

Rising 12th Grade – AP Vocabulary Terms

Key: Terms have been categorized into the following:

Poetry Terms, Literary Terms, Plot Terms, Question Terms (ie: terms that show up in questions but might be confusing)

Poetry Terms:

1. Blank verse-Name for unrhymed iambic pentameter. An iamb is a metrical foot in which an unstressed syllable is followed by a stressed syllable. In iambic pentameter there are five iambs per line making ten syllables.
2. Alliteration-The repetition of the same consonant sound at the beginning of several words in a line of poetry. ie. Marilyn Monroe
3. Assonance-The repetition of the same vowel sound in a phrase or line of poetry.
4. Consonance-The repetition of consonant sounds in a phrase or line of poetry. The consonant sound may be at the beginning, middle, or end of the word.
5. Couplet-Two rhyming lines in poetry.
6. Elegy-A poem or song composed especially as a lament for a deceased person.
7. Enjambment-The continuation of reading one line of a poem to the next with no pause, a run-on line.
8. Epic-An extended narrative poem in elevated or dignified language, celebrating the feats of a legendary or traditional hero.
9. Free verse-Type of verse that contains a variety of line lengths, is unrhymed, and lacks traditional meter.
10. Meter-The measured arrangement of words in poetry, as by accentual rhythm, syllabic quantity, or the number of syllables in a line.
11. Ode-A lyric poem of some length, usually of a serious or meditative nature and having an elevated style and formal stanzaic structure. An ode celebrates something. John Keats is known for writing odes.
12. Rhyme scheme-The act of assigning letters in the alphabet to demonstrate the rhyming lines in a poem.
13. Soliloquy-A dramatic or literary form of discourse in which a character talks to himself or herself or reveals his or her thoughts without addressing a listener. Typical in plays.
14. Sonnet-A poem with fourteen lines. An Italian sonnet subdivides into two quatrains and two tercets; while an English sonnet subdivides into three quatrains and one couplet. A volta is a sudden change of thought which is common in sonnets.

Literary Terms

15. Allegory-The representation of abstract ideas or principles by characters, figures, or events in narrative, dramatic, or pictorial form.
16. Ambiguity-When an author leaves out details/information or is unclear about an event so the reader will use his/her imagination to fill in the blanks.
17. Anecdote-A short story or joke told at the beginning of a speech to gain the audience's attention.
18. Colloquial language-Informal, conversational language. Colloquialisms are phrases or sayings that are indicative of a specific region.
19. Connotation-An idea or meaning suggested by or associated with a word or thing, ie. Bat=evil.
20. Convention-An understanding between a reader and a writer about certain details of a story that does not need to be explained.
21. Diction-Word choice or the use of words in speech or writing.
22. Emotive language-Deliberate use of language by a writer to instill a feeling or visual.
23. Epistolary-Used to describe a novel that tells its story through letters written from one character to another.
24. Euphemism-The act of substituting a harsh, blunt, or offensive comment for a more politically accepted or positive one. (short=vertically challenged)
25. Fable-A usually short narrative making an edifying or cautionary point and often employing as characters animals that speak and act like humans.

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26. Figurative language-Speech or writing that departs from literal meaning in order to achieve a special effect or meaning. Speech or writing employing figures of speech.
27. Genre-A category of artistic composition, as in music or literature, marked by a distinctive style, form, or content.
28. Gothic novel-A genre of fiction characterized by mystery and supernatural horror, often set in a dark castle or other medieval setting.
29. Hyperbole-A figure of speech in which exaggeration is used for emphasis or comic/dramatic effect.
30. Imagery-The use of vivid or figurative language to represent objects, actions, or ideas.
31. Irony-When one thing should occur, is apparent, or in logical sequence but the opposite actually occurs. Example: A man in the ocean might say, “Water, water everywhere and not a drop to drink.” Dramatic Irony: When the audience or reader knows something characters do not know Verbal Irony: When one thing is said, but something else, usually the opposite, is meant Cosmic Irony: When a higher power toys with human expectations
32. Memoir-An account of the personal experiences of an author.
33. Metaphor-A figure of speech in which a word or phrase that ordinarily designates one thing is used to designate another, thus making an implicit comparison; this comparison does not use like or as.
34. Metonymy-The use of a word or phrase to stand in for something else which it is often associated. ie. Lamb means Jesus
35. Motif-A dominant theme or central idea.
36. Symbolism- Something that represents something else by association, resemblance, or convention, especially a material object used to represent something invisible.
37. Onomatopoeia-The formation or use of words such as buzz or murmur that imitate the sounds associated with the objects or actions they refer to.
38. Paradox- Statement which seems to contradict itself. i.e. His old face was youthful when he heard the news.
39. Parody-A literary or artistic work that imitates the characteristic style of an author or a work for comic effect or ridicule. i.e. SNL or Weird Al Yankovich.
40. Personification-A figure of speech in which inanimate objects or abstractions are endowed with human qualities or are represented as possessing human form.
41. Poetic justice-The rewarding of virtue and the punishment of vice in the resolution of a plot. The character, as they say, gets what he/she deserves.
42. Prose-Ordinary speech or writing without metrical structure, written in paragraph form. Novels and short stories are referred to as prose.
43. Pun-Play on words, when two words have multiple meanings and spellings and are used in a humorous manner.
44. Satire-A literary work in which human vice or folly is attacked through irony, derision, or wit; the goal is to change the behavior/issue. Authors known for satires are Jonathan Swift and George Orwell.
45. Simile-A figure of speech in which two essentially unlike things are compared, often in a phrase introduced by like or as.
46. Tone-Reflects how the author feels about the subject matter or the feeling the author wants to instill in the reader.

Plot Terms:

47. Antagonist-The protagonist’s adversary.
48. Anti-climactic-When the ending of the plot in poetry or prose is unfulfilling or lackluster.
49. Climax-The turning point in the plot or the high point of action.
50. Deus ex machina-Term that refers to a character or force that appears at the end of a story or play to help resolve conflict. Word means “god from a machine.” In ancient Greek drama, gods were lowered onto the stage by a mechanism to extricate characters from a seemingly hopeless situation. The phrase has come to mean any turn of events that solve the characters’ problems through an unexpected and unlikely intervention.
51. Denouement-The final resolution or clarification of a dramatic or narrative plot.

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- 52. Epiphany-Sudden enlightenment or realization, a profound new outlook or understanding about the world usually attained while doing everyday mundane activities.
- 53. Flashback- When a character remembers a past event that is relevant to the current action of the story
- 54. Static character-A literary character whose personality can be defined by one or two traits and does not change over the course of the story. Flat characters are usually minor or insignificant characters.
- 55. Foil-A character that by contrast underscores or enhances the distinctive characteristics of another.
- 56. Foreshadowing- Clues in the text about incidents that will occur later in the plot, foreshadowing creates anticipation in the novel.
- 57. Heroine-A woman noted for courage and daring action or the female protagonist.
- 58. In medias res-A story that begins in the middle of things.
- 59. Narrator-Someone who tells a story. First person: The narrator is a character in the story Third person objective: The narrator does not tell what anyone is thinking; the “fly on a wall” Third person limited: The narrator is able to tell the thoughts of one character Third person omniscient: The narrator is able to tell the thoughts of any character
- 60. Protagonist-The main character in a drama or literary work.
- 61. Rising action-The events of a dramatic or narrative plot preceding the climax.
- 62. Rites of passage-An incident which creates tremendous growth signifying a transition from adolescence to adulthood.
- 63. Dynamic character-A character who is developed over the course of the book, round characters are usually major characters in a novel.
- 64. Resolution-Solution to the conflict in literature.
- 65. Tragedy- A drama or literary work in which the main character is brought to ruin or suffers extreme sorrow, especially as a consequence of a tragic flaw, moral weakness, or inability to cope with unfavorable circumstances.

Question Terms:

- 66. Rhetoric-- the art of effective or persuasive speaking or writing, especially the use of figures of speech and other compositional techniques. language designed to have a persuasive or impressive effect on its audience, but often regarded as lacking in sincerity or meaningful content.
- 67. Analogy-- a comparison between two things, typically on the basis of their structure and for the purpose of explanation or clarification.
- 68. Persuade-- cause (someone) to do something through reasoning or argument.
- 69. Infer-- deduce or conclude (information) from evidence and reasoning rather than from explicit statements.
- 70. Repetition-- the action of repeating something that has already been said or written.
- 71. Explication-- the process of making something clearer. When you carefully explain your performance art piece to your mystified parents, you can describe what you're doing as an **explication**. The noun **explication** is closely related to "explicit," which essentially **means** "crystal clear."
- 72. Exposition-- a comprehensive description and explanation of an idea or theory.
- 73. Juxtaposition-- a **literary** technique in which two or more ideas, places, characters and their actions are placed side by side in a narrative or a poem for the purpose of developing comparisons and contrasts.
- 74. Implied-- suggested but not directly expressed;
- 75. Extended-- made larger; enlarged
- 76. Objective-- (of a person or their judgment) not influenced by personal feelings or opinions in considering and representing facts.
- 77. Subjective-- based on or influenced by personal feelings, tastes, or opinions.
- 78. Reference-- the action of mentioning or alluding to something.
- 79. Assert-- state a fact or belief confidently and forcefully.

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80. Paraphrase-- express the meaning of (the writer or speaker or something written or spoken) using different words, especially to achieve greater clarity.
81. Primarily-- for the most part; mainly.
82. Chiefly-- above all; mainly.
83. Distinguish-- recognize or treat (someone or something) as different.
84. Context-- the circumstances that form the setting for an event, statement, or idea, and in terms of which it can be fully understood and assessed.
85. Parallel-- **literary** device in which parts of the sentence are grammatically the same, or are similar in construction. It can be a word, a phrase, or an entire sentence repeated. King's famous 'I have a dream' repetition makes the speech compelling and rhythmic, as well as memorable.
86. Litotes--ironical understatement in which an affirmative is expressed by the negative of its contrary
87. Hypophora--Hypophora is a figure of speech in which a writer raises a question and then immediately provides an answer to that question. Commonly, a question is asked in the first paragraph and then the paragraph is used to answer the question. It is also known as antipophora or anthypophora.
88. Apostrophe--In literature, apostrophe is a figure of speech sometimes represented by exclamation "O". A writer or a speaker, using an apostrophe, detaches himself from the reality and addresses an imaginary character in his speech.
89. Synecdoche--a figure of speech in which a part is made to represent the whole or vice versa.
90. Zeugma--a figure of speech in which a word applies to two others in different senses (e.g., *John and his license expired last week*) or to two others of which it semantically suits only one (e.g., *with weeping eyes and hearts*).
91. Chiasmus--is the figure of speech in which two or more clauses are related to each other through a reversal of structures in order to make a larger point; that is, the clauses display inverted parallelism.
92. Homily--a religious discourse that is intended primarily for spiritual edification rather than doctrinal instruction; a sermon.
93. Antithesis--the juxtaposition of sharply contrasting ideas in balanced or parallel words, phrases, grammatical structure, or ideas
94. Farce--a comic dramatic work using buffoonery and horseplay and typically including crude characterization and ludicrously improbable situations.
95. Iambic pentameter--refers to a certain kind of line of poetry, and has to do with the number of syllables in the line and the emphasis placed on those syllables.