

## English 1201 Literary Terms

*For Study of the Novel, Short Story  
and Play*

<b>Antagonist</b>	A character who is opposed to the main character.
<b>Atmosphere</b>	The feelings or emotions created by the writer in a piece of literature.
<b>Character Trait</b>	A quality of personality that a character exhibits. This is determined by how the character acts, what he or she says and how it is said, what he or she thinks, and what others say about him or her.
	Dynamic Character <sup>o</sup> A character that shows change in behaviour, thought, or attitude as the short story, play, or novel progresses.
	Flat (or Static) Character <sup>o</sup> Remains the same throughout the story.
	Round Character <sup>o</sup> Demonstrates several personality traits or dimensions
	Stereotyped character <sup>o</sup> Demonstrates only typical characteristics
<b>Conflict</b>	A central problem or struggle that a character faces and which drives the plot forward. It is a situation in which two or more people, ideas, or forces are opposed to each other.
	Internal conflict <sup>o</sup> Conflict that occurs within a person. It may be emotional or mental when the character is struggling with his own feelings or with a decision.
	Interpersonal conflict <sup>o</sup> Conflict that occurs between people
	External conflict <sup>o</sup> Conflict which occurs between the character and the elements, such as the forces of nature
<b>Diction</b>	The writer's word choice which expresses his meaning as clearly and precisely as possible.
<b>Dialogue</b>	The conversation between two or more characters.

<b>Empathy</b>	The feeling a reader experiences as he or she identifies with a character in a short story, play or novel.	
<b>Flashback</b>	A break in the continuity of the story, play, etc. which provides background information. It is an event, scene, episode or conversation that happened before the start of the story.	
<b>Foreshadowing</b>	A hint or clue early in a narrative to indicate an event, usually unpleasant, that will occur later.	
<b>Imagery</b>	The use of words or phrases to create mental images which appeal to the senses.	
<b>Irony</b>	Dramatic Irony °	Irony that is produced when the audience knows something that the main character or characters do not.
	Situational Irony °	Irony that is produced by a twist through which the opposite happens of what is expected.
	Verbal Irony °	An effect created so that what is said is the opposite of what is meant.
<b>Mood</b>	The main feeling associated with a piece of writing.	
<b>Motivation</b>	The cause or causes that move a character in a short story, play, or novel to behave as he or she does.	
<b>Plot</b>	The plan or outline in a story or drama.	
	Exposition °	The introduction of information necessary for the reader's understanding of the situation at the beginning of the story.
	Rising Action °	Grabs the reader's attention and creates suspense as the main character's problem begins to unfold.
	Climax °	The event or point of greatest intensity or interest. It is the turning point before the plot is resolved.
	Falling Action °	The portion of the plot of a short story or play between the climax and the end. It is the working out of the solution to the problem that the rising action is concerned with.
	Dénouement (or Resolution) °	That part of the plot of a story, play or novel which reveals the final outcome.

**Point of View**

First Person ° The writer narrates the story using the first person pronouns “I” or “We”. The “I” may be one of the main characters in the story or one of the minor characters.

Third Person Omniscient ° The narrator is all-knowing and describes the thoughts and feelings of all the characters **but** is not a character in the story.

Third Person Limited ° The narrator is **not** a character in the story. The story is told by an “outside” narrator, and the reader is limited to the thoughts and perspectives of a single character.

**Setting**

The place and time in which a story or drama is set

**Suspense**

A quality in a work of fiction that arouses excited expectation about the outcome in the mind of the viewer or reader

**Symbol**

A thing which represents or recalls something else

**Theme**

The central or main idea which the writer develops through the piece of writing

