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Personification is a literary device in which the author speaks of or describes an animal, object, or idea as if it were a person.

Simile is a comparison of two unlike things using the words like or as.

Understatement is a way of emphasizing an idea by talking about it in a restrained manner.

Flashback is returning to an earlier time (in a story) for the purpose of making something in the present more clear.

Foil is someone who serves as a contrast or challenge to another character.

Foreshadowing is giving hints or clues of what is to come later in a story.

Genre refers to a category or type of literature based on its style, form, and content. The mystery novel is a literary genre.

Gothic novel is a type of fiction that is characterized by gloomy castles, ghosts, and supernatural happenings—creating a mysterious and sometimes frightening story. Bram Stoker's *Dracula* is probably the best known gothic novel still popular today.

Hubris, derived from the Greek word *hybris*, means "excessive pride." In Greek tragedy, hubris is often viewed as the flaw that leads to the downfall of the tragic hero.

Imagery is the use of words to create a certain picture in the reader's mind. Imagery is usually based on sensory details.

Impressionism is the recording of events or situations as they have been impressed upon the mind.

Irony is using a word or phrase to mean the exact opposite of its literal or normal meaning. There are three kinds of irony;

Dramatic irony, in which the reader or the audience sees a character's mistakes, but the character does not.

Verbal irony, in which the writer says one thing and means another: "The best substitute for experience is being thirteen"

Irony of Situation, in which there is a great difference between the purpose of a particular action and the result.

Local color is the use of language and details that are common in a certain region of the country.

Malapropism is the type of pun, or play on words that results when two words become jumbled in the speaker's mind.

Melodrama is an exaggerated form of drama (as in television soap operas) characterized by heavy use of romance, suspense, and emotion.

Memoir is the feeling a text arouses in the reader: happiness, peacefulness, sadness, and so on.

Motif is the term for an often-repeated idea or theme in literature.

Myth is a traditional story that attempts to justify a certain practice or belief or to explain a natural phenomenon.

Narration is writing that relates an event or a series of events: a story.

Narrator is the person who is telling the story.

Naturalism is an extreme form of realism in which the author tries to show the relation of a person to the environment or surroundings. Often, the author finds it necessary to show the ugly or raw side of that relationship.

Novel is a lengthy fictional story with a plot that is revealed by the speech, action, and thoughts of the characters.