**English 9**

**English 8/9**

# GUIDE TO EXAMINABLE TERMS AND DEVICES IN LITERATURE

Quiz 1

## **ALLITERATION**: repetition of consonant sounds at the beginning of words.

## Example: **P***eter* **P***iper* **p***icked a peck of pickled peppers*

**ALLUSION**: a reference to a person, place or event outside of the work in which

it appears. Example: The kid is a little *Romeo* at school.

**ANTAGONIST**: a person or force against the protagonist. Example: One of Batman’s antagonists was the Joker.

**ASIDE**: in drama, lines spoken by a character directed only to the audience.

**ATMOSPHERE**: the emotional climate established usually at the start of a literary work (mood).

**­­­­­­AUDIENCE**: a group of listeners, readers or spectators. For a dental magazine, the audience is dentists.

**BALLAD**: a narrative (story) poem; in the old days, it was often sung.

**BIAS**: a personal and sometimes unreasoned prejudgment on a topic that prevents you from having an open mind about it.

**BLANK VERSE**: verse written in unrhymed iambic pentameter. Example: Shakespearean plays are all written in blank verse.

**CHARACTER**: one of the persons of a drama, novel or poem

**CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER:** arranged in, or according to, the order of time.

**CLICHÉ:** an overly used phrase or expression. Example: ‘Last, but not least,’ or ‘No worries’ or ‘Think outside the box.’

**CLIMAX:** the point of greatest intensity or suspense in a story, and where we see if the protagonist succeeds or fails.

**COLLOQUIAL:** a conversational expression. Example: “the boss” instead of “the

employer”; “the kid” instead of “the child”, “gonna” instead of “going to”

**COMEDY:** In Lit. Studies, a literary work that ends happily. Example: All of Shakespeare’s comedies end happily, but some of them are not funny (which is what we often think for stories that are comedies). Modern comedies are funny and usually end well.

**COMPARE/CONTRAST:** To compare two things means to offer points of similarity

and differences; to contrast means to discuss ONLY the differences between things, people or ideas

**CONFLICT: (internal/external)** the struggle between two opposing forces or

characters in a literary work

**CONNOTATION/DENOTATION**: Connotation is considered the emotions and/or

associations aroused by the word; denotation is the first literary or dictionary definition of the word. Example: She is cold. (denotation=freezing, connotation=not friendly).

**DESCRIPTION:** writing intended to allow a reader to picture the scene or setting in

which the action of a story takes place (using senses to immerse the reader).

**DIALOGUE:** conversation between two or more people or characters

End of quiz 1

**Quiz 2 starts here**

**DIRECT PRESENTATION**: an author tells his or her reader directly about something or someone. Ex. “Carling was cruel.” INDIRECT: “Although he was sensitive, Carling still made the joke.”

**DRAMA:** plays as a branch of literature and as a performing art

**DRAMATIC IRONY:** the reader or audience knows something important that a character does not (in a story or a play).

**DYNAMIC CHARACTER:** a character who, by the end of the story, has changed.

**EXPOSITION/EXPOSITORY**: 1) This type of essay explains your position on a topic. 2) In a novel, this is at the start to give character and setting.

**FALLING ACTION:** what happens after the peak/climax of a story

**FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE:** language not meant to be taken literally. Example: Kate is a tiger (She is tough and strong). **LITERAL LANGUAGE** is the opposite. If you are at a zoo and Kate is a tiger, stay out of her cage (She will eat you).

**FIRST PERSON POINT OF VIEW**: a story told in the first person using “I” vs. 3rd person which is “he”, “she” or “it”

**FLASHBACK:** when a story goes back to relate an event which took place before

the story began.

**FLAT CHARACTER:** a character with only one or two character traits vs. round.

**FOIL:** A character used to ‘show up’ or highlight some feature of the main character. The **character foil** is the exact opposite of the main character and therefore serves to magnify certain characteristics of the main character.

**FORESHADOWING:** hints/clues in a narrative to suggest what will happen later

**FREE VERSE:** poetry without a regular pattern of rhyme or rhythm vs. blank verse

**GENRE:** a category of literature. Example: science fiction, satire, romance,

adventure vs. FORM (more specific type of lit: essay, short story, poster, etc).

**HYPERBOLE:** the use of exaggeration. Ex. If you have a cold and you say, “I am dying!”

**IMAGE/IMAGERY:** words that create pictures/images in a reader’s mind. Imagery is a term that is an umbrella for metaphors, similes, symbols, etc.

**INDIRECT PRESENTATION**: readers have to draw their own conclusions about a character in a literary work.

**IRONY:** the recognition of incongruity between reality and appearance. SITUATIONAL IRONY is the difference between what is intended and what actually occurs; verbal is the difference between what is meant and what is said; DRAMATIC IRONY is when the audience knows something important that the character does not. SARCASM is verbal irony with a human target (it can be mean).

**JARGON:** words or expressions used by a particular group or profession. Example: a doctor in the E.R. says she needs something, “Stat!”

**LIMITED OMNISCIENT POINT OF VIEW:** a story told by a character in the 3rd

person (he/she/it). The narrator knows a lot of what is happening, but not everything.

**LYRIC:** a type of poetry that presents a personal, often intense display of thoughts or

emotions

**METAPHOR:** a figure of speech that states a direct comparison between two dissimilar

things. Example. She is a real bulldog when it comes to her children.

**MOOD:** feeling or emotional state created in the reader’s mind by an author’s

descriptive details.

**NARRATION/NARRATIVE**: telling a story

**NARRATOR**: the person who tells the story

End of Quiz

**Start of quiz 3**

**OBJECTIVE POINT OF VIEW**: a neutral point of view and not from any character’s

point of view.

**OMNISCIENT POINT OF VIEW**: The reader is given insight into the thought and feelings of several of the characters in the piece of literature.

**ONOMATOPOEIA**: use of words whose sounds seem to imitate sound. Ex. the buzzing bees

**PARADOX:** On the surface a statement is illogical or contradictory, but underneath it is deeper. Ex. *“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.”*

**PERSONIFICATION**: a figure of speech in which inanimate (non-living) objects, animals or abstract ideas are given human qualities. Ex.: “The sunflowers watched from above, guarding the seedlings in the garden plot.”

**PERSUASION/PERSUASIVE**: a forceful argument which attempts to convince the

reader.

**PLOT:** the sequence of events or actions in a literary work.

**POINT OF VIEW:** the perspective from which a story is told (1st, 3rd, etc., omniscient, limited omniscient, etc.)

**PROPAGANDA:** ideas spread to further one’s cause (usually negative connotation).

**PROTAGONIST**: the central or main character of a literary work (vs. antagonist).

**REFRAIN:** a word, phrase or line repeated regularly in a poem

Example: Obama’s “Yes, we can.”

**RESOLUTION:** the final working out of a story’s problems or conflicts

**RHYME**: the repetition of sounds in two or more words that appear close to each other. It does not have to be an exact rhyme—it can be an ‘Eye rhyme’ or ‘Near rhyme’.

**RHYME SCHEME**: a particular pattern of rhyme in a poem. Example: Shakespearean sonnets have the same rhyme scheme of abab cdcd efef gg

**RHYTHM:** the pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables

**RISING ACTION:** a set of conflicts and crises that constitute the part of the play

or story’s plot leading up to the climax

**ROUND CHARACTER:** a character whose various traits contribute to a “complexity”

of character.

**SARCASM:** bitter remarks intended to hurt

**SATIRE:** a blend of humour and irony to criticize a person, idea, or subject, especially political.

**SETTING**: the time and place of a literary work. Setting serves to establish the physical

background and atmosphere or theme of the work.

**SIMILE:** a comparison between two dissimilar things using the words “like” or “as”

Example: “My love is like a red, red rose”. (Robert Burns)

**SLANG**: language which is inappropriate for formal writing

Example: ‘That’s cool’.

**SONNET:** a fourteen line lyric poem, with a particular rhyme scheme (Shakespeare’s sonnets are famous)

## **SPEAKER**: the person from whose point of view the poem or story is told

**STANZA**: a group of lines in a poem

**STATIC CHARACTER:** a character who does not change during the events of the plot

**STEREOTYPE/STOCK CHARACTER:** an easily recognizable character. Stereotypes are about social groups (Canadians, jocks) while stock characters are recognizable characters that do not represent a whole group of people (evil scientist, wicked witch).

**STYLE:** an author’s particular or unique way of writing. Style is determined by word

choice, use of figurative language etc.

**SUSPENSE:** the quality in the piece of literature which arouses excitement, curiosity or

expectation in the reader. Suspense is created by making the reader wonder what will happen next, how the conflict will be resolved, or what will happen to the protagonist.

**SYMBOL/SYMBOLISM:** the use of something concrete (tangible, visible) such as an

object, person, place or event to stand for an abstraction or a more complicated idea

**THEME:** a central insight about life that a writer wishes to you to get out of reading his or her work.

**THIRD PERSON NARRATIVE:** the point of view in which the writer is not one of the

characters in the story: he/she/it

**TONE:** the attitude a writer takes toward his/her subject. This is conveyed through the

language in the selection.

**TRAGEDY:** a play in which the protagonist meets an unhappy or disastrous end

**UNDERSTATEMENT:** a phrase or statement that expresses an idea in mild terms. If you are looking at a building burn d