literary devices

| Literary Device | Definition | Simplified Definition or Example |
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| Allegory | Work that symbolizes or represents an idea or event; used to convey a political or spiritual meaning. |  |
| Alliteration | Repetition of the same or similar consonant sounds in succession. |  |
| Allusion | Indirect reference to a person, place, thing, event, or idea. |  |
| Anthropomorphism | Interpretation of a non-human animal, event, or object as embodying human qualities or characteristics. |  |
| Colloquialism | Informal piece of dialogue or turn of phrase used in everyday conversation |  |
| Diction | Word choice and speaking style of a writer or character |  |
| Epiphany | Moment of sudden realization or insight by a character |  |
| Foreshadowing | Hinting at future or subsequent events to come to build tension in a narrative |  |
| Hyperbole | Statement that is obviously and intentionally exaggerated |  |
| Idiom | Figure of speech that is indecipherable based on the words alone, but which has metaphorical or symbolic meaning |  |
| Imagery | Compilation of sensory details which enables the reader to visualize the event |  |
| Irony | The opposite of what is expected to happen. This can occur in language, in situations, or in the behavior of characters. |  |
| Simile | Comparison between objects, events, or people, which uses “like” or “as” |  |
| Juxtaposition | Ideas, people, images, or object placed next to one another to highlight their differences and similarities |  |
| Metaphor | Exact comparison between two unrelated things; used for dramatic or poetic effect; does not use “like” or “as” |  |
| Mood | General feeling the narrator evokes in the reader through the atmosphere, descriptions, and other features |  |
| Onomatopoeia | Word that is closely associated or identical to the sound it describes |  |
| Oxymoron | Pairing of seemingly contradictory terms used to convey emphasis or tension |  |
| Paradox | Apparent contradiction that, upon further unraveling, may contain truth; used for effect on the reader |  |
| Personification | Attribution of human characteristics to something nonhuman, or the representation of an abstract quality in human form; differs from anthropomorphism in that anthropomorphism involves non-humans displaying literal human traits and being capable of human behavior |  |
| Satire | Phrase or entire work that uses irony to critique behaviors, events, people, or vices |  |
| Symbolism | Something used to represent a larger concept or idea |  |
| Synecdoche | Instance of a part representing a whole or vice versa |  |
| Tone | Speaker or narrator’s attitude toward the subject of the piece; distinct from mood in that it is not used to evoke a particular feeling in the reader |  |