

# Literary Terms Guide

## For Dialectical Journals or Annotations

Term	Definition	Examples
Alliteration	Repetition of a sound or letter at the beginnings of a series of words	-silly sorority sisters -husky hum
Allusion	Reference to another famous text	Shakespeare, Greek Mythology, The Bible
Connect	Relate parts of the story to yourself, society or the universe	Growing up, I had a neighbor the kids were all afraid of, just like the kids in the story.
Compare	Note the similarities between the text and another piece of literature or event.	The witness in the case against Tom Robinson is similar to the old lady who testifies in the play <i>Twelve Angry Men</i> .
Contrast	Note the differences between the text and another piece of literature or event.	Bob Ewel of <i>TKAM</i> turns out to be a very different kind of criminal than the prison escapee in <i>Great Expectations</i> .
Diction	Author's choice of words.	"She baked a cake so full of shinny it made me tight."
Detail	Sentences or phrases important to the development of the story.	It turns out, the women who testified that she saw the whole thing, wasn't even wearing her glasses!
Figurative Language	Non-literal use of language	Simile, Metaphor, Idiom, Personification, Hyperbole, pun, etc.
Hyperbole	Exaggeration used for dramatic effect.	"Two geological ages later we heard the sound of Atticus' footsteps...."
Idiom	Phrases understood by speakers of a certain language.	It's raining cats and dogs
Imagery	Author's use of sensory details to paint a picture with words.	The warm gold reflection of his watch fob caught my eye as I gazed across the cool green pasture.
Metaphor	Comparison of unlike things not using like or as.	The governor was determined to scrape the barnacles off the ship of state.
Mood	Feeling created by the author's word choice.	The walls of the crypt were lined with dusty bones of poor souls not fortunate enough to escape.

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Onomatopoeia	Words used for their sound effect.	Meow, honk, woof, beep, etc.
Personification	Giving non-human things human characteristics.	The flashlight slid from my grasp and swam down the river.
Point of View	From whose perspective is the story told. How does this affect the story?	“All he needed was someone to beat him up, and I ain’t big enough.”
Pun	Words or phrases used for their multiple meanings.	“...it was going to be a hot summer.” Hot = intense as well as climate.
Repetition	Words or phrases repeated to emphasize significance.	We were children. We were his children. We would always be his children.
Sensory details	Details that appeal to the five senses.	The warm gooey smell of fresh baked cookies wafted through the window.
Simile	Comparison of unlike things using like or as.	“She fit into Maycomb like a hand into a glove.”
Symbolism	One thing is used to represent something else.	The mockingbird actually represents Tom Robinson, and all of the other innocents who do nothing but better their surroundings.
Theme	What the author is trying to tell us about life.	You can’t judge a person by their appearance.
Tone	Author’s attitude toward the subject.	Serious, humorous, sarcastic, reflective, etc.