

Literary Devices

Lower Secondary

Allegory

1. Definition of Allegory

As a literary device or artistic form, an allegory is a narrative or visual representation in which a character, place, or event can be interpreted to represent a hidden meaning with moral or political significance.

2. Types of Allegory

There are four major types of allegories.

1. **Classical allegory:** Allegorical stories told in the classical Grecian times about animals and other things to demonstrate human existence and teach the people a lesson. One of the best examples is Plato's Allegory of the Cave.
2. **Biblical allegory:** Biblical allegories show stories used in the Bible to convey Christian teachings. These stories often evoke Biblical themes such as the conflict between evil and good.
 - a. The Prodigal Son (from the Bible)
 - b. The Good Samaritan (from the Bible)
 - c. The Divine Comedy (Dante Alighieri)
3. **Medieval allegory:** This type of allegories presents stories such as the unity of Christianity
4. **Modern allegory:** Modern allegories include stories of animals and birds to depict modern themes such as The Chronicles of Narnia and Animal Farm.

3. Function of Allegory

The message the writer conveys lies hidden in the narrative of his characters. It is often of good, evil, sorrow, or happiness and their impacts on human life. The writer conveys this message through these narratives which comprise symbolic characters, situations, and happenings.

4. Examples of Allegory in Literature

Animal Farm by George Orwell

"No one believes more firmly than Comrade Napoleon that all animals are equal. He would be only too happy to let you make your decisions for yourselves. But sometimes you might make the wrong decisions, comrades, and then where should we be?"

Animal Farm is one of the most well-known and appreciated allegorical novels in literature. This passage represents the multi-layered narrative of Orwell's work. The surface narrative is that of a farm fable in which the animals "overthrow" the farmer as a means of escaping oppression. Unfortunately, the cycle of oppression is taken up by the small group of animals that subsequently put themselves in charge of the farm. This passage reflects the message of the surface story that certain animals should make important decisions even under the guise of equality.

On a symbolic level, Orwell's allegory reflects the events of the Russian Revolution in which Bolshevik and liberal revolutionaries overthrew the Russian Czar. Two of the pigs in the novel symbolize the historical figures Leon Trotsky and Joseph Stalin, and nearly every literary element in the story symbolizes the rise of communism and its consequences in Russia and the Soviet Union.

Alliteration

1. Definition of Alliteration

Alliteration is a literary device that reflects repetition in two or more nearby words of initial consonant sounds. Alliteration does not refer to the repetition of consonant letters that begin words, but rather the repetition of the consonant sound at the beginning of words.

2. Purpose of Alliteration

Poets use different poetic devices to make their verses melodious. Alliterations are often used to sync the words with the metrical patterns to create rhythm and melody in the poem. Alike sounds create a unique stress pattern that suits the themes. Therefore, the major purpose of the poets in using alliterations is to make their poetic output melodious, flowery, interesting, and musical.

3. Effects of Alliteration

Alliteration creates a flow and music in the verses. When sounds are similar, they seem soothing to the ears and facilitate reading.

4. Examples of Alliteration in Literature

Example: *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare

*"From forth the fatal loins of these two foes
A pair of star-crossed lovers take their life;
Whose misadventured piteous overthrows
Doth with their death bury their parents' strife."*

In the prologue of his tragic work, Shakespeare utilizes alliterative wording like "fatal" and "foes" as a means of foreshadowing the events of the play. This alliteration also calls attention to certain pairings of words in the prologue to emphasize the themes of "Romeo and Juliet." For example, "fatal" is associated with "foes," "lovers" with "life," and "doth" with "death." These alliterative pairs reflect the pairing of characters in the tragedy, through love and conflict, including the feuding Capulet and Montague families, the romance between Romeo and Juliet, and even the cousins Tybalt and Benvolio.

Therefore, the use of alliteration as a literary device in the prologue helps to create a sense of balance between the opposing forces of and within the overall play. In addition, the alliterative phrasing, most notably in the first line of this excerpt, provides melody and rhythm to the verse, indicating to the reader how the words may sound if spoken aloud or performed. This enhances Shakespeare's intended thematic effects of discord and harmony for the reader.

Allusion

1. Definition of Allusion

An allusion is a reference, typically brief, to a person, place, thing, event, or other literary work with which the reader is presumably familiar. As a literary device, allusion allows a writer to compress a great deal of meaning and significance into a word or phrase. However, allusions are only effective to the extent that they are recognized and understood by the reader, and that they are properly inferred and interpreted by the reader. If an allusion is obscure or misunderstood, it can lose effectiveness by confusing the reader.

2. Common Examples of Allusion

- His smile is like kryptonite to me. (Superman's weakness)
- She felt like she had a golden ticket. (Charlie and the Chocolate Factory)
- If I'm not home by midnight, my car might turn into a pumpkin. (Cinderella)
- She smiles like a Cheshire cat. (Alice in Wonderland)
- Is there an Einstein in your physics class? (Albert Einstein)

3. Examples of Allusion in Literature

Nothing Gold Can Stay by Robert Frost

*"Nature's first green is gold,
Her hardest hue to hold.
Her early leaf's a flower;
But only so an hour.
Then leaf subsides to leaf.
So Eden sank to grief,
So dawn goes down to day.
Nothing gold can stay."*

In his poem, Frost makes an allusion to the "fall of man" and exile from Paradise by referring to Eden and how it "sank to grief." This allusion helps to connect the human experience to the poet's lament about the cycle of life and death, beginning and ending, in nature. The allusion to Eden also provides an interesting context to the poem, in that the reader can infer that the fall of man was a natural and possibly inevitable occurrence, adding to the appreciation of life in its temporary existence.

Analogy

1. Definition of Analogy

A comparison between one thing and another, typically for the purpose of explanation or clarification. Analogy is an effective device in terms of providing a new or deeper meaning to concepts through the artistic use of language.

2. Examples of Analogy

- And I began to let him go. Hour by hour. Days into months. It was a physical sensation, like letting out the string of a kite. Except that the string was coming from my center. (Augusten Burroughs)

- It has been well said that an author who expects results from a first novel is in a position similar to that of a man who drops a rose petal down the Grand Canyon of Arizona and listens for the echo. (P.G. Wodehouse)
- Don't worry about the future. Or worry, but know that worrying is as effective as trying to solve an algebra equation by chewing bubble gum. (Mary Schmich)

3. Examples of Analogy in Literature

A Week on the Concord and the Merrimack Rivers by Henry David Thoreau

"This world is but a canvas to our imaginations"

In this analogy, Thoreau compares the world to a canvas in terms of human imagination. To a degree, Thoreau could have created a more abstract comparison by stating that the world is but a canvas, which would have implied creativity, art, beauty in nature, and so on. Instead, he provides the added context of imagination. This allows for clarity as to what Thoreau is trying to convey to his readers, yet the analogy is still comprised of artistic and figurative language.

Antagonist

1. Definition of Antagonist

In literature, an antagonist is a character, or a group of characters, which stands in opposition to the Protagonist, which is the main character.

It is common to refer to an antagonist as a villain (the bad guy), against whom a Hero (the good guy) fights in order to save himself or others. In some cases, an antagonist may exist within the protagonist that causes an inner conflict or a moral conflict inside his mind.

Generally, an antagonist appears as a foil to the main character, embodying qualities that are in contrast with the qualities of the main character.

2. Function of Antagonist

Conflict is a basic element of any plot. The presence of an antagonist alongside a protagonist is vital for the typical formula of a plot. The antagonist opposes the protagonist in his endeavors, and thus the conflict ensues. The protagonist struggles against the antagonist, taking the plot to a climax. Later, the conflict is resolved with the defeat of the antagonist; or, as in tragedies, with the downfall of the protagonist.

Atmosphere

1. Definition of Atmosphere

A literary technique, atmosphere is a type of feeling that readers get from a narrative, based on details such as setting, background, objects, and foreshadowing. In literary works, atmosphere refers to emotions or feelings an author conveys to his readers through description of objects and settings. Bear in mind that atmosphere may vary throughout a literary piece.

Difference between Atmosphere and Mood: Mood is about internal feelings, while atmosphere exists at a particular spot. Besides, a mood contributes for building up the entire atmosphere of a narrative.

2. Function of Atmosphere

The purpose of establishing atmosphere is to create emotional effect. It makes a literary work lively, fascinating, and interesting by keeping the audience more engaged. It appeals to the readers' senses by making the story more real, allowing them to comprehend the idea easily. Since atmosphere makes the audience feel in an indirect way, writers can convey harsh feelings with less severity.

3. Examples of Atmosphere in Literature

Example #1: An Unspoken Hunger by Terry Tempest Williams

"It is an unspoken hunger we deflect with knives – one avocado between us, cut neatly in half, twisted then separated from the large wooden pit. With the green fleshy boats in hand, we slice vertical strips from one end to the other. Vegetable planks. We smother the avocado with salsa, hot chiles at noon in the desert. We look at each other and smile, eating avocados with sharp silver blades, risking the blood of our tongues repeatedly."

Here, Williams creates a dangerous atmosphere, where she presents the hazards of knives and avocados. In fact, when an author tries to establish atmosphere by using objects, these objects represent unspoken reality. Besides, appearance of two characters also adds to a sexually charged atmosphere.

Attitude

1. Definition of Attitude

Generally, attitude is a behavior a person adopts toward other people, things, incidents, or happenings. In literature, the term "attitude" can be referred as perspective or tone of the writer he adopts in a certain work.

It is the way a writer develops his characters, describes his stories and designs his narratives. His attitude explains the real nature of the characters and the story. He makes use of an appropriate attitude to provide an in-depth insight into a character's personality. The attitude of a writer can be serious as well as humorous. In certain cases, the attitude can be critical or witty. It is through the attitude readers come to know the feelings of a writer regarding his topic, subject or belief.

2. Function of Attitude

The function of attitude is to give a certain shape and form to a piece of writing. While reading it, the attitude helps the reader to treat it in a specific way. The attitude makes the readers feel in a particular way about the topic the author wants him to feel. It is attitude, which stimulates the feelings of seriousness, comedy or distress while going through a piece of literature. Not only does it give tongue to characters to speak, but also highlights the personality and nature of the characters for readers' full understanding of the given perspective.

3. Examples of Attitude in Literature

The Catcher in the Rye by J. D. Salinger

"All morons hate it when you call them a moron."

"If a girl looks swell when she meets you, who gives a damn if she's late? Nobody."

"Goddamn money. It always ends up making you blue as hell."

"Catholics are always trying to find out if you're Catholic."

This is a selection of dialogues from J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*, all of which are uttered by Holden Caulfield. It is easy to understand the nature and real personality of the character through these statements. Most of the remarks are quite sarcastic, as Holden talks about real things in criticizing manner. It is not only a way to know the personality of the character, but it opens a window to the writer's viewpoint of real life objects. In fact, the characters are the mouthpieces of the writer's attitude and thinking. That is why this shows the attitude of D. J. Salinger too.

Audience

1. Definition of Audience

An Audience is the person for whom a writer writes, or composer composes. A writer uses a particular style of language, tone, and content according to what he knows about his audience. In simple words, audience refers to the spectators, listeners, and intended readers of a writing, performance, or speech.

2. Function of Audience

Since the term audience refers to the readers, many writers prefer to adopt different styles of voice – mixed, formal, or casual – depending upon their intended audience. Knowing his audience helps the writer to determine what level of details he should provide, and what type of word choices he may make, because the word choice and tone should match the expectations of the audience.

3. Examples of Function in Literature

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee

Harper Lee tells the story, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, through the eyes of a character named Scout; reflecting upon the life of an adult. Throughout the narrative, readers observe her perspective from the lens of one person's recollection, which appears on the very first page of the story. It begins as, "When enough years had gone by to enable us to look back on them, we sometimes discussed the events leading to [Jem's] accident." After this, the author takes the readers back to the times of Scout's first grade, and then onward to her eighth birthday. She is not only a first-person narrator, but also a participant in the story. The story evolves uniquely, through both a child's eyes, and from a mature perspective. This benefit of hindsight is what makes this story so appealing for both children its adult audience.

Cacophony

1. Definition of Cacophony

Cacophony refers to the use of words with sharp, harsh, hissing, and unmelodious sounds – primarily those of consonants – to achieve desired results.

2. Function of Cacophony

Writers use cacophony as a tool to describe a conflicting situation using unharmonious words. The use of such words allows readers to picture and feel the unpleasantness of the situation the writer has described through words.

3. Examples of Cacophony in Literature

Through the Looking Glass by Lewis Carroll

*" 'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogoves, an
And the mome raths outgrabe.*

*"Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun
The frumious Bandersnatch!"*

In the excerpt, we see a collection of nonsense words, which are at the same time unmelodious. After reading the poem, Alice, the main character of the novel, gives her impression, which clearly reflects the purpose of the poem. She says:

"Somehow it seems to fill my head with ideas — only I don't exactly know what they are! However, somebody killed something: that's clear, at any rate."

Character

1. Definition of Character

All stories need certain necessary elements. Without these elements, literary works often fail to make sense. For instance, one of the essential elements of every story is a plot with a series of events. Another important element is a character. A character can be any person, a figure, an inanimate object, or animal. There are different types of characters, and each serves its unique function in a story or a piece of literature.

2. Function of Character

The main function of a character in a story is to extend or prolong the plot, make it readable and interesting. Many stories use multiple characters, and every story has a main character that affects the plot a great deal. The main character could be a protagonist, an antagonist, a dynamic, a static, a flat, or a round character. Readers feel that the characters given in the literary pieces exist, and they enjoy reading their real and lifelike figures and actions.

Characterisation

1. Definition of Characterisation

Characterisation is the way an author or a playwright describes or shows what a character is like. It helps to make the characters seem believable or life-like to the reader or audience.

2. Importance of Characterisation

Characterisation is essential for anyone trying to sculpt a piece of story-driven work, as it allows characters to be modeled realistically and develop traits that aid the narrative.

In order for readers or an audience to feel invested in the plot of a book or play, they need to believe that the characters involved are individuals. Part of that involves these characters behaving believably, according to their constructed persona.

It's the process of characterisation that makes this happen.

3. Some Methods of Characterisation

- **Physical descriptions:** This is where the physical appearance and features of the character is described. This could be their height, hair colour, eye colour, clothes, etc. If your students are unsure where to begin, why don't they use their own physical description to build their characters?
- **Actions:** Characters can be motivated and built through what they do rather than what they look like. Try adding dramatic events and actions to teach your reader a little more about the character. How a character reacts to an action or event, can tell us a lot. What the character does tells us a lot about him/her, as well as how the character behaves and his or her attitude. Is the character a good person or a bad person? Is the character helpful to others or selfish?
- **Inner thoughts:** If your students are writing in the first-person narrative, this is a great opportunity to use inner thoughts as a way to describe and build a detailed character. A character's inner thoughts include the thoughts and feelings that they may not share with the other characters in a story.
- **Reactions:** Here, students will learn about the relationships among the characters. How does the character make the other characters feel? Do they feel scared, happy, or confused? This helps the reader have a better understanding of all the characters.
- **Speech:** Finally, speech is all about what their characters say rather than what they do. It can also refer to the tone and way they say. For example, the character might speak in a shy, quiet manner or in a nervous manner. The character might speak intelligently or in a rude manner.

4. Examples of Characterisation in Literature

The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald

In this particular book, the main idea revolves around the social status of each character. The major character of the book, Mr. Gatsby, is perceptibly rich, but he does not belong to the upper stratum of society. This means that he cannot have Daisy. Tom is essentially defined by his wealth and the abusive nature that he portrays every now and then, while Daisy is explained by Gatsby as having a voice "full of money."

Another technique to highlight the qualities of a character is to put them in certain areas that are symbolic of social status. In the novel, Gatsby resides in the West Egg, which is considered less trendy than East Egg, where Daisy lives. This difference points out the gap between Jay's and Daisy's social statuses. Moreover, you might also notice that Tom, Jordan, and Daisy live in East Egg while Gatsby and Nick reside in West Egg, which again highlights the difference in their financial background. This division is reinforced at the end of the novel when Nick supports Gatsby against the rest of the folk.

Occupations have also been used very tactfully in the novel to highlight the characteristics of certain protagonists. The prime example is Gatsby who, despite being so rich, is known for his profession: bootlegging. He had an illegal job that earned him a fortune but failed to get him into the upper class of New York society. In contrast, Nick has a clean and fair job as a "bondman" that defines his character. The poor guy Wilson, who fixes rich people's cars, befriends his wife; and then there is Jordan, who is presented as a dishonest golf pro.

Cliffhanger

1. Definition of Cliffhanger

A cliffhanger is a type of narrative or a plot device in which the end is curiously abrupt, so that the main characters are left in a difficult situation, without offering any resolution of conflicts.

As a result of a sudden end, suspense is created at the very end of the novel, leaving the readers in such a state that they could not help but to ask, "What will happen next?" This type of end is common to serially-published novels, which end at a dramatic or suspenseful moment. The cliffhanger plot device ensures readers will buy the next installment, in order to read and find out what happens.

2. Function of Cliffhanger

By nature, man is a curious creature. Cliffhangers in any form of literature appeal to our curiosity. The main purpose of employing this device is to maintain suspense in the plot in order to ensure the interest and focus of the readers. It acts as bait to lead the readers from one part of the text to another with more interest than before.

Cliffhangers, undoubtedly, are enjoyable to read at the end of the chapters of novels. However, it can be very frustrating at the very end of a novel, as it leaves readers discontented after all the effort they put in to read the novel.

3. Examples of Cliffhangers in Literature

Example #1: One Thousand and One Nights by Muhsin Mahdi

Cliffhanger has its roots in ancient oriental literature. One example is in the collection of stories known as One Thousand and One Nights, in which the king Shehreyar orders his queen Scheherzade to be hanged. She devises a plan to tell a story to the king every night, ending that story with a cliffhanger. The king postponed the order of execution every day to hear the rest of the story.

Example #2: The Tempest by William Shakespeare

William Shakespeare could not afford for his audience to be bored, and for this reason he uses a cliffhanger in Act 1, Scene 1 of his play *The Tempest*. The scene of a storm and shipwreck is depicted in a most vivid manner, but the audience is unsure if anybody on the ship has survived. The device is employed with the purpose that the audience will return to see the next act. Finally, the fate of the crew on board is revealed in Act 2, Scene 1 and the focus of the audience is ensured by that time.

Conflict

1. Definition of Conflict

In literature, conflict is a literary element that involves a struggle between two opposing forces, usually a protagonist and an antagonist.

2. Types of Conflict

Internal Conflict

1. **Mind Vs. Body:** One type of internal conflict that occurs in stories is mind versus body. It occurs when the protagonist or the main character fights against his bodily addiction such as in the case of some drug addict. Some may fight against the religious belief that has proved wrong or against political dogmas such as in *Animal Farm*.
2. **Mind Vs. Mind:** The second internal conflict is mind versus mind which is the mental thinking conflict. It occurs when a person has desires but he also has to fulfill his responsibilities. He has to perform his duty as well as do his responsibility or commit suicide and die or struggle for his survival. This is called mind versus mind conflict as it happens in *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley.
3. **Mind Vs. Reality:** Some literary works present worlds that do not match with reality such as the dystopian world of *The Handmaid's Tale* created by Margret Atwood, the world of magical realism created by Garcia Marquez, or the world created by the superiority complex or right versus just people. This is called mind versus reality conflict.

External Conflict

1. **Conflict With Nature:** It happens when a man comes into conflict with nature. It happens in Hardy's novels as his protagonist comes into conflict with nature and loses such. Another example is Santiago of Hemingway in *The Old Man and the Sea*.
2. **Conflict With Another Person:** This conflict happens with the thinking and subsequent actions of the people that do not match and create a conflict between them. Happens in *Tess of D'Urberville* by Thomas Hardy that she has a conflict with Alec and then with Angel.
3. **Conflict With Society:** It happens with the main protagonist comes into conflict with the social setup, norms, traditions, and conventions. It happens in *Tess of D'Urberville* of Thomas Hardy that she breaks the social norms of those times.

Core Conflict

As a novel or a play has several characters, events, and situations, there are numerous conflicts at play. They also move side by side and keep the readers and audiences engaged. However, there is only one principal character or protagonist who comes into conflict with the outside world, society, or nature and creates maximum tension and suspense. This is called the core conflict whose resolution is central to the world of literary piece.

Character Conflict

This conflict occurs only due to the characters and their interactions. When one character does not find it easy to sync his interests with that of the others and faces obstacles, this creates a conflict between the characters. This is called character conflict.

3. Conflict and Plot

Conflict is one of the most important elements of the plot. As the plot is the larger world, conflict is its critical part. If there is no conflict, it means the plot has lost a critical component and may not have a good storyline. Missing conflict means missing the resolution. So, the readers would not be able to hold any interest in the plot or storyline having no conflict.

4. Function of External Conflict in Literature

The external conflict is mostly written as an outside narrative and has nothing to do with the internal conflict. It is relations of the characters that seriously impact the entire situation in the narrative. It acts as the foreign agent that impacts the protagonists, their thinking, their relations, and ultimately the results of their efforts. In case it comes into collusion with the antagonists, it hinders the efforts of the protagonists to come out of the existing conflicts or adverse situations.

5. Difference between Conflict and Tension

Conflict is a serious tense situation between characters due to some dispute, squabble, or controversy. However, tension does not simply mean that it is due to some dispute. It is just an impending sense of something ominous that is about to happen but may not happen even until the end. It could be the fear of divorce, the sense of disclosure or some secret that may cause a rift among the characters, or even the discovery of something that continues to haunt the characters.

6. Function of Conflict

Both internal and external conflicts are essential elements of a storyline. It is essential for a writer to introduce and develop them, whether internal, external, or both, in his storyline in order to achieve the story's goal. Resolution of the conflict entertains the readers.

7. Examples of Conflict in Literature

Example #1: Hamlet by William Shakespeare

Hamlet's internal conflict is the main driver in William Shakespeare's play Hamlet." It decides his tragic downfall. He reveals his state of mind in the following lines from Act 3, Scene 1 of the play:

*"To be, or not to be – that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles
And by opposing end them. To die, to sleep..."*

The conflict here is that Hamlet wants to kill his father's murderer, Claudius, but he also looks for proof to justify his action. This ultimately ruins his life and the lives of his loved ones. Due to his internal conflict, Hamlet spoils his relationship with his mother and sends Ophelia (Hamlet's love interest) into such a state of despair that she commits suicide.

Hamlet's indecisiveness almost got everyone killed at the end of the play. The resolution came when he killed Claudius by assuming fake madness so that he would not be asked for any justification. In the same play, we find Hamlet engaged in an external conflict with his uncle Claudius.

Example #2: To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee

Another kind of external conflict sets a character against the evil that dominates society. In this case, a character may confront a dominant group with opposing priorities. For instance, in Harper Lee's novel To Kill a Mockingbird, an honest lawyer, Atticus Finch, goes up against the racist society in which he lives. Atticus has the courage to defend a black man, Tom Robinson, who has been falsely accused of rape. Though Atticus has the support of a few like-minded people, most of the townspeople express their disapproval of his defense of a black man.

Contrast

1. Definition of Contrast

Contrast is a rhetorical device through which writers identify differences between two subjects, places, persons, things, or ideas. Simply, it is a type of opposition between two objects, highlighted to emphasize their differences.

2. Function of Contrast

Writers address a number of features and characteristics of two subjects, persons, places, and events by contrasting them from one point to another. While the major purpose of contrast is to elucidate ideas and clear their meanings, readers can easily understand through this device what is going to happen next. Through opposite and contrasting ideas, writers make their arguments stronger, thus making them more memorable for readers due to emphasis placed on them. In addition, contrasting ideas shock the audience, heighten drama, and produce balanced structures in literary works.

3. Examples of Contrast in Literature

Example #1: Eminent Men I have Known, Unpopular Essays by Bertrand Russell

"To begin with the differences: Lenin was cruel, which Gladstone was not; Lenin had no respect for tradition, whereas Gladstone had a great deal; Lenin considered all means legitimate for securing the victory of his party, whereas for Gladstone politics was a game with certain rules that must be observed. All these differences, to my mind, are to the advantage of Gladstone, and accordingly Gladstone on the whole had beneficent effects, while Lenin's effects were disastrous."

In this example, Russell presents a point-by-point contrast between two persons, Vladimir Lenin – a Russian communist revolutionary, and William Gladstone – a British Liberal politician. By the end, the author expresses his favor for Gladstone over Lenin.

Example #2: Sonnet 130 by William Shakespeare

*"My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
Coral is far more red than her lips' red;
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head."*

*I have seen roses damasked, red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks..."*

In the first five lines of this poem, Shakespeare employs a number of contrasts to lay emphasis on his beloved's qualities. He contrasts her with the sun, coral, snow, and wire. Simply, he wants to convey the idea that, while his woman is not extraordinary, she is substantial.

Conundrum

1. Definition of Conundrum

In literature, a conundrum is a difficult situation that is unresolvable or almost unresolvable. It is akin to a dilemma or a riddle in a novel or a poem. Whereas a riddle involves a pun or twisty argument or narrative, a dilemma is a situation where two or more options are available.

2. Function of Conundrum

The use of a conundrum depends on the writer whether he uses it as a mild dilemma or a riddle or a simple unresolvable option. In many cases, the writers put a serious issue amid various options. In such a case, it heightens the suspense of suspense and makes readers feel the same agony as the characters feel.

In the case of a simple dilemma, the function of such a conundrum is to just make the readers feel the unresolvable situation and try to find a solution on their own.

In case it is just a riddle, the readers are implicitly given a chance to find the answer and imbibe this lesson so that they could apply it in the future. Overall, its function is to make readers feel the thirst to read more and find how characters resolve their respective conundrums.

3. Examples of Conundrum in Literature

Example #1: Hamlet by William Shakespeare

*To be, or not to be: that is the question.
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer

The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,³⁸
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? To die, to sleep
No more, and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to. 'Tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wished.*

This soliloquy occurs in Hamlet. Hamlet speaks these words when he finds himself in a dilemma; the dilemma is that he is to kill his uncle, king Claudius, as per the words that he has given to the Ghost of his father. On the other hand, he doubts the morality of his action in which murder is a heinous crime. Therefore, he faces this conundrum in which he thinks that he is options but not sure which one is righteous.

Example #2: A Raisin in the Sun by Hansberry Lorraine

Mama: *My children and they tempers. Lord, if this little old plant don't get more sun than it's been getting it ain't never going to see spring again. (She turns from the window) What's the matter with you this morning, Ruth? You looks right peaked. You aiming to iron all them things? Leave some for me. I'll get to 'em this afternoon. Bennie honey, it's too drafty for you to be sitting 'round half dressed. Where's your robe?*

Mama speaks these words in the play of Hansberry Lorraine. On the one hand, she sees the plant not getting more sun, and on the other hand, she sees Ruth not doing enough. She faces this conundrum about what to do as she has options after having money in her hands. This dilemma is purely moral as well as social, for if she invests money in the education of her daughter, it would be able to uplift them as well as ruin them. The fate of the entire family depends on her resolution of this conundrum.

Dialogue

1. Definition of Dialogue

As a current literary device, dialogue refers to spoken lines by characters in a story that serve many functions such as adding context to a narrative, establishing voice and tone, or setting forth conflict.

Writers utilize dialogue as a means to demonstrate communication between two characters. Most dialogue is spoken aloud in a narrative, though there are exceptions in terms of inner dialogue. Writers denote dialogue by the use of quotation marks (indicating spoken words) and dialogue tags (words such as "said" or "asked" indicating which character in the narrative is speaking).

2. Why Writers Use Dialogue

Dialogue, when used effectively in a literary work, is an important literary device. Dialogue allows writers to pause in their third-person description of a story's action, characters, setting, etc., which can often feel detached to the reader if prolonged. Instead, when characters are "speaking" in first-person in a narrative, the story can become more dynamic.

Here are some examples of why writers use dialogue in literary works:

- reveal conflict in a story
 - move story forward
 - present different points of view
 - provide exposition, background, or contextual information
 - efficient means of conveying aspects and traits of characters
 - convey subtext (inner feelings and intentions of a character beyond their surface words of communication)
 - establish deeper meaning and understanding of a story for the reader
 - set character's voice, point of view, and patterns of expression
 - allow characters to engage in conflict
 - create authenticity for reader
-

Diction (a.k.a. Choice of Words)

1. Definition of Diction

As a literary device, diction refers to the linguistic choices made by a writer to convey an idea or point of view, or tell a story, in an effective way.

Diction is closely connected to characterization. The words associated with a literary character represent their ideals, values, and attitudes. Diction can create a representation of a character's outer appearance and/or inner state of mind for the reader.

2. Impact of Diction on Themes

Not only in common communication of daily lives but also in literary works, diction plays an important role in setting things right. The first significant development comes in the thematic strands that a literary piece propagates. Although tone and point of view, too, contribute to thematic strands, they depend on diction in passing on those ideas. Therefore, when diction moves, changes colors and shows nuances, it impacts the thematic strands in different ways.

3. Example of Diction in Literature

Their Eyes Were Watching God by Zora Neale Hurston

Then you must tell 'em dat love ain't somethin' lak uh grindstone dat's de same thing everywhere and do de same thing tuh everything it touch. Love is lak de sea. It's uh movin' thing, but still and all, it takes its shape from de shore it meets, and it's different with every shore.

In Hurston's novel, Janie's diction helps to establish the setting of rural Florida in the early 1900s. Janie's diction is colloquial and her word choices and expression support the way she is characterized in the novel as a strong and passionate woman. In this passage, Janie's diction reveals much about her rural background and limited education in terms of her manner of expression. However, the poetic nature of her words also indicates to the reader that Janie is introspective and capable of deep emotions. Therefore, rather than Hurston choosing to portray Janie through simple colloquial diction, she allows the protagonist to reflect a complex female character through the artistic style of her words and vocabulary.

Ellipsis

1. Definition of Ellipsis

Ellipsis is a literary device that is used in narratives to omit some parts of a sentence or event, which gives the reader a chance to fill the gaps while acting or reading it out. It is usually written between the sentences as a series of three dots, like this: "..."

Apart from being convenient, ellipses also help in advancing the story. Leaving out part of a sentence or an event by substituting it with ellipses is often done to either save time, or as a stylistic element. The ellipsis can be dated back to Ernest Hemingway, who presented the Iceberg theory, which is also called the theory of omission.

2. Function of Ellipsis

Ellipsis is also very commonly used in filmmaking. The parts and scenes that are of no significance to the film are usually omitted by editing. For instance, there would be no point in showing a scene that involves a character walking to the door to answer it unless there is something absolutely important in that scene that you would like to highlight. Normally, such a scene would be cut short by editing out the unnecessary parts. In such cases, the narrative logic allows the audience to ignore the ellipsis.

A very good example of the use of ellipsis in filmmaking would be Stanley Kubrick's 2001: A Space Odyssey. The movie directly proceeds to the modern technology (space station) from the most primitive tool of mankind (a bone). In film language, this kind of ellipsis is often called a match cut. It is bridged by the symbolic comparison between the two things.

Exaggeration

1. Definition of Exaggeration

We all exaggerate. Sometimes by spicing up stories to make them more fun, or simply to highlight our points. Exaggeration is a statement that makes something worse, or better, than it really is. In literature and oral communication, writers and speakers use exaggeration as a literary technique, to give extra stress and drama in a work or speech.

2. Function of Exaggeration

The function of any type of exaggeration, whether it is overstatement or hyperbole, is to lay emphasis and stress on the given idea, action, feature, or feeling by overstating it. Through exaggeration, writers describe an action or a feature in a remarkable and heightened manner. Sometimes, they also use it sarcastically and ironically to bring humor to their works. In poetry, on the other hand, poets use it by adding images, similes and metaphors.

3. Examples of Exaggeration in Literature

Example #1: A Modest Proposal (By Jonathan Swift)

Jonathan Swift has been notorious for employing exaggeration in his writings, to provide social and political commentary. Through his peculiar story, A Modest Proposal, Swift elevates the politics of society to an extent of barefaced absurdity. In this essay, Swift exaggerates by suggesting that the only way to save Ireland from poverty and overpopulation is to kill the children of the poor families. He further suggests that their meat would serve as a delicacy for the nobles of Ireland. He continues to exaggerate, considering ways and recipes to make their skin into handbags and gloves by saying:

"Those who are more thrifty may flay the carcass, the skin of which, artificially dressed, will make admirable gloves for ladies and summer boots for fine gentleman."

In fact, Swift exaggerates tenaciously this idea because the people of Ireland have failed to find a logical solution to reduce poverty and overpopulation.

Example #2: Candida (By Voltaire)

"I have wanted to kill myself a hundred times, but somehow I am still in love with life. This ridiculous weakness is perhaps one of our more stupid melancholy propensities, for is there

anything more stupid than to be eager to go on carrying a burden which one would gladly throw away, to loathe one's very being and yet to hold it fast, to fondle the snake that devours us until it has eaten our hearts away?"

In this example, an old woman tells her story – how she faced hard times, exaggerating that she wanted to kill herself a hundred times, calling herself a burden.

Foreshadowing

1. Definition of Foreshadowing

Foreshadowing is a literary device that writers utilize as a means to indicate or hint to readers something that is to follow or appear later in a story. Foreshadowing, when done properly, is an excellent device in terms of creating suspense and dramatic tension for readers. It can set up emotional expectations of character behaviors and/or plot outcomes. This can heighten a reader's enjoyment of a literary work, enhance the work's meaning, and help the reader make connections with other literature and literary themes.

2. Examples of Foreshadowing in Literature

Foreshadowing is an effective literary device in terms of preparing readers for events to come or narrative reveals. This device is valuable, as it allows readers to make connections between themes, characters, symbols, and more—both within a literary work and between works of literature. Here are some examples of foreshadowing and how it adds to the significance of well-known literary works:

Example 1: Of Mice and Men (John Steinbeck)

"You seen what they done to my dog tonight? They says he wasn't no good to himself nor nobody else. When they can me here I wisht somebody'd shoot me. But they won't do nothing like that. I won't have no place to go, an' I get no more jobs."

Steinbeck utilizes foreshadowing in *Of Mice and Men* is very subtle. Most readers are shocked by the ending of the novel. However, Steinbeck incorporates an earlier scene in the story that mirrors and hints at the final outcome. This foreshadowing takes place when the character Candy's dog is shot as a "mercy killing." Like Candy himself, his dog is growing old and has outlived his usefulness in the eyes of the ranch hands. Candy confesses to George the agony of his decision to let Carlson kill his dog, the regret of not having done so himself, and his fear that he will have nobody to put him out of his own misery when the time comes. This scene foreshadows the decision George must make regarding Lennie at the end of the novel.

Example 2: Macbeth (William Shakespeare)

*By the pricking of my thumb,
Something wicked this way comes.*

In Shakespeare's play, the second witch makes this pronouncement at Macbeth's approach. Her statement indicates an intuitive sense of foreboding, symbolized by the witch's physical sensation in her thumb. This is foreshadowing for the reader of the events to come in the story and Macbeth's true nature as someone who is capable of betrayal and murder as a means of keeping his power as king.

Shakespeare's use of direct foreshadowing in this scene confirms for the reader Macbeth's guilt and corruption. Throughout the play, the witches speak "indirectly" through their prophecies and veiled predictions, all of which are subtle examples of foreshadowing that must be deciphered and interpreted by the reader. However, with this pointed and direct statement of foreshadowing, there is no doubt for Shakespeare's audience that Macbeth deserves his outcome in the play.

Foreshadowing

1. Definition of Foreshadowing

Foreshadowing is a literary device that writers utilize as a means to indicate or hint to readers something that is to follow or appear later in a story. Foreshadowing, when done properly, is an excellent device in terms of creating suspense and dramatic tension for readers. It can set up emotional expectations of character behaviors and/or plot outcomes. This can heighten a reader's enjoyment of a literary work, enhance the work's meaning, and help the reader make connections with other literature and literary themes.

2. Examples of Foreshadowing in Literature

Foreshadowing is an effective literary device in terms of preparing readers for events to come or narrative reveals. This device is valuable, as it allows readers to make connections between themes, characters, symbols, and more—both within a literary work and between works of literature. Here are some examples of foreshadowing and how it adds to the significance of well-known literary works:

Example 1: Of Mice and Men (John Steinbeck)

"You seen what they done to my dog tonight? They says he wasn't no good to himself nor nobody else. When they can me here I wisht somebody'd shoot me. But they won't do nothing like that. I won't have no place to go, an' I get no more jobs."

Steinbeck utilizes foreshadowing in *Of Mice and Men* is very subtle. Most readers are shocked by the ending of the novel. However, Steinbeck incorporates an earlier scene in the story that mirrors and hints at the final outcome. This foreshadowing takes place when the character Candy's dog is shot as a "mercy killing." Like Candy himself, his dog is growing old and has outlived his usefulness in the eyes of the ranch hands. Candy confesses to George the agony of his decision to let Carlson kill his dog, the regret of not having done so himself, and his fear that he will have nobody to put him out of his own misery when the time comes. This scene foreshadows the decision George must make regarding Lennie at the end of the novel.

Example 2: Macbeth (William Shakespeare)

*By the pricking of my thumb,
Something wicked this way comes.*

In Shakespeare's play, the second witch makes this pronouncement at Macbeth's approach. Her statement indicates an intuitive sense of foreboding, symbolized by the witch's physical sensation in her thumb. This is foreshadowing for the reader of the events to come in the story and Macbeth's true nature as someone who is capable of betrayal and murder as a means of keeping his power as king.

Shakespeare's use of direct foreshadowing in this scene confirms for the reader Macbeth's guilt and corruption. Throughout the play, the witches speak "indirectly" through their prophecies and veiled predictions, all of which are subtle examples of foreshadowing that must be deciphered and interpreted by the reader. However, with this pointed and direct statement of foreshadowing, there is no doubt for Shakespeare's audience that Macbeth deserves his outcome in the play.

Humour

1. Definition of Humor

Humor is a literary tool that makes audiences laugh, or that intends to induce amusement or laughter. Its purpose is to break the monotony, boredom, and tedium, and make the audience's nerves relax. The writer uses different techniques, tools, words, and even full sentences in order to bring to light new and funny sides of life. Humor is often found in literature, theater, movies, and advertising, where the major purpose is to make the audience happy.

2. Function of Humor

Humor is one of the most effective literary weapons to please the audience, as it develops characters and makes plots useful and memorable. Humor plays many functions in a literary work. It arouses interest among readers, sustains their attention, helps them connect with the characters, emphasizes and relates ideas, and helps the readers picture the situation. Through this tool, writers can also improve the quality of their works by pleasing the audience. Apart from that, the most dominant function of humor is to provide surprise, which not only improves quality but improves the memorable style of a literary piece. The writers learn how to use words for different objectives.

3. Examples of Humor in Literature

Example #1: Pride and Prejudice By Jane Austen

Jane Austen's novel *Pride and Prejudice* is one of her most popular works. Throughout the entire novel, Jane Austen uses humor. She presents a very hilarious scene between Mr. and Mrs. Bennet. Mrs. Bennet endlessly breaks down and makes complaints about her husband's lack of understanding of her nerves, and then he responds by saying:

"You mistake me, my dear. I have a high respect for your nerves. They are my old friends. I have heard you mention them with consideration these twenty years at least."

He constantly pokes fun at her. Likewise, Austen bursts with humor in the case of Elizabeth and Darcy as, upon their first meeting, both feel a sense of disgust for one another. However, later they enjoy teasing each other.

Example #2: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn By Mark Twain

"No, don't you worry; these country jakes won't ever think of that. Besides, you know, you'll be in costume, and that makes all the difference in the world; Juliet's in a balcony, enjoying the moonlight before she goes to bed, and she's got on her night-gown and her ruffled nightcap. Here are the costumes for the parts."

In this example, the duke is unable to recognize the silliness of his own actions, instead, he makes comments on the low level of understanding of the country jakes.

Hyperbole

1. Definition of Hyperbole

Hyperbole is a figure of speech and literary device that creates heightened effect through deliberate exaggeration. Hyperbole is often a boldly overstated or exaggerated claim or statement that adds emphasis without the intention of being literally true. In rhetoric and literature, hyperbole is often used for serious, comic, or ironic effects.

For example, lyrics to The Ballad of Davy Crockett by Thomas W. Blackburn contain hyperbole:

*Born on a mountain top in Tennessee
Greenest state in the land of the free
Raised in the woods so he knew ev'ry tree
Kilt him a be 'are [bear] when he was only three
Davy, Davy Crockett, king of the wild frontier*

The audience isn't supposed to believe that this character truly knew "every tree" or that he literally killed a bear when he was "only three." Instead, hyperbole is used to exaggerate Davy Crockett's frontier experience and make him seem larger than life. Hyperbole is a frequently used literary device in tall tales, legends, and folk stories. The audience is aware that such claims are to emphasize the traits of the characters and not to be taken literally.

Imagery

1. Definition of Imagery

Imagery is a literary device that refers to the use of figurative language to evoke a sensory experience or create a picture with words for a reader. By utilizing effective descriptive language and figures of speech, writers appeal to a reader's senses of sight, taste, smell, touch, and sound, as well as internal emotion and feelings. Therefore, imagery is not limited to visual representations or mental images, but also includes physical sensations and internal emotions.

For example, in his novel *The Scarlet Letter*, Nathaniel Hawthorne utilizes imagery as a literary device to create a sensation for the reader as a means of understanding the love felt by the protagonist, Hester Prynne.

Love, whether newly born or aroused from a deathlike slumber, must always create sunshine, filling the heart so full of radiance, that it overflows upon the outward world.

By using descriptive language in an effective and unique way, Hawthorne evokes feelings and allows the reader an internal emotional response in reaction to his description of love. This image is especially poignant and effective for readers of this novel since Hester's love, in the story, results in darkness, shame, and isolation—the opposite of sunshine and radiance. However, Hawthorne's imagery appeals to the reader's understanding of love and subsequent empathy for Hester's emotions and actions, despite her transgression of societal norms, morals, and laws.

2. Types of Poetic Imagery

For poetic imagery, there are seven primary types. These types of imagery often feature figures of speech such as similes and metaphors to make comparisons. Overall, poetic imagery provides sensory details to create clear and vibrant descriptions. This appeals to a reader's imagination and emotions as well as their senses.

Here are the main types of poetic imagery:

Visual: appeals to the sense of sight through the description of color, light, size, pattern, etc.

Auditory: appeals to the sense of hearing or sound by including melodic sounds, silence, harsh noises, and even onomatopoeia.

Gustatory: appeals to the sense of taste by describing whether something is sweet, salty, savory, spicy, or sour.

Tactile: appeals to the sense of touch by describing how something physically feels, such as its temperature, texture, or other sensation.

Olfactory: appeals to the sense of smell by describing something's fragrance or odor.

Kinesthetic: appeals to a reader's sense of motion or movement through describing the sensations of moving or the movements of an object.

Organic: appeals to and communicates internal sensations, feelings, and emotions, such as fatigue, thirst, fear, love, loneliness, despair, etc.

Irony

1. Definition of Irony

Irony is a literary device in which contradictory statements or situations reveal a reality that is different from what appears to be true. There are many forms of irony featured in literature. The effectiveness of irony as a literary device depends on the reader's expectations and understanding of the disparity between what "should" happen and what "actually" happens in a literary work. This can be in the form of an unforeseen outcome of an event, a character's unanticipated behavior, or something incongruous that is said.

Many common phrases and situations reflect irony. Irony often stems from an unanticipated response (verbal irony) or an unexpected outcome (situational irony).

2. Examples of Irony

Verbal Irony

- Telling a quiet group, "don't speak all at once"
- Coming home to a big mess and saying, "it's great to be back"
- Telling a rude customer to "have a nice day"
- Walking into an empty theater and asking, "it's too crowded"
- Stating during a thunderstorm, "beautiful weather we're having"
- An authority figure stepping into the room saying, "don't bother to stand or anything"
- A comedian telling an unresponsive audience, "you all are a great crowd"
- Describing someone who says foolish things as a "genius"

- Delivering bad news by saying, “the good news is”

Situational Irony

- A fire station that burns down
- Winner of a spelling bee failing a spelling test
- A t-shirt with a “Buy American” logo that is made in China
- Marriage counselor divorcing the third wife
- Sending a Christmas card to someone who is Jewish
- Leaving a car wash at the beginning of a downpour
- A dentist needing a root canal
- Going on a blind date with someone who is visually impaired
- A police station being burglarized
- Purchasing a roll of stamps a day before the price to send a letter increases

Main Idea

1. Main Idea Definition

Main Idea includes the overall message of the text that a writer intends to convey to the audience. Almost all genres of literature have one or two main ideas in them. However, the main idea in literature is not limited to one sentence or paragraph; instead, it develops and grows throughout the text. It works as the central, unifying element of the story which ties together all other elements. In this sense, it can be best defined as the dominant impression or the generic truth incorporated in the literary piece. Etymologically, the central idea is the phrase of two words ‘main’ and ‘idea.’ The meaning is clear that it is the most important thought of a text which enables the readers to understand the layered meanings of the concerned text.

2. Function of Main Idea

Main idea serves as the pause for the audience. It provides them an opportunity to understand the writer’s intention or the reason for his writing. It also makes them recognize and appreciate the deeper meanings of the texts. The writers also use it as a tool that enables them to project their inner thoughts and persuade the readers. Moreover, some of the academic writings unconsciously instill main ideas into the subconscious of the readers with ulterior motives which can be good or bad.

3. Examples Main Idea from Literature

Example #1: “A Red, Red Rose” by Robert Burns

*“O my Luvie is like a red, red rose
That’s newly sprung in June;
O my Luvie is like the melody
That’s sweetly played in tune.
So fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
So deep in luvie am I;
And I will luvie thee still, my dear,
Till a’ the seas gang dry.*

*Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun;
I will love thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.*

*And fare thee weel, my only luve!
And fare thee weel awhile!
And I will come again, my luve,
Though it were ten thousand mile."*

This is one of the famous poems of Robert Burns, a renowned Scottish poet, and lyricist. The poem illustrates the intense love of the speaker for his beloved. The central idea of the poem is love, which the writer has declared in the opening lines. However, he further supports this idea by comparing his beloved with a red rose. He has also employed literary elements to make the readers understand his version of love. To him, beauty is transitory, but his love is holy and eternal. Thus, the central idea plays a great role in advancing the action of this poem.

Example #2: Invictus by William Ernest Henley

*Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.*

*In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.*

*Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds and shall find me unafraid.*

*It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul.*

The poem, having an artistic expression, was composed to illustrate the courageous stance of a person in unfortunate circumstances. The main idea of the poem is the resilience of human spirit in the face of miseries and challenges of life. Despite having troubles and adverse circumstances, the speaker holds his spirit high and face the difficult time of his life bravely. His optimism and ability to overcome the adversity makes him stronger as he calls himself the master of his fate. He is not afraid of the problems and, this belief enables him to overcome any obstacle that comes to his way. Therefore, courage makes up the main idea of the poem.

Metaphor

1. Definition of Metaphor

A metaphor is a figure of speech that makes a comparison between two non-similar things. As a literary device, metaphor creates implicit comparisons without the express use of “like” or “as.” Metaphor is a means of asserting that two things are identical in comparison rather than just similar. This is useful in literature for using specific images or concepts to state abstract truths.

For example, one of the most famous metaphors in literature is featured in this line from William Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*: “What light through yonder window breaks? It is the East, and Juliet, the sun!” In this metaphor, Juliet is compared to the sun. In fact, this figure of speech claims that Juliet is the sun. Of course, the reader understands that Romeo does not believe that Juliet is literally the sun. Instead, the comparison demonstrates the idea that Romeo equates Juliet with the beauty, awe, and life-giving force of the sun. To Romeo, symbolically, Juliet and the sun are the same.

2. Difference Between Metaphor and Simile

It can be difficult in some instances to distinguish between metaphor and simile as literary devices. Both are figures of speech designed to create comparisons. In fact, simile is a subset of metaphor. However, they are distinguished by the presence of one of two words: “like” and “as.” Metaphors create direct comparisons without using either of these words. Similes feature either like or as in making a comparison.

A good example to distinguish between these two literary devices comes from the movie adaptation of the novel *Forrest Gump* by Winston Groom. One of the movie’s themes is based on a comparison between life and a box of chocolates. The main character, Forrest Gump, quotes his mother: “Life is like a box of chocolates. You never know what you’re going to get.” In this case, the comparison between life and a box of chocolates is a simile due to the presence of the word like.

In a different scene, the audience hears Forrest’s mother say: “Life is a box of chocolates, Forrest. You never know what you’re going to get.” This comparison is a metaphor due to the absence of the word like (or as). Both quotes feature comparative figures of speech. However, the uses of metaphor and simile create subtle differences in the meaning of comparing life to a box of chocolates.

3. Function of Metaphor

Overall, as a literary device, metaphor functions as a means of creating a direct comparison between two seemingly different things. This is effective for readers in that metaphor can create an association between two dissimilar entities or ideas that, as a result of the metaphor, illuminate each other and deepen the meaning of both. Metaphor is an essential figure of speech for writers of both poetry and prose.

4. Examples of Metaphor in Literature

Metaphor is a very effective literary device. Here are some examples of metaphor and how it adds to the significance of well-known literary works:

Example 1: *Fire and Ice* by Robert Frost

<p><i>Some say the world will end in fire, Some say in ice. From what I’ve tasted of desire</i></p>

*I hold with those who favor fire.
But if it had to perish twice,
I think I know enough of hate
To say that for destruction ice
Is also great
And would suffice.*

In this poem, Frost compares end-of-world destructive forces to both fire and ice. These are metaphors that serve as figures of speech in the sense that the poet does not literally mean that the world will end because of fire and ice. Instead, fire represents destructive forces associated with desire, such as power, jealousy, and anger. Similarly, ice represents destructive forces associated with hate, such as prejudice, hostility, and isolation. These metaphors are an effective literary device in that it causes the reader to consider that desire and hatred are as destructive as fire and ice.

Example 2: Dreams by Langston Hughes

*Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die
Life is a broken-winged bird
That cannot fly.*

*Hold fast to dreams
For when dreams go
Life is a barren field
Frozen with snow.*

In this poem, Hughes utilizes metaphor to compare life to a broken-winged bird and a barren field as consequences to the loss of dreams. In the first stanza, Hughes claims that if dreams die then life is a “broken-winged bird that cannot fly.” This is significant use of metaphor in that it characterizes life without dreams as something fragile that has been irreparably harmed. The metaphor creates an image for the reader of a bird that is wounded, grounded, and unable to reach its purpose or potential. If life is this bird, then, without dreams, it is also wounded, grounded, and thwarted in purpose.

Mood

1. Definition of Mood

As a literary device, mood refers to the emotional response that the writer wishes to evoke in the reader through a story. This response can range anywhere from feelings of calm, fear, anger, or joy depending on the literary work. In general, short stories and poems feature a consistent mood due to their length. Novels can feature more than one mood, although readers will typically identify an overall emotional response to the work as a whole. Mood allows a writer to create a memorable and meaningful story with which the reader can connect. In addition, writers reveal their artistic use of language and creative skills when establishing the mood of a literary work.

2. Examples of How Writers Establish Mood

Mood is an essential literary device to bring cohesion to a story and create an emotional response in readers. This response allows readers to experience emotion and connection within a story, making

the literary work more meaningful and memorable. When writers establish mood, it should be consistent with the literary work so that the mood is not disjointed from the story yet remains emotionally accessible and resonant for readers. Though it may seem difficult to achieve mood in a story without being too overt or too subtle for readers, writers can rely on four techniques to craft this literary device.

Here are some examples of how writers establish mood:

Setting

A story's setting refers to its "physical" location and time frame in which it takes place. Setting can have a distinct impact on the mood of a story. For example, if a story is set in an idyllic pasture on a sunny day, readers will be inclined to expect a happy mood. In turn, if a story is set in a futuristic dystopia, readers may expect a mood of tension or hopelessness.

Tone

Though tone and mood appear similar, they are distinct. Mood indicates the emotions evoked in the reader by the story. Tone refers to the narrator's attitude toward the events taking place in the story, which can also evoke emotion in a reader. The tone of a narrator can contribute to a story's mood by enhancing the reader's emotional response.

Choice of Words

Word choice in a story is key to establishing its mood. This includes the way words "sound" to a reader, perhaps harsh or loving, and the use of connotative meanings of words. For example, if a writer states that a family returned to their house, the implied meaning is that the family has come back to the structure in which they live. If, instead, a writer states that a family has returned to their home, the implied meaning is that the family has come back to a place of comfort and belonging. A writer's choice of words is significant in establishing a story's mood by evoking emotional responses in readers.

Subject Matter

The subject matter of a story can also help establish its mood. For example, a story about war is likely to feature a sad mood, whereas a story about romantic love is likely to feature a happy mood.

3. Difference Between Mood and Atmosphere

Though mood and atmosphere can seem interchangeable as literary devices, they are distinguishable. Essentially, mood is a literary device that is created directly by the writer to evoke an emotion in the reader. Atmosphere is a general feeling or sensation generated by the environment of a scene in a literary work. Atmosphere is a feeling imposed on the reader rather than an emotion evoked in a reader. For example, the atmosphere of a very dramatic scene in literature may be described as restrictive. However, "restrictive" is not applicable in describing the mood and emotion of the reader in response to the scene. Instead, restrictive applies to the atmospheric feeling of the environment created in the scene, not the mood.

4. Examples of Mood in Literature

Establishing mood in a story, poem, novel, or other fictional work is an essential literary device. Mood engages the reader with the narrative and helps them understand many aspects of a story on an emotional level. This allows the reader to make further connections with the literary work as the writer is able to express deeper meaning.

Here are some examples of mood in well-known literature:

Example 1: And Then There Were None (Agatha Christie)

The others went upstairs, a slow unwilling procession. If this had been an old house, with creaking wood, and dark shadows, and heavily panelled walls, there might have been an eerie feeling. But this house was the essence of modernity. There were no dark corners – no possible sliding panels – it was flooded with electric light – everything was new and bright and shining. There was nothing hidden in this house, nothing concealed. It had no atmosphere about it. Somehow, that was the most frightening thing of all. They exchanged good-nights on the upper landing. Each of them went into his or her own room, and each of them automatically, almost without conscious thought, locked the door....

In her well-known novel, Christie makes an interesting and clear delineation between mood and atmosphere in a narrative. The atmosphere of the house where the group is staying is modern, new, and open, and therefore emanates what should be a non-threatening feeling to the characters and readers as well. However, in describing the behavior of the characters in this “non-threatening” setting, the mood of the story becomes ominous and foreboding. Therefore, Christie utilizes mood as a literary device to evoke feelings in the reader of nervousness and fear even though the atmosphere of the setting does not appear frightening. This makes for an engaging and memorable reading experience.

Example 2: The Old Man and the Sea (Ernest Hemingway)

He looked across the sea and knew how alone he was now. But he could see the prisms in the deep dark water and the line stretching ahead and the strange undulation of the calm. The clouds were building up now for the trade wind and he looked ahead and saw a flight of wild ducks etching themselves against the sky over the water, then blurring, then etching again and he knew no man was ever alone on the sea.

In his well-known novel, Hemingway portrays a character (the old man) who lives much of his life in isolation and often suffers from loneliness. However, as demonstrated in this passage, the overall mood of the story reflects the comforting presence of nature, which eases the man’s feelings of loneliness and those of the reader as well. Hemingway establishes this mood through the peaceful and comforting tone of the narrator towards the old man and the setting, which influences the reader’s emotions.

Motivation

1. Definition of Motivation

In literature, “motivation” is defined as a reason behind a character’s specific action or behavior. This type of behavior is characterized by the character’s own consent and willingness to do something.

There are two types of motivation: one is intrinsic, while the other one is extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation is linked to personal pleasure, enjoyment and interest, while extrinsic motivation is linked to numerous other possibilities. Extrinsic motivation comes from some physical reward such as money, power, or lust. Intrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is inspired by some internal reward such as knowledge, pride, or spiritual or emotional peace or wellbeing, etc.

Characters have some motivation for every action, as do people in real life. Therefore, the implicit or explicit reference to a motivation of a character makes the piece of literature seem closer to life and

reality.

2. Function of Motivation

In literature, motivation is used to connect the behavior and actions of a character with the events of the story. Motivation serves as the logical explanation for what a character does, which is necessary for the readers and audiences to understand the causes of a character's actions. The core desires of characters lead the way to all actions in storytelling.

Sometimes motivations of characters change with the development of the story. With a change in the motivation, the character changes too. For effective characterization, unified and dominant motivation is inevitable. Great characters have great motivations. These characters teach some good or bad moral lessons to the readers and the audiences. The readers and audiences get more interested in motivated characters and understand those motivations, which make or break societies.

3. Examples of Motivation in Literature

Example #1: Hamlet (By William Shakespeare)

All actions that Hamlet commits in the play are the result of his motivation, such as revenge, justification, and integrity of his character. Throughout the play, revenge remains a constant motivation for Hamlet. He is extremely grieved over his father's death. His sorrow and grief are aggravated when the Ghost of his father tells him that the murderer has not only taken the throne, but has taken his mother as his bride.

This becomes a motivation for Hamlet to justify his actions and exact revenge for "murder most foul," in the words of the Ghost. This motivation is further escalated when he sees his mother married to his uncle, the murderer. In fact, Hamlet finds an opportunity to kill his uncle, but he does not, as King Claudius was praying at the time. Hamlet does not want to send the murderer's soul to heaven. This motivation stops him from taking action.

Example #2: Lady Macbeth from "Macbeth" (by William Shakespeare)

According to many literary critics about Shakespeare's characters, the most evil of all his female characters is Lady Macbeth, who happens to have the worst motivation behind her actions. She is highly cunning, skillfully manipulative, and much more ambitious than her husband, Macbeth. When she receives a letter from her husband revealing the prophecy of the witches that foretells that Macbeth will be the future king, she at once begins to plan the murder of Duncan.

Then, when Macbeth withdraws from taking action, she motivates and urges him to move forward. Therefore, not only are greed and lust her motivations, but she transfers these motivations to her husband, giving him reason to kill the king.

Narrator

1. Definition of Narrator

The word/term, narrator, is derived from the Latin term, narrator, which typically means a person who narrates or relates facts, or events, etc. In other words, the narrator could be a historian, an observer, or an active participant in the events. In grammar, it is a noun of narrating. In literary

terms, it is a person who tells a story from his or her point of view. Thus, could be several types of narrators in literature.

2. Types of Narrators

There are various types of narrators, such as,

- **First-person narrator** – an active or a full participant of the story.
- **Second person narrator** – the protagonist or the main characters are addressed by pronouns like 'You'.
- **Third person or omniscient narrator** – not a participant or a character in a story.

3. Functions of Narrator

A narrator, disregarding the category, establishes the reputation of the author among his readers to become an icon of reliability or unreliability. It also defines the area in which the author holds specialization and command over the plot and story. The author invents a narrator to make his or her readers believe in his or her voice about their philosophy, message, or information. Therefore, the function of a narrator varies from one narrative to another narratives, depending on the purpose of a writer or author.

Onomatopoeia

1. Onomatopoeia Definition

Onomatopoeia indicates a word that sounds like what it refers to or describes. The letter sounds combined in the word imitate the natural sound of the object or action, such as hiccup.

2. Use of Onomatopoeia in Literature

Onomatopoeia is used by writers and poets as figurative language to create a heightened experience for the reader. Onomatopoeic words are descriptive and provide a sensory effect and vivid imagery in terms of sight and sound.

3. Impacts of Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeia not only creates rhythm but also beats, as the poets try to create sounds imitating the sound creators. These sounds create a sensory impression in the minds of the readers which they understand. The readers also understand the impacts of the sounds, their likely meanings, and their roles in creating those meanings. When used in poetry, onomatopoeia creates a rhythmic pattern that imitates the sounds in reality. This vice versa movement of sounds shows the onomatopoeic use of words to create a metrical pattern and rhyme scheme.

4. Function of Onomatopoeia

Generally, words are used to tell what is happening. Onomatopoeia, on the other hand, helps readers to hear the sounds of the words they reflect. Hence, the reader cannot help but enter the world created by the poet with the aid of these words. The beauty of onomatopoeic words lies in the fact that they are bound to have an effect on the readers' senses, whether that effect is understood or not. Moreover, a simple plain expression does not have the same emphatic effect that conveys an

idea powerfully to the readers. The use of onomatopoeic words helps create emphasis.

5. Examples of Onomatopoeia in Literature

Onomatopoeia is frequently employed in the literature. We notice, in the following examples, the use of onomatopoeia gives rhythm to the texts. This makes the descriptions livelier and more interesting, appealing directly to the senses of the reader.

Example #1: Come Down, O Maid By Alfred Lord Tennyson

*"The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
And murmuring of innumerable bees..."*

Example #2: The Tempest By William Shakespeare

*"Hark, hark!
Bow-wow.
The watch-dogs bark!
Bow-wow.
Hark, hark! I hear
The strain of strutting chanticleer
Cry, 'cock-a-diddle-dow!'"*

Parenthesis

1. Definition of Parenthesis

Parenthesis is a qualifying or explanatory sentence, clause, or word that writers insert into a paragraph or passage. However, if they leave it out, even then it does not grammatically affect the text, which is correct without it.

Writers mark these explanatory clauses off by round or square brackets, or by commas, dashes, or little lines. As far as its purpose is concerned, this verbal unit provides extra information, interrupts the syntactic flow of words, and allows readers to pay attention to the explanation. However, the overuse of parenthesis may make sentences look ambiguous and poorly structured.

2. Function of Parenthesis

Parenthesis makes the statements more convincing, as it puts the readers in a right form from the very beginning where they read it as an explanation. However, its main function is to give more explanation and add emphasis, while its repeated use can cause focus and thus makes parenthetical insertions a dominant feature of a sentence.

Parenthesis also offers readers an insight into true feelings and opinions of characters and narrators, while they might tend to evade parenthetical information as unimportant. Doing this, parenthesis could leave them clueless to the actual purpose of a sentence. In addition, it often creates humorous effect by using hyperbole and understatements.

3. Examples of Parenthesis in Literature

Example #1: One Art (By Elizabeth Bishop)

“—Even losing you (the joking voice, a gesture I love) I shan’t have lied. It’s evident the art of losing’s not too hard to master though it may look like (Write it!) like disaster.”

Bishop uses an abrupt, excruciating parenthesis towards the end of the poem. For this, she uses brackets, for expressing understatement, and for suggesting how to cope with losses through art by using the phrase “write it.”

Example #2: The Elements of Style (By William Strunk, Jr. and E. B. White)

“It is now necessary to warn you that your concern for the reader must be pure: you must sympathize with the reader’s plight (most readers are in trouble about half the time) but never seek to know the reader’s wants. Your whole duty as a writer is to please and satisfy yourself...”

The style guidebook provides parenthetical information several times. Here, you can see how the authors have explained the reader’s plight by giving descriptive sentence in brackets, showing how readers are in trouble.

Persona

1. Definition of Persona

The term persona has been derived from the Latin word persona, which means “the mask of an actor,” and is therefore etymologically linked to the *dramatis personae*, which refers to the list of characters and cast in a play or a drama. It is also known as a “theatrical mask.” It can be defined in a literary work as a voice or an assumed role of a character, which represents the thoughts of a writer, or a specific person the writer wants to present as his mouthpiece.

Most of the time, the *dramatis personae* are identified with the writer, though sometimes a persona can be a character or an unknown narrator. Examples of persona are found, not only in dramas, but in poems and novels too.

2. Function of Persona

The speaker of a dramatic monologue is also known as a persona. Such a monologue is presented without commentary or analysis. However, emphasis is laid on subjective qualities, and finally left up to the audience to interpret it. In literature, authors use persona to express ideas, beliefs, and voices they are not able to express freely, due to some restrictions, or because they cannot put into words otherwise. Persona is also sometimes a role assumed by a person or a character, in public or in society.

Personification

1. Definition of Personification

Personification is a figure of speech in which an idea or thing is given human attributes and/or feelings or is spoken of as if it were human. Personification is a common form of metaphor in that human characteristics are attributed to nonhuman things. This allows writers to create life and motion within inanimate objects, animals, and even abstract ideas by assigning them recognizable human behaviors and emotions.

Personification is a literary device found often in children's literature. This is an effective use of figurative language because personification relies on imagination for understanding. Of course, readers know at a logical level that nonhuman things cannot feel, behave, or think like humans. However, personifying nonhuman things can be an interesting, creative, and effective way for a writer to illustrate a concept or make a point.

For example, in his picture book, "The Day the Crayons Quit," Drew Daywalt uses personification to allow the crayons to express their frustration at how they are (or are not) being used. This literary device is effective in creating an imaginary world for children in which crayons can communicate like humans.

2. Function of Personification

Overall, as a literary device, personification functions as a means of creating imagery and connections between the animate and inanimate for readers. Therefore, personification allows writers to convey meaning in a creative and poetic way. These figures of speech enhance a reader's understanding of concepts and comparisons, interpretations of symbols and themes, and enjoyment of language.

Here are instances in which it's effective to use personification in writing:

Exercise Poetic Skill

Many poets rely on personification to create vivid imagery and memorable symbolism. For example, in Edgar Allan Poe's poem "The Raven," the poet skillfully personifies the raven through allowing it to speak one word, "nevermore," in response to the narrator's questions. This is a powerful use of personification, as the narrator ends up projecting more complex and intricate human characteristics onto the bird as the poem continues though the raven only speaks the same word.

Create Humor

Personification can be an excellent tool in creating humor for a reader. This is especially true among young readers who tend to appreciate the comedic contrast between a non human thing being portrayed as possessing human characteristics. Personification allows for creating humor related to incongruity and even absurdity.

Enhance Imagination

Overall, personification is a literary device that allows readers to enhance their imagination by "believing" that something inanimate or nonhuman can behave, think, or feel as a human. In fact, people tend to personify things in their daily lives by assigning human behavior or feelings to pets and even objects. For example, a child may assign emotions to a favorite stuffed animal to match their own feelings. In addition, a cat owner may pretend their pet is speaking to them and answer

back. This allows writers and readers to see a reflection of humanity through imagination. Readers may also develop a deeper understanding of human behavior and emotion.

3. Examples of Personification in Literature

Example #1: The House on Mango Street (Sandra Cisneros)

But the house on Mango Street is not the way they told it at all. It's small and red with tight steps in front and windows so small you'd think they were holding their breath.

In the first chapter of Cisneros's book, the narrator Esperanza is describing the house into which she and her family are moving. Her parents have promised her that they would find a spacious and welcoming home for their family, similar to what Esperanza has seen on television. However, their economic insecurity has prevented them from getting a home that represents the American dream.

Cisneros uses personification to emphasize the restrictive circumstances of Esperanza's family. To Esperanza, the windows of the house appear to be "holding their breath" due to their small size, creating an image of suffocation. This personification not only enhances the description of the house on Mango Street for the reader, but it also reflects Esperanza's feelings about the house, her family, and her life. Like the windows, Esperanza is holding her breath as well, with the hope of a better future and the fear of her dreams not becoming reality.

Example #2: Ex-Basketball Player (John Updike)

*Off work, he hangs around Mae's Luncheonette.
Grease-gray and kind of coiled, he plays pinball,
Smokes those thin cigars, nurses lemon phosphates.
Flick seldom says a word to Mae, just nods
Beyond her face toward bright applauding tiers
Of Necco Wafers, Nibs, and Juju Beads.*

In his poem about a former basketball player named Flick, Updike recreates an arena crowd watching Flick play pinball by personifying the candy boxes in the luncheonette. The snack containers "applaud" Flick as he spends his free time playing a game that is isolating and requires no athletic skill. However, the personification in Updike's poem is a reflection of how Flick's life has changed since he played and set records for his basketball team in high school.

Flick's fans have been replaced by packages of sugary snacks with little substance rather than real people appreciating his skills and cheering him on. Like the value of his audience, Flick's own value as a person has diminished into obscurity and the mundane now that he is an ex-basketball player.

Plot

1. Definition of Plot

Plot is a literary device that writers use to structure what happens in a story. However, there is more to this device than combining a sequence of events. Plots must present an event, action, or turning point that creates conflict or raises a dramatic question, leading to subsequent events that are connected to each other as a means of "answering" the dramatic question and conflict. The arc of a story's plot features a causal relationship between a beginning, middle, and end in which the conflict is built to a climax and resolved in conclusion.

For example, A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens features one of the most well-known and satisfying plots of English literature.

I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year. I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future. The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me. I will not shut out the lessons that they teach.

Dickens introduces the protagonist, Ebenezer Scrooge, who is problematic in his lack of generosity and participation in humanity—especially during the Christmas season. This conflict results in three visitations by spirits that help Scrooge’s character and the reader understand the causes for the conflict. The climax occurs as Scrooge’s dismal future is foretold. The above passage reflects the second chance given to Scrooge as a means of changing his future as well as his present life. As the plot of Dickens’s story ends, the reader finds resolution in Scrooge’s changed attitude and behavior. However, if any of the causal events were removed from this plot, the story would be far less valuable and effective.

Plot Twist

1. Definition of Plot Twist

Plot twist is an unexpected development in a literary work or film. The term plot twist comprises a combination of two words, plot, which is an autonomous term with, twist, having separate meanings. Yet, it is not a compound word.

In literature, however, it means a technique that brings a change in the plot in a way that it entirely turns to the opposite direction from the expected direction that it seems to take.

Although such twists are quite common, sometimes a twist occurs just at the end of the story and takes a sharp turn. This is where it surprises the readers, causing an immediate response in the shape of fear, awe, happiness, or laughter. This new conflict, sometimes, just ends, while, at other times, it becomes quite linear. Some other techniques that support plot twists are flashbacks, cliffhangers, red herring, and reverse chronology.

2. Functions of Plot Twist

A plot twist not only surprises the readers but also makes them believe in things that the authors want to convey. A plot twist makes the story believable and entertains the readers so that they could desire more. Writers use plot twists to convey their messages effectively by abruptly ending the story with a twist.

Protagonist

1. Protagonist Definition

A protagonist is the central character or leading figure in poetry, narrative, novel or any other story. A protagonist is sometimes a “hero” to the audience or readers. The word originally came from the Greek language, and in Greek drama it refers to the person who led the chorus. Later on, the word started being used as a term for the first actor in order of performance.

2. Function of Protagonist

A protagonist is a very important tool to develop a story. There are different terms for a protagonist, such as hero, focal character, central character, and main character. Regardless of what title you give a protagonist, he or she remains the key ingredient in the development of the story, which is why the story revolves around him or her. More often than not the protagonist is fair and virtuous, and is always supporting the moral good. Further in the plot the protagonist may undergo some change, which will probably be the climax of the story.

Being the central element puts grave responsibilities on the shoulders of a protagonist. Since, the story revolves around the protagonist, he is the one who has to work as an emotional heart of the story, helping the audience connect with it on a basic level. A well-constructed protagonist attracts the audience emotionally. It helps them relate to the joys, fears, and hopes of the character in the story.

Repetition

1. Definition of Repetition

Repetition is a literary device that involves intentionally using a word or phrase for effect, two or more times in a speech or written work. For repetition to be noticeable, the words or phrases should be repeated within close proximity of each other. Repeating the same words or phrases in a literary work of poetry or prose can bring clarity to an idea and/or make it memorable for the reader.”

2. Function of Repetition

Repetition, as a literary device, functions as a means of reinforcing a concept, thought, or idea for a reader by repeating certain words or phrases. Writers that utilize repetition call attention to what is being repeated. This can generate greater focus on a particular subject and intensify its meaning.

3. Purpose of Repetition in Literature

As far as the purpose of repetition in literature is concerned, it has three specific functions that the writers and poets have in their minds when they use repetitions.

1. The first one is the stress upon some point so that it could reach its intended audiences.
2. The second is to create intended impacts on the audiences by repeating the same phrase such as “I have a dream” in the speech of the same title by Martin Luther King. This repetition also serves the purpose of persuading the audience or readers.
3. The third is to use repetition for melody and rhythm. It happens mostly in poetry though some prose writers such as Charles Dickens have used repetitions in prose for rhythm.

4. Examples of Repetition in Literature

Repetition is a commonly used literary device. Here are some examples of repetition and how it adds to the value of well-known literary works:

Macbeth (William Shakespeare)

<i>Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow, Creeps in this petty pace from day to day, To the last syllable of recorded time;</i>
--

*And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death.*

In this Shakespearean soliloquy, Macbeth is lamenting the death of his wife and repeats the word “tomorrow” three times. Macbeth’s repetition of this word calls attention to the fact that his wife no longer has any tomorrow, and that the tomorrows Macbeth has remaining will be a repetition of life without her.

The rhythm established by the repetition of tomorrow also serves to highlight a sense of futility and mundanity in a word that typically connotes the expectation of change or something new. Instead, the repetition of the word renders it meaningless and without the promise of hope. Therefore, just as Macbeth has accumulated nothing in the play, his accumulation of tomorrows also represents nothing.

Resolution

1. Definition of Resolution

The literary device resolution means the unfolding or solution of a complicated issue in a story. Most of the instances of resolution are presented in the final parts or chapters of a story. It mostly follows the climax.

In certain mystery novels, climax and resolution may occur simultaneously. However, in other forms of literature, resolution takes place at the end of the story. Considering that it ends a story, resolution is an integral part of the conflict of the story.

2. Function

The resolution is the final solution in literature. Almost all the genres of storytelling make use of resolution to end a story. Actually, resolution is required to wrap up a story, and it comes after the climax. Following a heart-racing and anxiety-triggering climax, resolution gives audiences the opportunity to relax. It brings all disturbing conflicts into order, and helps the central theme of the movie or novel to resonate. Its function of resolving the problem has made it highly significant. The story would be a disaster if the resolution is presented poorly.

3. Examples of Resolution in Literature

Example #1: Romeo and Juliet (by William Shakespeare)

*Capulet: O brother Montague, give me thy hand.
This is my daughter’s jointure, for no more
Can I demand ...*

*Montague: But I can give thee more,
For I will raise her statue in pure gold,
That whiles Verona by that name is known, ...
As that of true and faithful Juliet ...*

*Capulet: As rich shall Romeo’s by his lady’s lie,
Poorsacrifices of our enmity ...*

*Prince: A glooming peace this morning with it brings.
The sun, for sorrow, will not show his head ...*

This is the final dialogue that takes place between Lord Capulet and Lord Montague. Seeing their beloved children, Romeo and Juliet, committing suicide for love, both the heads of the family regret their long enmity. Now both of them agree to end the dispute between their tribes to avoid future tragedy.

Example #2: The Great Gatsby (by F. Scott Fitzgerald)

"They're a rotten crowd," I shouted across the lawn. "You're worth the whole damn bunch put together... "

Concluding the story "The Great Gatsby," Nick makes his mind to return to Minnesota as an escape from the rich people. He knows that the rich people are engaged in morally worthless activities. That is why he is convinced that people in Gatsby's circle are unfaithful.

Rhyme Scheme

1. Definition of Rhyme Scheme

Rhyme scheme is the pattern of rhyme that comes at the end of each verse or line in poetry. In other words, it is the structure of end words of a verse or line that a poet needs to create when writing a poem. Many poems are written in free verse style. Some other poems follow non-rhyming structures, paying attention only to the number of syllables. The Japanese genre of Haiku is a case in point. Thus, it shows that the poets write poems in a specific type of rhyme scheme or rhyming pattern. There are several types of rhyme schemes as given below.

2. Types of Rhyme Scheme

There are a number of rhyme schemes used in poetry; some of the most popular of which include:

Alternate rhyme: It is also known as ABAB rhyme scheme, it rhymes as "ABAB CDCD EFEF GHGH."

Ballade: It contains three stanzas with the rhyme scheme of "ABABBCBC" followed by "BCBC."

Monorhyme: It is a poem in which every line uses the same rhyme scheme.

Couplet: It contains two-line stanzas with the "AA" rhyme scheme, which often appears as "AA BB CC and DD..."

Triplet: It often repeats like a couplet, uses rhyme scheme of "AAA."

Enclosed rhyme: It uses rhyme scheme of "ABBA"

Terza rima rhyme scheme: It uses tercets, three lines stanzas. Its interlocking pattern on end words follows: ABA BCB CDC DED and so on.

Keats Odes rhyme scheme: In his famous odes, Keats has used a specific rhyme scheme, which is "ABABCDECDE."

Limerick: A poem uses five lines with a rhyme scheme of "AABBA."

Villanelle: A nineteen-line poem consisting of five tercets and a final quatrain. It uses a rhyme scheme of "A1bA2, abA1, abA2, abA1, abA2, abA1A2."

3. Function of Rhyme Scheme

Rhyme scheme is an integral part of the constitution of a poem, which includes meter, length of phrase, and rhythm. In fact, rhyme scheme, like other writing tools, is used to create balance and relieve tension, manage flow, create rhythm, and highlight important ideas. Its basic function is to form units of sound and suggest units of sense. It also communicates the idea in a more effective way.

Rhythm

1. Definition of Rhythm

The word rhythm is derived from *rhythmos* (Greek) which means, "measured motion." Rhythm is a literary device that demonstrates the long and short patterns through stressed and unstressed syllables, particularly in verse form.

2. Types of Rhythm

English poetry makes use of five important rhythms. These rhythms are of different patterns of stressed (/) and unstressed (x) syllables. Each unit of these types is called Foot. Here are the five types of rhythm:

A. Iamb (x /)

This is the most commonly used rhythm. It consists of two syllables, the first of which is not stressed, while the second syllable is stressed. Such as:

"Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?"
(Sonnet 18, by William Shakespeare)

B. Trochee (/ x)

A trochee is a type of poetic foot commonly used in English poetry. It has two syllables, the first of which is strongly stressed, while the second syllable is unstressed, as given below:

"Tell me not, in mournful numbers"
(Psalm of Life, by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow)

C. Spondee (/ /)

Spondee is a poetic foot that has two syllables, which are consecutively stressed. For example:

"White founts falling in the Courts of the sun"
(Lepanto, by G. K. Chesterton)

D. Dactyl (/ x x)

Dactyl is made up of three syllables. The first syllable is stressed, and the remaining two syllables are not stressed, such as in the word “marvelous.” For example:

“This is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines and the hemlocks,”
(Evangeline, by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow)

The words “primeval” and “murmuring” show dactyls in this line.

E. Anapest (x x /)

Anapests are total opposites of dactyls. They have three syllables; where the first two syllables are not stressed, and the last syllable is stressed. For example:

“’Twas the night before Christmas, and all through the house,”
(’Twas the Night Before Christmas, by Clement Clarke Moore)

3. What is the Purpose of Rhythm in Poetry?

As the beat or pace of the poem, rhythm shows the regular occurrence of stressed and unstressed syllables. The purpose is to create a metrical pattern that could fit the musical beats. The music also helps readers understand the major themes and messages of the poem.

4. Function of Rhythm

Rhythm in writing acts as beat does in music. The use of rhythm in poetry arises from the need to express some words more strongly than others. They might be stressed for a longer period of time. Hence, the repeated use of rhythmical patterns of such accents produces the rhythmical effects, which sound pleasant to the mind as well as to the soul. In a speech, rhythm is used unconsciously to create identifiable patterns. Moreover, rhythm captivates the audience and readers alike by giving musical effect to a speech or a literary piece.

Run-On Sentence

1. Definition of Run-On Sentence

A run-on sentence is a combination of two independent clauses, joined together without a conjunction or punctuation mark.

Generally, this is considered grammatically incorrect, and called a stylistic error. There are many examples of run-on sentences used as literary devices in literature. However, not all long sentences are run-on sentences, for it is quite acceptable to combine different related ideas into a compound sentence. Nevertheless, without using appropriate punctuation rules, a compound sentence becomes a run-on sentence.

2. Function of Run-On Sentence

Though it is not a good idea to use run-on sentences in writing, poets and writers sometimes use them for repeating something important, or for imitating the speaking style of characters. Despite that, use of run-on sentences is usually incorrect, because it makes the writing too difficult and

intricate to understand. However, intentional use of run-on sentences creates special effects in colloquial speech and informal contexts.

3. Examples of Run-On Sentence from Literature

Example #1: Rabbit, Run (By John Updike)

“But then they were married (she felt awful about being pregnant before but Harry had been talking about marriage for a while and anyway laughed when she told him in early February about missing her period and said Great she was terribly frightened and he said Great and lifted her put his arms around under her bottom ... she was still little clumsy dark-complected Janice Springer and her husband was a conceited lunk who wasn’t good for anything in the world Daddy said and the feeling of being alone would melt a little with a little drink.”

This passage presents an example of fused run-on sentences, where the author has not used commas to separate the sentences. These sentences, however, can make a proper thought.

Example #2: A Tale of Two Cities (By Charles Dickens)

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair... —in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.”

This excerpt is a good example of comma splices, where we can clearly see the use of commas separating the clauses. Yet, there is no use of conjunction to form a complete sense or thought.

Sarcasm

1. Definition of Sarcasm

Sarcasm generally takes the form of an ironic remark, somewhat rooted in humor, that is intended to mock or satirize something. When a speaker is being sarcastic, they are saying something different than what they actually mean. As a literary device, sarcasm can convey a writer and/or character’s true feelings of frustration, anger, and even derision, though veiled by the presence of humor and wording that is inconsistent with what is intended.

2. Function of Sarcasm

Sarcasm is an effective literary device in that it can reveal a great deal about a speaker and/or writer and how they feel about other people, ideas, social conventions, and more. For a reader, sarcasm can be a source of humor and provide memorable insight into both a speaker’s thoughts and feelings as well as the reader’s own thoughts and feelings.

3. Examples of Sarcasm in Literature

Sarcasm can be an effective device when used in literature as a means of expressing underlying pain, anger, or frustration on behalf of a character or the writer themselves. Here are some examples of sarcasm and how it can enhance the meaning of a literary work:

Example 1: The Catcher in the Rye by J.D. Salinger

When I was all set to go, when I had my bags and all, I stood for a while next to the stairs and took a last look down the goddam corridor. I was sort of crying. I don't know why. I put my red hunting hat on, and turned the peak around to the back, the way I liked it, and then I yelled at the top of my goddam voice, 'Sleep tight, ya morons!'

In this passage, Salinger utilizes sarcasm to express the main character Holden's feelings of frustration, loneliness, and isolation as he is leaving preparatory school. Of course, the fact that Holden yells "sleep tight" indicates that he does not wish his fellow students good sleep, but rather the opposite. In addition, Holden refers to his peers as morons, which is a sarcastic way of indicating that he feels isolated and apart from them. Though the line is humorous to most readers, Holden's remark reveals through sarcasm how much pain he is in and his inability to express it without the intention of verbally hurting others as well.

Example 2: Resume' by Dorothy Parker

*Razors pain you,
Rivers are damp,
Acids stain you,
And drugs cause cramp.
Guns aren't lawful,
Nooses give,
Gas smells awful.
You might as well live.*

In her poem, Parker uses sarcasm as a means of mocking suicide and satirizing typical methods one might use to commit it. The poet's tone is incongruously flippant considering the seriousness of the subject, which effectively indicates sarcasm to the reader in both tone and context. In using sarcasm as a literary device, readers are called to question what the poet truly means by listing this resume' of ways someone can kill themselves. For example, the poet may be literally listing methods to commit suicide, but figuratively saying that they are ineffective or not worth the resulting pain. Parker's use of sarcasm also calls into question the poem's last line and whether it is meant to be ironic and satirical or whether it is meant exactly as it's worded.

Setting

1. Definition of Setting

Setting is a literary device that allows the writer of a narrative to establish the time, location, and environment in which it takes place. This is an important element in a story, as the setting indicates to the reader when and where the action takes place. As a result, the setting of a narrative or story helps the reader picture clear and relevant details. In addition, setting enhances the development of a story's plot and characters by providing a distinct background.

In literature, setting can be specific or general in terms of geographical location and historical time period. A specific, or integral, setting refers to an exact location and time period established by the writer. This information can be directly imparted to the reader or implied in the narrative. A backdrop setting is more general, vague, or nondescript, which makes the story more universal for readers. The setting of a literary work may also be a fictional location or world, a future time and place, or it may be unknown.

2. Importance of Setting as a Literary Device

Setting is an important literary device, as its purpose is to create a “world” in which a story takes place. Setting can also influence the plot of a story and the actions of the characters. Here are some examples of the importance of setting as a literary device:

- helps establish the mood and/or tone of a story
- provides context for other story elements such as plot, characters, and theme
- reinforces the narrative by providing structure and function in the story
- enhances individual scenes within a story’s plot

Occasionally, the “presence” of a story’s setting, in terms of a time period, geographic location, or environment, can feel to the reader like an additional character. This can make for clever use of this literary device in portraying a particular time and/or place with a personality all on its own in a story.

Simile

1. Simile Definition

A simile is a figure of speech in which two essentially dissimilar objects or concepts are expressly compared with one another through the use of “like” or “as.” Simile is used as a literary device to assert similarity with the help of like or as, which are language constructs that establish equivalency. A proper simile creates an explicit comparison between two things that are different enough from each other such that their comparability appears unlikely.

For example, the statement “this poem is like a punch in the gut” features a simile. The poem is being explicitly compared to a “punch in the gut” with the word “like.” This is an effective simile in that a poem is not at all similar to a punch in literal terms. However, figuratively, the simile’s comparison and association between these two things establishes that the impact of the poem on the speaker has the force of and feels similar to a punch in the gut.

2. Examples of Simile in Literature

Simile is a very effective and widely used literary device. Here are some examples of simile and how it adds to the significance of literary works:

Example 1: Horseradish (Lemony Snicket)

A library is like an island in the middle of a vast sea of ignorance, particularly if the library is very tall and the surrounding area has been flooded.

Lemony Snicket is well-known for his brilliant use of simile as a means of describing concepts, especially for children. In this line, he demonstrates not only the power of simile as a comparison between a library and an island with figurative language, but he also invokes a literal image of a library as an island. This reinforces the significance of a library as a refuge and protective haven against ignorance and other potentially destructive forces.

Example 2: A Red, Red Rose (Robert Burns)

*O my Luve’s like a red, red rose,
That’s newly sprung in June;*

*O my Luve's like the melodie
That's sweetly play'd in tune.*

In this stanza, the poet compares the person he loves both to a rose and melody. In poetry, the concept of love is often compared to a rose and/or a song. However, in this poem, Burns enhances those similes by comparing his “Luve,” an actual person rather than an abstract concept, to a rose and a song. This allows the reader to understand that the poet views the person he loves as a symbol of love itself.

Suspense

1. Definition of Suspense

Suspense is a literary device that authors use to keep their readers’ interest alive throughout the work. It is a feeling of anticipation that something risky or dangerous is about to happen. The purpose of using this type of anxiety in literature is to make readers more concerned about the characters, and to form sympathetic association with them. Therefore, authors create scenarios that could force readers to understand, and to want to read on to see what their beloved characters face the next.

2. Function of Suspense

Suspense ensures the interest of readers by putting them on the edges of their seats, waiting for what’s next. If an author does this well, suspense continues to increase gradually until the climax, or the turning point, and final confrontation is reached. Writers and authors use suspense to create empathy with their readers, by giving their characters internal struggles with which readers can identify. Readers feel apprehension for their beloved characters whenever they are in danger.

3. Examples of Suspense in Literature

Example #1: Tarzan of the Apes (by Edgar Rice Burroughs)

In his novel, *Tarzan of the Apes*, Edgar Rice Burroughs builds suspense through different verbal clues. Tarzan falls for a girl named Jane, who is carried away by a brutal gorilla. Then, Jane asks, “How can anyone vanquish such a mighty antagonist?” It is quite a surprising question, which informs readers that the gorilla is a very strong and powerful opponent, and that Jane thinks Tarzan has very little chance of besting him. This situation creates suspense in Tarzan’s life, pushing readers to keep reading the story to find out what Tarzan and Jane are going to face in their lives.

Example #2: Othello (by William Shakespeare)

An author may also use dramatic irony to create suspense in his work. Dramatic irony occurs when readers or audiences know something that characters do not. This is exactly what Shakespeare has done in “*Othello*” in which malevolent Iago plays the role of a villain who creates jealousy in Othello, to destroy his life and career by convincing him that his wife is deceitful. The readers know that Othello’s wife is not guilty, and that Iago has wicked intentions toward Othello. However, Othello is ignorant of this fact.

Throughout the play, readers feel curious and worried, because they know that Iago is making a fool of Othello. This creates suspense for readers and members of the audience, encouraging them to

continue reading and watching, as they are eager to know if Othello gets out of Iago's trap or not.

Theme

1. Definition of Theme

As a literary device, theme refers to the central, deeper meaning of a written work. Writers typically will convey the theme of their work, and allow the reader to perceive and interpret it, rather than overtly or directly state the theme. As readers infer, reflect, and analyze a literary theme, they develop a greater understanding of the work itself and can apply this understanding beyond the literary work as a means of grasping a better sense of the world. Theme is often what creates a memorable and significant experience of a literary work for the reader.

Themes are often subject to the reader's perception and interpretation. This means that readers may find primary and/or secondary themes in a work of literature that the author didn't intend to convey. Therefore, theme allows for literature to remain meaningful, "living" works that can be revisited and analyzed in perpetuity by many readers at once or by a single reader across time.

2. Examples of Theme in Literature

As a literary device, the purpose of theme is the main idea or underlying meaning that is explored by a writer in a work of literature. For certain works of literature, such as fables, the theme is typically a "moral" or lesson for the reader. However, more complex works of literature tend to have a central theme that is open to interpretation and reflects a basic aspect of society or trait of humanity. Many longer works of literature, such as novels, convey several themes in order to explore the universality of human nature.

Here are some examples of theme in well-known works of literature:

Example 1: The Yellow Wall-Paper (Charlotte Perkins Gilman)

If a physician of high standing, and one's own husband, assures friends and relatives that there is really nothing the matter with one but temporary nervous depression – a slight hysterical tendency – what is one to do?

My brother is also a physician, and also of high standing, and he says the same thing. •

So I take phosphates or phosphites whichever it is, and tonics, and journeys, and air, and exercise, and am absolutely forbidden to "work" until I am well again.

Personally, I disagree with their ideas.

Personally, I believe that congenial work, with excitement and change, would do me good.

In her short story, Charlotte Perkins Gilman holds forth a revolutionary theme for the time period. The protagonist of the story is kept in a room with sickly yellow wall-paper as a means of "curing" her emotional and mental difficulties. Her husband, brother, and others are committed to keeping her idle. She is even separated from her baby. Rather than allow the narrator any agency over her daily life, they disregard her words and requests for the fact that she is a woman and considered incompetent.

Gilman conveys a theme of rebellion and feminism to the reader as the narrator begins to embrace the “trapped” woman she has become. Therefore, this allows the reader to perceive the narrator as an empowered figure in many ways, as opposed to one that is oppressed or incompetent.

Example 2: Harlem (Langston Hughes)

What happens to a dream deferred?

*Does it dry up
like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore—
And then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over—
like a syrupy sweet?*

*Maybe it just sags
like a heavy load.*

Or does it explode?

Hughes’s well-known poem explores the universality of hope and dreams among humans and the devastating legacy of oppression in deferring such hope and dreams. Hughes structures the poem in the form of questions and responses addressing what happens to a dream deferred. This calls on the reader to consider their own dreams as well those of others, which underscores the theme that dreams, and the hope associated with them, is universal—regardless of race, faith, etc.

Tied to this theme is the deferment of dreams, reflecting the devastating consequences of racism and oppression on the hopes of those who are persecuted. Therefore, the underlying theme of the poem that Hughes conveys to the reader is that, though dreams and hopes are universal, the dreams and hopes of certain members of society are put off and postponed due to the oppression of their race.

Tone

1. Definition of Tone

Tone is a literary device that reflects the writer’s attitude toward the subject matter or audience of a literary work. By conveying this attitude through tone, the writer creates a particular relationship with the reader that, in turn, influences the intention and meaning of the written words. However, though the writer’s tone may reflect their personal attitude or opinion, this literary device may also strictly apply to convey the attitudes and feelings of a certain character or narrator. Therefore, it’s essential for readers to look closely at the literary choices made by the writer so as not to unfairly assign a tone to them and to interpret tone judiciously.

2. Examples of Tone in Literature

As a literary device, tone is an important aspect of the narrative voice of a literary work. This allows the writer to inform the reader and communicate attitudes and feelings that might otherwise be

limited in conveying with just words.

The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho

We are travelers on a cosmic journey, stardust, swirling and dancing in the eddies and whirlpools of infinity. Life is eternal. We have stopped for a moment to encounter each other, to meet, to love, to share. This is a precious moment. It is a little parenthesis in eternity.

In this passage from *The Alchemist*, Coelho utilizes descriptive and figurative language to establish a tone of wonder and awe at the metaphysical relationships in the universe. By asserting to the reader that “we” are metaphorical travelers that are all part of the infinite cosmos, Coelho is able to convey the connection humans have to all that has existed and all that will exist. This allows the reader to feel connections with the writer’s words, their meanings, and the universe itself through the literary work. In addition, the inclusion of the image that human interaction is a momentary and temporary encounter “to meet, to love, to share” implies that people’s lives are brief and precious against the scope of the universe and a parenthetical interruption of a larger narrative. This calls for the reader to reflect on how they choose to impact, even briefly, the people and world around them.

Writers often find it challenging to express universal meaning in a literary work with denotative and connotative wording. In this passage, Coelho utilizes tone as a literary device to convey a universality to human existence as it relates to time and space. This is appealing to the reader in the sense that it conveys belonging and connection to all things while also acknowledging the existence and importance of the individual at momentary points along the continuum.
