

LITERARY TERMS

1. **Plot:** a sequence of events; the “what happens” in a story
2. **Exposition:** the background information at the beginning of a story
3. **Rising action:** a series of complications in the plot leading to the climax
4. **Climax:** the point in the story of the greatest intensity
5. **Falling action:** a series of events leading to the resolution
6. **Resolution:** at the end of the story, how the main conflict is brought to a close
7. **Character:** person in a story, poem, or play
8. **Character is revealed by**
 - what the character says
 - what the character does
 - description of what the character looks like
 - listening to the character’s inner thoughts and feelings
 - what other characters say about the person
 - the author/narrator telling us directly (for example: he is cruel, kind, stupid, etc.)
9. **Protagonist:** the main character of a story—many times “the good guy”
10. **Antagonist:** the opposing force to the protagonist—“the bad guy”
11. **Setting:** the time and place of a story

12. **Theme:** central idea of a work of literature. An idea the author is expressing about the subject
13. **Point of view:**
vantage point from which a writer tells a story
14. **First person point of view:**
character in story is narrating; uses pronouns such as "I, we, me, us"
15. **Third person point of view:**
narrator is not part of the story and may know the thoughts of one or more characters; uses pronouns such as "he, she, they, it"
16. **Irony:** the contrast between expectation and reality
17. **Foreshadowing:** the use of clues to hint at events that will occur later in the plot
18. **Symbol:** person, place, thing or event that stands for itself and for something beyond itself
19. **Personification:** using human or living characteristics to describe non-living things (My pen walks across the paper.)
20. **Metaphor:** comparison of two unlike things or ideas that does not include the words "like" or "as" (The diamonds in her eyes reflected off the firelight.)
21. **Simile:** comparison of two unlike things/ideas that DOES include "like" or "as" (Her eyes shone like diamonds.)

22. **Allusion:** a reference to a well-known object, place, time, etc. (Mona Lisa, The Thinker, etc.)