| Term | Definition | Ms. Keeler’s Example | Your Example |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Theme | The larger subject (s) of the work studied. | Love, The Function of Art, Betrayal |  |
| Message | The specific message of the theme. The theme applied. | Love is conditional, only art can expose the truths of the human heart, Only those who you love can betray you |  |
| Motif | An element that recurs throughout the work or body of works. This can be a symbol, theme, image, etc. It supports the message/theme. | Beethoven in *Night*, poison in *Romeo and Juliet* |  |
| Conflict | The struggle of two opposing forces in the text. |  |  |
| Internal | The protagonist vs. him/herself | Eli’s struggle with leaving his dad behind during the march |  |
| External | Man v. Nature, Man vs. Man, Man vs. Society, Man vs. Animal, Man vs. Machine, etc | Tybalt vs. Romeo: the swordfight; Romeo and Juliet vs. Parents: the love; the Jews vs. the snow: the march |  |
| Point-of-View | The guise through which the story is told. |  |  |
| 1st Person | A work told from the protagonist’s perspective. Often employs *I.* | *Night* is told by Eli Wiesel |  |
| 1st Person  Unreliable  Narrator | A work told from an unreliable/unbelievable protagonist’s perspective. This narrator may have mental or cognitive issues. | *Atonement* is unreliable because it is a child’s impression of events that ripped her family apart. |  |
| 2nd Person | A work that employs *you*. When used, it usually implicates the reader/audience in the action. | Speeches, especially political ones, usually employ this pov |  |
| 3rd Person  Objective | A work that employs an external narrator, but does NOT judge the events. This is usually employed in journalism. *He/she* is used. | Newspaper articles usually use this pov. |  |
| 3rd Person  Limited | A work that employs an external narrator, but focuses on one person. The reader gets insight into that chosen character. In a larger work, this can be employed on multiple characters at different parts. *He/she* is used. | *Pride and Prejudice* is limited to the protagonist’s view of things/ feelings |  |
| 3rd Person  Omniscient | A work that employs an external narrator, but can give insight into several characters. This narrator “knows all.” *He/she* is used. | *Things Fall Apart* |  |
| Persona | The speaker of the work that is not the author. | almost any poem |  |
| Authorial  Intrusion or  Editorial  Omniscience | This occurs when the author interjects with commentary of judgement about the action, other characters, events, etc | Vonnegut declares “That was me!” in the latrine scene to highlight how brutal war was—even if you were not fighting. |  |
| Impartial  Omniscience | This is where the omniscient narrator goes from character-to-character with no judgement. | Similar to objective, but we do know the good and bad of each character. |  |
| Free  Indirect  Discourse | This is when the character’s thoughts are filtered through a 3rd person narrator without quotation marks | "Mr. John Dashwood told his mother again and again how exceedingly sorry he was that she had taken an house at such a distance from Norland as to prevent his being of any service to her in removing her furniture. He really felt conscientiously vexed on the occasion; for the very exertion to which he had limited the performance of his promise to his father was by this arrangement rendered impracticable." (Austen) |  |
| Innocent  Narrator | A narrator who is innocent or naïve. Oftentimes, this is a child or mentally deficient character. | *To Kill a Mockingbird* |  |
| Interior  Monologue | An extended presentation of a character’s thoughts and feelings. This is usually in present tense and rarely in quotations. This can be in first or third person. | “The Year of Spaghetti” |  |
| Setting | The time and place in which the story takes place. |  |  |
| Historical | The time period and the surrounding events or features of the time period in which the work takes place. | Roman times in *Julius Caesar*, the Holocaust for *Night* |  |
| Geographical | The area of the world and its geological features that impact our understanding of the work. | Rome, Italy in Europe. It is a warm urban area. |  |
| Physical | The physical setting in which the work (or its parts) take place. Think of this as televising the setting. What would the set look like and how does that setting impact the work? | Caesar was stabbed adjacent to the Theatre of Pompey at the Senate. His position was literally higher because he was at the casca. |  |
| Atmosphere | The ultimate feeling of the setting. This is usually the result of the physical setting, figurative language, mood, and tone of the work. | Poe’s atmosphere is usually one of dark suspense. |  |
| Mood | The feeling that work gives. There can be multiple moods throughout a work. This comprises the atmosphere. | The mood when Romeo and Juliet die is usually one of quiet and sadness. |  |
| Imagery | The ”picture” description of the setting that appeals to one of your primary senses. | Anything that appeals to the senses. |  |
| Plot | The order of the action of the text. This is usually applicable to narrative writing. |  |  |
| Introduction  or  Exposition | The most boring part of the text. It gives detailed information of characters, setting, and conflict. It sets up the arc of the text. | Learning of Cinderella’s basic home-life, dead mother, absent father, evil stepfamily. |  |
| Rising  Action | The conflicts that lead to the climax of the text. | Working hard, being treated cruelly, the ball, the missing shoe, the search with the shoe |  |
| Climax | The turning point of the text. This is what everything leads to. | The shoe fits |  |
| Falling  Action | Parts after the climax that lead to the resolution. | She leaves with the prince and they marry |  |
| Resolution  or  Denouement | The end result of all of the conflicts presented. | They live happily ever after |  |
| Open  Denouement | There is no resolution or tidying up of the narrative. | The Chocolate War: the bullying never ends although we briefly thought it would because the protagonist stands -up for himself. |  |
| In Medias  Res | When the work begins in the middle of the action instead of beginning at the start. Authors usually employ this to immerse the reader in the conflict. | *The Occurrence of Owl Creek Bridge* opens with the soldier hanging and then tells us how it happened using flashback. |  |
| Verisimilitude | The quality of being believable or credible. | Harry Potter is fantasy, but seems reasonable once we suspend doubt |  |
| Bildungsroman | A coming-of-age story that closely chronicles one’s formative years. | *Persepolis* |  |
| Subplot | A secondary plot in the text that interweaves with the primary plot. | Hagrid’s storyline is a subplot in Harry Potter |  |
| Foreshadowing | Clues to what will happen later in the story. |  |  |
| Flashback | When the narrative shifts into the past to give background to a character, conflict, or setting. | *Their Eyes are Watching God* is told by Janie to her friend as an explanation as to where she has been. |  |
| Narrative  Disruptions | When the author purposely disrupts the plot for a desired effect. | *A Handmaid’s Tale’s* narrator lies to us and then admits it. |  |
| Episode | Distinct units of events that are used to complement the plot. They can be extracted and studied separately. | The stories from *The Odyssey:* the cyclops, Circe, the sirens, etc |  |
| Framed  Narrative | When a narrative is surrounded by a frame of events. | *Slaughterhouse-Five* (we meet the author, his persona, and then we get to the primary story. At the end, the persona and author summarize the events. ) |  |
| Character | A person or thing in the narrative that acts. |  |  |
| Protagonist | The primary character. He/she/it can be positive or negative. | Eli in *Night* |  |
| Antagonist | The person/thing/force that opposes the protagonist. This can be the protagonist as well. | Eli, the Germans, his father, other people at the camps, etc |  |
| Stock | These characters are one-dimensional characters who represent a stereotype or situation in the narrative. | The hanged boy in *Night* |  |
| Cardboard  or Flat | These are one-dimensional characters in general. We only know them as good or as bad, but not both. | The guards in *Night* |  |
| Round | These are characters in whom we see the good, bad, and ugly. | Eli, his father |  |
| Dynamic | These are developing characters. They change throughout the text. | Eli, his father |  |
| Static | These are characters who remain the same throughout the narrative and do not change. | Juliek |  |
| Foil | This is a character who contrasts the the protagonist in order to highlight that character’s features—good or bad. | Tybalt and Romeo |  |
| Archetypal | A character who fits into a type such as the hero, the villan, the damsel in distress, the wise old person, the benign friend, etc | Odysseus |  |
| Antihero | The protagonist who is faulted. He or she displays inadequacies so we know they are not going to “win.” | J. Alfred Proofrock, Gragor Samsa |  |
| Symbol | Something that represents a larger idea. This can be a place, thing, or idea. |  |  |
| Conventional  Symbol | Symbols that are specific to a time or place. They are understood in context of the work. | A cell phone used to indicate status |  |
| Universal  Symbol | A symbol that is recognized throughout time and place. It never changes. | Light of any kind |  |
| Object | An object that represents a larger idea. | A book represents knowledge |  |
| Place | A place that represents a larger idea. | A body of water indicates a journey or change |  |
| Name | A name that the author has given that embodies the character or setting. | Every Harry Potter name |  |
| Color | Colors represent ideas, though not always the obvious ones. | Green is rebirth, fertility, greed, and envy |  |
| Number | Numbers that represent ideas. | 13 is unlucky; 3 alludes to the trinity |  |
| Action | Actions or ceremonies that represent ideas. | A meal represents communion |  |
| Allegory | The work is a metaphor or lesson for something larger. Usually has a “moral.” | *Life of Pi* |  |
| Style | The way in which the writer uses language and structure to convey his or her ideas. |  |  |
| Diction | The words used. This usually boils down to positive, negative, formal, casual. You will receive a separate sheet for guided notes. | See notes |  |
| Syntax | The way the words are arranged and punctuated. This is the structure, punctuation, length etc of the sentences/ideas. You will have a separate handout to break down elements of syntx. | See notes. |  |
| Tone | The author’s attitude toward the subject. This is usually proved through diction. | See notes. |  |
| Stream-of-  Consciousness | When the narrative sounds like the ideas are coming directly from a character’s head without pause. | I decided to write the example myself because I am tired of external sourcing though I haven’t tried to use it much. I am tired and don’t’ want to use Virginia Woolf or anything because she annoys me. So does the person talking loudly in the media center. |  |
| Dialogue | A conversation between or among people/things in the text. | I don’t think you need one. |  |
| Metafiction | When the author expresses angst about the inadequacies of his or her writing as a parody of other writing. | *Slaughterhouse-Five* |  |
| Epistolary | A narrative or poem told in the style of a letter. | *Dracula* |  |
| Irony | When something turns out differently from what was expected. |  |  |
| Verbal | This is when there is a divide between what is said and what is meant. (It is NOT always sarcasm.) | Why would I want you to read? As long as you pass the test at the end, I don’t care if you use Schmoop. |  |
| Situational | When something turns out differently than how you expected it to turn out. | When you think you can pass without reading, but Ms. Keeler gives you a test that goes beyond Sparknotes. |  |
| Dramatic | When the audience knows something about a character or action that the character does not. | Every horror film ever. Ever. |  |
| Cosmic | Irony of Fate that is situational. The character ends up in the opposite state expected by him or the audience. | When you thought you could pass because I’m still nice to you. |  |
| Kitsch | Popular or mass art that takes the place of real art. It is usually ironically placed. | Hotel art or anything you can get at Home Goods or Ross. |  |
| Satire | A work that parodies a form of art, an event, or a situation. It is written to highlight the absurdity of the thing. | *A Modest Proposal* (Swift suggests cannibalism can help feed the poor.) |  |
| Epigraph | A brief quote that is placed before the text. It is usually an allusion. It conveys the message. | *The Godfather’s* epigraph is “Behind every great fortune is a crime.” |  |