

Literary Devices & Terms

“The Basics”

Characters
Imagery
Plot
Point of View
Setting
Symbolism
Theme

Terms for Interpreting Authorial Voice

Tone/Voice
Mood
Irony
Stream of Consciousness
Satire
Style/Structure
Exposition
Paradox

Terms for Interpreting Narrative Voice

Point of View
Persona/Speaker
Dialogue
Dialect
Tone
Reliability of Narrator

Terms for Interpreting Characters

Protagonist
Antagonist
Characterization
Anti-Hero
Caricature
Archetype
Dialogue/Dialect
Hubris

Terms for Interpreting Plot

Conflict (4 staple conflicts)
Climax
Denouement
Deus ex machina
Chronology (i.e., Flashback/Flashforward)
Foresighting
Exposition

Terms for Interpreting Layers of Meaning (Figurative Language)

Alliteration
Allegory
Assonance
Didacticism
Euphemism
Metonymy
Catharsis
Metaphor/Simile
Denotation vs. Connotation
Personification
Hyperbole
Malapropism
Synecdoche
Aesthetics (the nature of beauty in art)
Allusion
Motif
Extended Metaphor
Parody
Determinism

(Some) Literary Subgenres and/or Movements

Realism/Social Realism

Modernism

Naturalism

Post-Modernism

Surrealism

Historical Fiction

Post-Apocalyptic

Dystopian Fiction

Black Comedy

Social Darwinism

Polemic

(Some) Types of Fiction

Short Story

Novel

Novella

Picaresque Novel

Bildungsroman

Epistolary Novel

Regional Novel

Gothic Novel

Flash Fiction