables are animals that behave and speak like human beings.

Fact A piece of information provided objectively, presented as true.

Fallacious Reasoning (logical fallacy, fallacy) The use of invalid or otherwise faulty reasoning in the construction of an argument which may appear to be a well-reasoned argument if unnoticed. The argument may sound convincing or true but is actually flawed, leading to an unsupported conclusion.

Falling Action The part of a literary plot that is characterized by diminishing tensions and the resolution of the plot's conflicts and complications.

Fiction Any story that is the product of imagination rather than a documentation of fact. Characters and events in such narratives may be based in real life, but their ultimate form and configuration is a creation of the author.

Figurative Language Language that cannot be taken literally since it was written to create a special effect or feeling. A **figure of speech** is a word or phrase that describes one thing in terms of another and is not meant to be understood on a literal level. Some 250 different types of figures of speech have been identified. The most common are the **simile**, the **metaphor**, and **personification**.

Figures of speech—Ways of using language that deviate from the literal, denotative meanings of words in order to suggest additional meanings or effects. Figures of speech say one thing in terms of something. Metaphor and simile are examples.

Flashback An **organizational device** used in literature to present action that occurred before current (present) time of the story. Scene in a movie, play, short story, novel, or narrative poem that interrupts the present action of the plot to flash backward and tell what happened at an earlier time. A flashback breaks the normal time sequence of events in the narrative, usually to give the readers or viewers background information. Flashbacks are often introduced as the dreams or recollections of one or more characters.

Flashforward —A literary or cinematic device in which later events interrupt the normal chronological order of a narrative. This device is often used to give important information about what may happen later in the plot.

Focus The center of interest or attention.

Foil Character who is used as a contrast to another character. A writer uses a foil to accentuate and clarify the distinct qualities of two characters. A character who is a foil intensifies the qualities of another character. The term 'foil' refers to a literary device where the author creates a character whose primary purpose is to create a contrast to another character by laying emphasis, or drawing attention to, the differences.

Folk Tale Story that has no known author and was originally passed on from one generation to another by word of mouth. Unlike myths, which are usually about heroes and gods, folk tales are typically about ordinary people. Folk tales tend to travel, and you'll often find the same **motifs** in the tales of different cultures. For example, there are said to be nine hundred versions of the folk tale about Cinderella.

Foreshadowing An **organizational device** used in literature to create expectation or **suspense**— or to set up an explanation of later developments. The use of clues to hint at events that will occur later in a plot. Foreshadowing helps the reader accept an unlikely ending

Free Verse Poetry that does not have a regular **meter** or **rhyme scheme**. Poets writing in free verse try to capture the natural rhythms of ordinary speech. To create its music, free verse may use **internal rhyme**, **alliteration**, **onomatopoeia**, **refrain**, and **parallel structure**, among other techniques.

Freytag's Pyramid Named after Gustav Freytag, this is the formal name for a story structure that includes five elements (exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution).

Generalization A conclusion drawn from specific information that is used to make a broad statement about a topic or person.

Genre A category used to classify artistic composition, as in music or literature, literary works, usually by form, technique or content (e.g., prose, poetry).

Gothic—Literature that employs dark and picturesque scenery, startling and melodramatic narrative devices, and an overall atmosphere of exoticism, mystery, fear, and dread.

Grotesque—Characterized by distortions or incongruities.

Haiku Japanese verse form consisting of three lines and, usually, seventeen syllables (five in the first line, seven in the second, and five in the third). The writer of a haiku uses association and suggestion to describe a particular moment of discovery or enlightenment. A haiku often presents an image of daily life that relates to a particular season.

Headings, Graphics and Charts Any visual cues on a page of text that offer additional information to guide the reader's comprehension. Headings typically are words or phrases in bold print that indicate a topic or the theme of a portion of text; graphics may be photographs, drawings, maps or any other pictorial representation; charts (and tables or graphs) condense data into a series of rows, lines or other shortened lists.

Hubris—The excessive pride or ambition that leads to the main character's downfall.

Hyperbole An exaggeration or overstatement (e.g., I had to wait forever.) A **figure of speech** that uses exaggeration to express a strong emotion or to create a comic effect. A hyperbole is an obvious and intentional exaggeration, called **overstatement**, not intended to be taken literally.

Iambic pentameter Line of poetry that contains five **iamb**s. An **iamb** is a metrical **foot**, or unit of measure, consisting of an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable. **Pentameter** comes from the Greek *penta* (five) and *meter* (measure). Iambic pentameter is by far the most common verse line in English poetry. The da-DUM of a human heartbeat is a common example of this rhythm.

Idiom A phrase or expression peculiar to a particular language that means something different from the literal meaning of *each word* (e.g., It's raining cats and dogs. She is pulling my leg.). One of the difficulties of translating a work from another language is translating idioms.

Idyll, idyllic/pastoral— a simple descriptive work in poetry or prose that deals with rustic life or suggests a mood of peace and contentment; a narrative poem treating an epic, romantic, or tragic theme

Imagery Descriptive or **figurative language** in a literary work; the use of language to create sensory impressions (sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell).

Imperative—The mood of a verb that gives an order. “Eat your spinach” uses an imperative verb.

Implication—An idea that is suggested without being explicitly or concretely stated

Implicit Though unexpressed in the actual text, meaning that may be understood by the reader; **implied**. (verb = to imply)

Incongruity—The deliberate joining of opposites or of elements that are not appropriate to each other.

Inductive reasoning—A logical process wherein one reasons from particulars to universals, using specific cases in order to draw a conclusion/generalization.

Inference A judgment based on reasoning rather than on a direct or **explicit** statement. A conclusion based on facts or circumstances; understanding gained by “reading between the lines.” (verb = infer)

Informational Text Nonfiction written primarily to convey factual information. Informational texts comprise the majority of printed material adults read (e.g., textbooks, newspapers, reports, directions, brochures, technical manuals).

Integration of Information Writing strategy to maintain the flow of ideas. Integration can be accomplished by **summarizing**, **paraphrasing**, or **quoting** source material.

Interior monologue—This is a term for novels and poetry, not dramatic literature. It refers to writing that records the mental talking that goes on inside a character's head.

Interpret To give reasons through an explanation to convey and represent the meaning or understanding of a text.

Inversion Reversal of the normal word order of a sentence. The elements of a standard English sentence are subject, verb, and complement, and in most sentences that is the order in which they appear (e.g., Ray rowed the boat.). Writers use inversion for emphasis and variety. They may also use it for more technical reasons—to create end rhymes or to accommodate a given meter.

Irony The use of a word or phrase to mean the exact opposite of its literal or usual meaning; incongruity between the actual result of a sequence of events and the expected result. Contrast or discrepancy between expectation and reality—between what is said and what is really meant, between what is expected to happen and what really does happen, or between what appears to be true and what is really true.

Verbal Irony When a writer or speaker says one thing but really means something completely different.

Situational Irony Occurs when there is a contrast between what would seem appropriate and what really happens or when there is a contradiction between what we expect to happen and what really does take place.

Dramatic Irony Occurs when the audience or the reader knows something important that a character in a play or story does not know.

Cosmic—occurs when a writer uses God, destiny, or fate to dash the hopes and expectations of a character or of humankind in general. In cosmic irony, a discrepancy exists between what a character aspires to and what universal forces provide.

Juxtaposition—Placement of two things closely together to emphasize similarities or differences

Key/Supporting Details Points of information in a text that strongly support the meaning or tell the story. Statements that define, describe, or otherwise provide information about the **topic**, **theme**, or **main idea**.

Key Words Specific word choices in a text that strongly support the **tone**, **mood**, or meaning of the text.

Lament—A poem of sadness or grief over the death of a loved one or over some other intense loss

Literal language

Literary Device Tool used by the author to enliven and provide voice to the text (e.g., dialogue, alliteration).

Literary Element An essential technique used in literature (e.g., characterization, setting, plot, theme).

Literary Form The overall structure or shape of a work that frequently follows an established design. Forms may refer to a literary type (**narrative, short story**) or to patterns of **meter, lines, and rhymes (stanza, verse)**.

Literary Movement A trend or pattern of shared beliefs or practices that mark an approach to literature (e.g., **Realism, Naturalism, Romanticism**).

Literary Nonfiction Text that includes literary elements and devices usually associated with fiction to report on actual persons, places, or events. Examples include **nature and travel text, biography, memoir** and the **essay**.

Litotes—Ironic understatement in which an affirmative is expressed by the negative of its contrary meaning

Logos (logical appeal) Appeal using reason and logic. Logos is one of the three primary modes of persuasion, along with ethos and pathos.

Lyric poetry Poetry that does not tell a story but is aimed only at expressing a speaker's emotions or thoughts. The term **lyric** comes from the Greek. In ancient Greece, lyric poems were recited to the accompaniment of a stringed instrument called a lyre.

Malapropism— The use of an incorrect word in place of a word with a similar sound, resulting in a nonsensical, often humorous, utterance. (“Texas has a lot of electrical votes.”—Yogi Berra)

Main Idea The author's central thought; the chief topic of a text expressed or implied in a word or phrase; the topic sentence of a paragraph.

Maxim— A well-known phrase that expresses a general truth about life or a rule of behavior.

Media The main means of mass communication (broadcasting, publishing, and the internet) regarded collectively. Journalism, social media, films, television, radio, advertising, books, magazines, newspapers, and Journals are all examples of media.

Media Literacy The ability to access, analyze, evaluate and create media in a variety of forms. Media literacy builds an understanding of the role of media in society as well as essential skills of inquiry and self-expression necessary for citizens of a democracy.

Metaphor A figure of speech that makes the comparison between two unlike things, in which one thing becomes another thing without the use of the word *like*, *as*, *seems*, or *resembles*. An **implied metaphor** does not tell us directly that one thing is something else. An **extended metaphor** is a metaphor that is extended, or developed, over several lines of writing or even throughout an entire poem. A **dead metaphor** is a metaphor that has been used so often that we no longer realize it is a figure of speech. A **mixed metaphor** is the inconsistent mixture of two or more metaphors. Mixed metaphors are a common problem in bad writing.

Meter Generally regular pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in poetry.

Memoir Meaning “memory,” this is a nonfiction narrative presenting an important period in a person’s life.

Metonymy—A figure of speech in which a person, place, or thing is referred to by something closely associated with it.

Modify—To restrict or limit in meaning. In the phrase “large, shaggy dog,” the two adjectives modify the noun; in the phrase “very shaggy dog” the adverb “very” modifies the adjective “shaggy” which modifies the noun “dog.”

Monologue An extended speech given by a single person to an audience

Mood The prevailing emotions or **atmosphere** of a work derived from literary devices such as **dialogue** and literary elements such as **setting**. The mood of a work is not always what might be expected based on its subject matter.

Motif A recurring subject, **theme**, image, or idea in a literary work.

Multiple-meaning Words Words that have several meanings depending upon how they are used in a sentence.

Myth Traditional story that is rooted in a particular culture, is basically religious, and usually serves to explain a belief, a ritual, or a mysterious natural phenomenon. In English class, we also apply this term broadly, to represent a special kind of story that has both significance and staying power.

Narrative A story, actual or fictional, expressed orally or in text.

Narrator A person, animal, or thing telling the story or giving an account of something.

Naturalism—a literary genre that started as a movement in late nineteenth century literature, film, theater, and art. It is a type of extreme realism. This movement suggested the roles of family, social conditions, and environment in shaping human character.

Nemesis—A nemesis is a bitter enemy, especially one that seems unbeatable.

Nonfiction Text that is not fictional; designed primarily to explain, argue, instruct or describe rather than entertain. For the most part, its emphasis is factual. Nonfiction is **prose** writing that deals with real people, things, events, and places. The most popular forms of nonfiction are **biography**, **autobiography**, and **memoir**.

Novel A fictional prose narrative of book length (usually consisting of more than fifty thousand words), typically presenting characters and plot. In general, the novel uses the same basic literary elements as the short story (**plot**, **character**, **setting**, **theme**, and **point of view**) but develops them more fully.

Oblique Reference—Not expressed directly or openly, making it difficult to understand

Occasion—The time and place a speech is given or a piece is written

Ode—A relatively lengthy lyric poem that often expresses lofty emotions in a dignified style. Odes are characterized by a serious topic, such as truth, art, freedom, justice, or the meaning of life; their tone tends to be formal. This is no prescribed pattern that defines an ode.

Onomatopoeia Use of a word whose sound imitates or suggests its meaning. Onomatopoeia is an important element in the music of poetry.

Opinion A personal view, attitude, or appraisal.

Organization—How the different parts of a text are arranged/sequenced

Oxymoron—A condensed form of paradox in which two contradictory words are used together.

Pacing of Text Pacing is a stylistic technique that controls the time and speed at which the story unfolds. In other words, the narrative pace is about how slow or fast the story moves. Writers use various literary devices to control the pace of a story, such as dialogue, action intensity, or the use of a particular genre.

Parallel sentence construction—(also called parallelism) The repetition of words or phrases that have similar grammatical structures.

Parable—A relatively short story that teaches a moral, or lesson, about how to lead a good life.

Paradox Statement or situation that seems to be a contradiction but reveals a truth. Paradoxes in literature often express aspects of life that are mysterious, surprising, or difficult to describe.

Paraphrase A restatement of another piece of writing with new words or phrases while keeping the same meaning. Paraphrasing still requires citations to ensure you're not plagiarizing someone else's ideas, research, or theories.

Parallelism Repetition of words, phrases, or sentences that have the same grammatical structure or that state a similar idea. Parallelism, or **parallel structure**, helps make lines rhythmic and memorable and heightens their emotional effect.

Parenthesis—a stylistic device that is a qualifying or explanatory sentence, clause, or word that writers insert into a paragraph or passage

Parody— A humorous imitation of another, usually serious, work. Parodists imitate the tone, language, and shape of the original in order to deflate the subject matter, making the original work seem absurd. Parody may also be used as a form of literary criticism to expose the defects in a work. Sometimes parody becomes an affectionate acknowledgement that a well-known work has become both institutionalized in our culture and fair game for some fun.

Pathos (emotional appeal) An appeal made to an audience's emotions in order to evoke feeling. Pathos is one of the three primary modes of persuasion, along with logos and ethos.

Pathetic fallacy— A literary device whereby an author ascribes the human feelings of one or more characters to non-human objects or nature (a type of personification).

Pentameter—A line containing five feet. The iambic pentameter is the most common line in English verse written before 1950.

Periodic sentence—A sentence grammatically complete only at the end. A loose sentence is grammatically complete before the period. The following are (1) periodic and (2) loose sentences.

1. When conquering love did first my heart assail,/Unto mine aid I summoned every sense.
2. Fair is my love, and cruel as she's fair.

Persona—Literally, a persona is a mask. In literature a persona is a speaker created by a writer to tell a story or to speak in a poem. A persona is not a character in a story or narrative, nor does a persona necessarily directly reflect the author's personal voice. A persona is a separate self, created by and distinct from the author, through which he or she speaks.

Personification A type of metaphor in which a nonhuman thing, quality, or idea is given human qualities or human form (e.g., Flowers danced about the lawn.)

Persuasion Type of writing that is aimed at leading the reader or listener to think or act in a certain way. Persuasion can use language that appeals to the emotions, or it can use logic to appeal to reason. When persuasive writing appeals to reason and not to the emotions, it is called **argument**.

Phrase A group of words that works together in a sentence but does not contain a subject or a verb. A phrase is a group of words that stand together as a single grammatical unit, typically as part of another phrase, a clause, or a sentence. Use of phrases in writing is essential to sentence variety and stylistic maturity.

***Prepositional phrase** A group of words consisting of a preposition, its object, and any words that modify the object. Most of the time, a prepositional phrase modifies a verb or a noun. These two kinds of prepositional phrases are called adverbial phrases and adjectival phrases, respectively.

***Participial phrase (past/present)** A group of words consisting of a participle and the modifier(s) and/or (pro)noun(s) or noun phrase(s) that function as the direct object(s), indirect object(s), or complement(s) of the action or state expressed in the participle. A participial phrase acts as an adjective, serving to modify nouns.

***Gerund phrase** A group of words consisting of a verbal that ends in -ing and any modifiers or objects associated with it, which functions as a noun. The term verbal indicates that a gerund, like the other two kinds of verbals (participles and infinitives), is based on a verb and therefore expresses action or a state of being.

***Infinitive phrase** A group of words consisting of the infinitive form of a verb plus any complements and modifiers and functioning as a noun, adjective, or adverb

Picaresque— A narrative depicting, in realistic and often humorous detail, the adventures of a roguish hero of low social class who lives by his wit in a corrupt society.

Plot The structure of a story. The sequence in which the author arranges related events in a story. The structure often includes the **exposition (or basic situation), the rising action, the climax, the falling action, and the resolution (or denouement)**. The plot may have a **protagonist** who is opposed by an **antagonist**, creating what is called **conflict**.

Exposition—the plot begins with this element which establishes the setting, identifies the characters, and introduces the basic situation

Rising action—the events in the plot that continue to build suspense

Climax—the highest point of interest or suspense

Falling action—Where the character begins to solve the problem and the winding down of the action; final or closing action following the climax

Resolution—When the character solves the main problem or conflict, or someone solves it for him/her

Poetry In its broadest sense, text that aims to present ideas and evoke an emotional experience in the reader through the use of **meter, imagery and connotative and concrete words**. Some poetry has a carefully constructed **structure** based on **rhythmic patterns**. Poetry typically relies on words and expressions that have several layers of meaning (**figurative language**). It may also make use of the effects of regular **rhythm** on the ear and may make a strong appeal to the senses through the use of **imagery**.

Point of View The vantage point from which a writer tells a story (e.g., **first person, third person limited, omniscient, etc**). The perspective from which a speaker or author recounts a narrative or presents information.

First Person Point of View One of the characters is actually the narrator telling the story, using the pronoun “I.”

Second person—The narrator addresses the reader directly as though she is part of the story.

Omniscient (all-knowing) point of view The person telling the story knows everything there is to know about the characters and their problems—their past, presents, and futures, even what they’re thinking. In the omniscient point of view, the narrator is not in the story.

Third person limited point of view The narrator, who plays no part in the story, zooms in on the thoughts and feelings of just one character. With this point of view, we observe the action through the eyes and with the feelings of this one character.

Third-objective—This is a third person narrator who only reports on what would be visible to the camera.

Premise (1) In literature, a premise is the basic concept of the book that includes the main character, the character's need or situation and the problem they face.

Premise (2) In argumentation, a premise is a statement or an idea that serves as the basis of an argument. A premise is a proposition—a true or false declarative statement—used in an argument to prove the truth of another proposition called the conclusion. Arguments consist of two or more premises that imply some conclusion if the argument is sound.

Prefix Groups of letters placed before a word to alter its meaning.

Process Analysis An organizational strategy for information and explanatory writing in which paragraphs or essays are developed through a step-by-step explanation of how something is done.

Problem/Solution An organizational strategy for information and explanatory writing that describes a problem and discusses possible solutions to the problem.

Propaganda Information aimed at positively or negatively influencing the opinions or behaviors of large numbers of people.

Propaganda Techniques Propaganda techniques and persuasive tactics are used to influence people to believe, buy or do something. (See **ethos**, **pathos**, and **logos**.)

1. **Name-calling** is an attack on a person instead of an issue.
2. **Bandwagon** tries to persuade the reader to do, think or buy something because it is popular or because “everyone” is doing it.
3. **Red herring** is an attempt to distract the reader with details not relevant to the argument.
4. **Emotional appeal (pathos)** tries to persuade the reader by using words that appeal to the reader’s emotions instead of to logic or reason.
5. **Testimonial** attempts to persuade the reader by using a famous person to endorse a product or idea (for instance, the celebrity endorsement).

6. **Repetition** attempts to persuade the reader by repeating a message over and over again.
7. **Sweeping generalization (stereotyping)** makes an oversimplified statement about a group based on limited information.
8. **Circular argument** states a conclusion as part of the proof of the argument.
9. **Appeal to numbers, facts, or statistics** attempts to persuade the reader by showing how many people think something is true.

Prose The ordinary language people use in speaking or writing; any written work that follows a basic grammatical structure (think words and phrases arranged into sentences and paragraphs). This stands out from works of poetry, which follow a metrical structure (think lines and stanzas).

Protagonist The main character in fiction or drama.

Pun Play on the multiple meanings of a word or on two words that sound alike but have different meanings. Most often puns are used for their humorous effects.

Purpose—The goal the speaker wants to achieve

Quote Integration The incorporation of source material into academic writing. Quote integration may be accomplished by using the following strategies:

- Author/speaker/+ verb (+ that)
- Signal phrase: According to X
- Independent Clause:Independent Clause
- Blend the quote into your own sentence while maintaining grammatical integrity.

Realism—the period of time from the Civil War to the turn of the century during which William Dean Howells, Rebecca Harding Davis, Henry James, Mark Twain, and others wrote fiction devoted to accurate representation and an exploration of American lives in various contexts

Reasons/Reasoning Reasons, also called “because clauses” are the “why” behind the claim in argument writing. Each reason will address one concern, and will act as one section of argument for the paper. Each of the reasons will be supported with its own research or support. **Reasoning** is the process for making clear how your evidence supports your claim.

Rebuttal—Gives voice to possible objections

Redundancy The use of unnecessary or repetitive words that can weaken your sentences and dilute your message.

Refrain Repeated word, phrase, line, or group of lines. Though refrains are usually associated with songs and poems, they are also used in speeches and other forms of literature. Refrains are most often used to build rhythm, but they may also provide commentary or build suspense.

Refutation—A denial of the validity of an opposing argument.

Relevance (of claims/evidence) In an argumentative text, relevant claims and evidence support the intended conclusion through arguments appropriate to the intended audience and to the context.

Renaissance —the revival of art and literature under the influence of classical models in the 14th-16th centuries.

Resolution The portion of a story following the climax in which the conflict is resolved, happily or unhappily, and perhaps with ambiguity.

Rhetoric Language that's carefully constructed to persuade, motivate, or inform the reader or listener about the speaker or writer's position; the art of persuasion.

Rhetorical Question a question asked in order to create a dramatic effect or to make a point rather than to get an answer

Rising Action The part of a story where the plot becomes increasingly complicated. Rising action leads up to the **climax**, or **turning Point**.

Rhyme The repetition of accented vowel sounds, and all sounds following them, in words that are close together in a poem. **End rhymes** occur at the ends of lines. **Internal rhymes** occur in the middle of a line. When two words have some sound in common but do not rhyme exactly, they are called **approximate rhymes** (or **near rhymes**, or **slant rhymes**).

Rhythm Musical quality in language produced by repetition. Rhythm occurs naturally in all forms of spoken and written language. The most obvious kind of rhythm is produced by **meter**, the regular repetition of stressed and unstressed syllables found in some poetry. But writers can also create rhythm by using rhymes, by repeating words and phrases, and even by repeating whole lines or sentences.

Rhyme scheme The pattern of rhymes in a poem, indicated by the use of a different letter of the alphabet for each rhyme.

Romanticism—a movement in the arts and literature that originated in the late 18th century, emphasizing inspiration, subjectivity, and the primacy of the individual

Satire A type of writing that ridicules or examines human vice or weakness. Satire ridicules a person, a group of people, humanity at large, or an attitude or failing, a social institution—in order to reveal a weakness and thereby correct it.

Schadenfreude—pleasure derived by someone from another person's misfortune

Sentence Variety Various sentence structures, styles, and lengths that can enhance the rhythm of or add emphasis to a piece of text. The presence of multiple sentence structures in a text (**simple, complex, compound, compound-complex**) and/or various sentence beginnings (e.g., **dependent and independent clauses, phrases, single words**).

***Simple** An independent clause that conveys a single, complete thought.

***Complex** A sentence with one independent clause and at least one dependent clause.

***Compound** A sentence made up of two independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, or so) and a comma or by a semicolon alone.

***Compound-Complex** A sentence with two or more independent clauses and at least one dependent clause.

Sequence of Steps A literary organizational form that presents the order in which tasks are to be performed.

Setting The time and place in which a story or play unfolds. Setting often contributes to a story's emotional effect. Setting can also contribute to the conflict in a story and to reveal character. Setting can be used to evoke a mood or atmosphere that will prepare the reader for what is to come.

Short Story Short, concentrated, fictional prose narrative.

Simile A figure of speech that makes a comparison between two unlike things, using a word such as *like*, *as*, *than*, *seems*, *appears*, or *resembles* (e.g., The ant scurried as fast as a cheetah.)--This is a terrible example.

Slant rhyme—Sounds are almost but not exactly alike (also called near rhyme, off rhyme and approximate rhyme).

Soliloquy A dramatic speech, revealing inner thoughts and feelings, spoken aloud by one character while alone on the stage.

Sonnet Fourteen-line lyric poem that is usually written in iambic pentameter and that has one of several rhyme schemes. The oldest kind of sonnet is called the **Italian sonnet**, or **Petrarchan sonnet**. The first eight lines, or **octet**, of the Italian sonnet pose a question or problem about love or some other subject. The concluding **six** lines, or **sestet**, are a response to the octet. The rhyme scheme of the Italian sonnet is *abba abba cde cde*. Another important sonnet form, widely used by Shakespeare, is called the **Shakespearean**, or **English, sonnet**. It has three four-line units, or **quatrains**, followed by a concluding two-line unit, or **couplet**. The most common rhyme scheme for the Shakespearean sonnet is *abab cdcd efef gg*.

Italian/Petrarchan—a sonnet divided into an octave, which typically rhymes *abbaabba*, and a *sestet*, which may have varying rhyme schemes. Common rhyme patterns in the *sestet* are *cdecde*, *cdcdcd*, and *cdccdc*. Very often the octave presents a situation, attitude, or problem that the *sestet* comments on or resolves.

English/Shakespearean—a sonnet organized into three **quatrains** and a **couplet**, which typically rhyme *abab cdcd efef gg*. English sonnets, because of their four-part organization, have flexibility with respect to where thematic breaks can occur. Frequently, however, the most pronounced break or turn comes with the concluding **couplet**.

Sound Devices Elements of literature that emphasize sound (e.g., **assonance**, **consonance**, **alliteration**, **rhyme**, **onomatopoeia**).

Source Accuracy The correctness, truthfulness, and overall excellence and quality of the information presented in a source.

Source Credibility A credible source is free from bias and backed up with evidence. It is written by a trustworthy author or organization.

Source Validity The truthfulness of the source in respect to the information presented

Speaker The voice used by an author to tell/narrate a story or poem. The speaker is often a created identity, and should not automatically be equated with the author. See also **narrator** and **point of view**.

Spoken Word An oral poetic performance art characterized by rhyme, repetition, improvisation, and word play and frequently referring to issues of social justice, politics, race, and community.

Stage Direction A playwright's written instructions provided in the text of a play about the setting or how the actors are to move and behave in a play.

Stanza Group of consecutive lines in a poem that form a single unit. A stanza in a poem is something like a paragraph in prose: It often expresses a unit of thought.

Stereotype Fixed idea or conception of a character that does not allow for any individuality. Stereotypes are often based on racial, social, religious, sexist, or ethnic prejudices.

Structure of Poem The **rhyming** pattern, **meter**, **grammar**, and **imagery** used by a poet to convey meaning.

Style The author's choices regarding language, **sentence structure**, **voice**, and **tone** in order to communicate with the reader. The distinctive and unique manner in which a writer arranges words to achieve particular effects. Style essentially combines the idea to be expressed with the author's individuality. These arrangements include individual word choices as well as matters such as the length of sentences, their structure, tone, and use of irony.

Subject—The topic of a text, what the text is about

Suspense— The tension that the author uses to create a feeling of discomfort about the unknown.

Suffix Groups of letters placed after a word to alter its meaning or change it into a different kind of word, from an adjective to an adverb, etc.

Summarize To capture all of the most important parts of the original text (paragraph, story, poem), but express them in a much shorter space, and as much as possible in the reader's own words.

Suspense Uncertainty or anxiety the reader feels about what is going to happen next in a story.

Syllogism—A form of reasoning in which two statements are made and a conclusion is drawn upon them. A syllogism begins with a major premise (“All tragedies end unhappily.”) followed by a minor premise (“*Hamlet* is a tragedy.”) and a conclusion (Therefore, *Hamlet* ends unhappily.”).

Symbolism A device in literature where a person, place, thing, or event represents not only itself literally, but also something larger than itself, typically an idea or abstraction.

Synecdoche— A literary device that uses a part of something to refer to the whole.

Synesthesia— The mixing (conflation) of the senses.

Synonym A word that is similar in meaning to another word (e.g., sorrow, grief, sadness).

Syntax The ordering of words into meaningful verbal patterns such as **phrases, clauses, and sentences**.

Synthesize When you synthesize information, you take specific concepts and consider them together to understand how they compare/contrast and how they relate to one another. Synthesis involves combining multiple elements to create a whole. Synthesizing information is the opposite of analyzing information. When you read an article or book, you have to pull out specific concepts from the larger document in order to understand it. This is analyzing.

Synthesize—To combine two or more ideas in order to create something more complex in support of a new idea

Tall Tale Exaggerated, far-fetched story that is obviously untrue but is told as though it should be believed.

Task (writer's) The type of writing you are asked to do: letter, feature article, editorial, speech, etc. Different types of writing have different formats. Look for “task words”--words or phrases in a writing assignment that tell you what you need to do. Common examples of task words are 'discuss', 'evaluate', 'compare and contrast', and 'critically analyze'.

Thesis A single declarative sentence that presents the claim or argument of an essay, research paper, etc., and is developed, supported, and explained in the text by means of examples and evidence.

Text Organization/Structure The author's method of structuring a text; the way a text is structured from beginning to end. In literary works, the structure could include **flashback** and **foreshadowing**, for example. In nonfiction works, the structure could include **sequence, question-answer, cause-effect, etc.**

Theme Central idea broad enough to cover the entire scope of a literary work. A theme may be stated or implied. Clues to the theme may be found in the prominent and/or recurring ideas in a work. **A theme is not the same as a subject. The subject of a work can usually be expressed in a word or two: love, childhood, death. The theme is the idea the writer wishes to reveal about that subject. The theme is something that can be expressed in at least one complete sentence.**

Thesis The statement in which the writer establishes their position on a topic

Tone The attitude of the author toward the audience, characters, subject or the work itself (e.g., serious, humorous). **Tone is conveyed through the writer's choice of words and details.**

Tragedy Play, novel, or other narrative that depicts serious and important events in which the main character comes to an unhappy end. In a tragedy, the main character is usually dignified and courageous. His or her downfall may be caused by a character flaw, or it may result from forces beyond human control. The tragic hero or heroine usually wins some self-knowledge and wisdom, even though he or she suffers defeat, perhaps even death.

Tragic hero— a literary character who makes a judgment error that inevitably leads to his/her own destruction

Tragic Flaw— The character flaw or error of a tragic hero that leads to a character's downfall.

Transitions Clarifying words or phrases connecting ideas and concepts together in sentences and paragraphs

Unity The quality of “oneness” in a written work that results when all the words and sentences contribute to a single effect or main idea.

Understatement—An understatement draws attention to a fact that is already obvious and noticeable in a sarcastic or ironic way. Understating something is akin to exaggerating its obviousness as a means of humor.

Universality—Existence or prevalence everywhere; a quality of literature that ensures that it has value and applicability across space and time.

Universal Character A character that symbolically embodies well-known meanings and basic human experiences, regardless of when or where he/she lives (e.g., hero, villain, intellectual, dreamer).

Universal Significance The generally accepted importance or value of a work to represent human experience regardless of culture or time period.

Utopia—A setting that is ideal or perfect.

Validity (in argument) A valid argument is an argument such that, in any possible situation where the **premises** are true, the conclusion is also true. In other words: a valid argument is an argument where true premises guarantee a true conclusion.

Villanelle A poem of nineteen lines, and which follows a strict form that consists of five tercets (three-line stanzas) followed by one quatrain (four-line stanza). Villanelles use a specific rhyme scheme of ABA for their tercets, and ABAA for the quatrain.

Voice The fluency, rhythm, and liveliness in a text that make it unique to the author.

Refers to the rhetorical mixture of vocabulary, tone, point of view, and syntax that makes phrases, sentences, and paragraphs flow in a particular manner. Novels can represent multiple voices: that of the narrator and those of individual characters.

Active Voice: a sentence that has a subject that acts upon its verb

Passive Voice: a sentence where the subject is a recipient of a verb’s action

Wit—A form of intelligent humor and the ability to say or write things that are clever and usually funny. A witty person is skilled at making clever and funny remarks.

Zeitgeist— the defining spirit or mood of a particular period of history as shown by the ideas and beliefs of the time.

Argument Organizer (Grade 9)

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1M0wsJX9iuAlAmdI2mQeQKe0M2YYQn-B2IEggzG0j6Co/edit?usp=sharing>

Revised Argument Organizer

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vMF-NtFBhiVRo6HL7kT0inbi32ekAZ0ogHt263bxYAs/edit?usp=sharing>

[COMPOSITION TERMINOLOGY \(All taken from Summer 2020 terms - linked here\)](#)

Forms of discourse—A system of classifying writing according to purpose. The four main forms of discourse are description, narration, exposition, and persuasion.

ANALYSIS: One of the types into which discourses are classified according to function and which comprise exposition, argument, description, and narration. The rhetorical analysis essay will consistently link its points to these elements as they pertain to the document under question. More general information about the rhetorical situation can be elsewhere on the OWL. The following sections deal with considerations unique to analyzing visual documents.

ARGUMENTATIVE: The argumentative essay is a genre of writing that requires the student to investigate a topic, collect, generate, and evaluate evidence, and establish a position on the topic in a concise manner.

Please note Some confusion may occur between the argumentative essay and the expository essay. These two genres are similar, but the argumentative essay differs from the expository essay in the amount of pre-writing (invention) and research involved. The argumentative essay is commonly assigned as a capstone or final project in first year writing or advanced composition courses and involves lengthy, detailed research. Expository essays involve less research and are shorter in length. Expository essays are often used for in-class writing exercises or tests, such as the GED or GRE.

DESCRIPTIVE: The descriptive essay is a genre of essay that asks the student to

describe an object, person, place, experience, emotion, situation, etc. This genre encourages the student's ability to create a written account of a particular experience. What is more, this genre allows for a great deal of artistic freedom (the goal of which is to paint an image that is vivid and moving in the mind of the reader).

One might benefit from keeping in mind this simple maxim If the reader is unable to clearly form an impression of the thing that you are describing, try, try again!

EXPLANATORY: The expository essay is a genre of essay that requires the student to investigate an idea, evaluate evidence, expound on the idea, and set forth an argument concerning that idea in a clear and concise manner. This can be accomplished through comparison and contrast, , example, the analysis of cause and effect, etc.

Please note: This genre is commonly assigned as a tool for classroom evaluation and is often found in various exam formats.

INFORMATIVE: Informative essays differ from argument-based essays in that they are not designed to persuade your audience but to inform. Your thesis statement should simply reflect what your paper is about, not pursue a persuasive agenda. Sometimes these essays are called expository or explanatory essays.

MEMOIR: While the personal essay can be about almost anything, the memoir tends to discuss past events. Memoir is similar to the personal essay, except that the memoir tends to focus more on striking or life-changing events.

Where the personal essay explores, free from any need to interpret, the memoir interprets, analyzes, and seeks the deeper meaning beneath the surface experience of particular events. The memoir continually asks the following questions

- Why was this event of particular significance?
- What did it mean?
- Why is it important?

In this sense, the memoir is heavier than the personal essay, and it mines the past to shed light on the present. The memoir seeks to make sense of an individual life.

PERSUASIVE: The primary purpose of persuasive writing is to give an opinion and try to influence the reader's way of thinking with supporting evidence.

REFLECTIVE: Looking back at something (often an event, i.e. something that happened, but it could also be an idea or object), analyzing the event or idea (thinking in depth and from different perspectives, and trying to explain, often with reference to a

model or theory from your subject), and thinking carefully about what the event or idea means for you and your ongoing progress as a learner and/or practicing professional.

Writing Strategies

CAUSE/EFFECT: A strategy which examines the causes and consequences of events or ideas; the concept that an action will produce a certain responses to the action in the form of another event

COMPARISON/CONTRAST: Strategy which analyzes how two or more things are similar (comparison) and/or how two or more things are different (contrast)

CLASSIFICATION: This is sometimes called a classification and division essay. This strategy divides a difficult topic into manageable parts or subtopics to clarify and explain.

PROCESS ANALYSIS: A strategy which presents a series of steps in order to obtain a particular result; explanation of how something is done

DEFINITION: This strategy is often used to introduce new terminology, but it may be used for an entire essay. Be certain to move beyond a dictionary definition into an extended definition where both connotation and denotation of the term is explored.

Essential Academic Vocabulary Cross Referenced with PA Core & Collins Writing

analyze: to examine something carefully and with focus

apply: to connect something you know or can do to another situation

appropriate: right or correct in a particular situation or context

argument: an idea supported by evidence or reasoning

assess: to make a judgment about

audience: those who receive information or a message

cite: to mention or quote as an example to support an idea, claim, or opinion

claim: to state a position that may go against the positions of others

clarify: to make something easier to understand

closure: the act of bringing something to an end or reaching a conclusion

compare: to see what is the same or similar about two or more items or to judge which is better

compose: to create or write

contrast: to see what is different about two or more items or to decide which is better or worse

conventions: generally accepted practices, such as in grammar or language mechanics

counterclaim: a claim that goes against a previous claim

credible: reasonable to trust or believe

critique: to express your opinion about the good and bad parts of something

define: to explain the meaning of something

delineate: to clearly show or describe

design: the way in which something is planned and made

detail: a fact or piece of information about something

determine: to decide the truth or validity of something (facts, statistics, or claims)

develop: to grow or change and become more advanced

dialogue: a conversation between two or more people, groups, or entities

e.g.: a Latin abbreviation that means “for example”

essay: a formal and focused piece of writing, usually containing multiple paragraphs

evaluate: to determine the value, worth, or importance of something after careful consideration

evidence: something that proves that a claim is true or valid

explain: to make clear with sufficient reasons or details

fact: true and provable piece of information

formal style: impersonal, objective, precise use of language

formulate: to develop and explain all the details of an idea, thought, or conclusion

infer: to use information you have been given to come to a conclusion

integrate: to combine one thing with another to make a whole

interpret: to explain or understand the meaning of

justify: to prove or show something to be just, right, or reasonable

logical: using reason

objective tone: presenting information in a way that is not emotional or biased

organization: the appropriate arrangement of parts in an orderly and efficient way

paraphrase: to reword something written or spoken by someone else

passage: a portion or section of a written work; a paragraph, verse, or similar

phrase: a group of words that express an idea wholly or completely

plagiarize: to use another's words without proper authorization

precise: definite or exact

predict: to say what will happen in the future

rank: relative position or standing

reason: basis of argument; supporting evidence

relevant: connected to the subject

source: where the information comes from; can be written, spoken, audio, video, and so on

specific: precise or particular

sufficient: enough

summarize: brief restatement of important points of a written or oral statement

support: to uphold or defend as valid or right

synthesize: to combine a number of things into a coherent whole

text: the whole of a written work

text features: elements that help the reader make sense of the text

text structure: how a text or a passage is organized

tone: a feeling or an attitude expressed by the words

transform: to change something from one state to another