Important ELA Terms

Mr. Horton-Team 7C
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acronym ~ n ~ (ak-r*uh*-nim)   a word formed from the initial letters or groups of letters of words in a set phrase or series of words. *Initialism i*s often associated with acronyms. *National Basketball Association* (NBA) is an example of an acronym.

alliteration ~ n ~ (ə-lĭt'ə-rā'shən)   the repetition of the same sounds or of the same kinds of sounds at the

beginning of words or in stressed syllables. *Four fat frogs fishing for frightened fish* is an example of alliteration.

antagonist ~ n ~ (an*tag"o*nist)   the principal character in opposition to the protagonist or hero of a narrative or drama.

antonym ~ n ~ (ăn'tə-nĭm')   a word having a meaning opposite to that of another word. *Gigantic* is an antonym of *small*.

autobiography ~ n ~ (ô'tō-bī-ŏg'rə-fē)

a history of a person's life written or told by that person.

biography ~ n ~ (bī-ŏg'rə-fē)   a history of a person's life written or told by another person.

central idea ~ n ~ (sen-truh l ahy-dee-uh)

the dominant impression or the universal, generic truth found in the story. Central idea is also referred to as the main idea or big picture.

characterization ~ n ~ (kar-ik-ter-*uh*-zey-sh*uh)*

the process by which the writer reveals the personality of a character. Characterization is revealed through direct characterization and indirect characterization.

direct characterization ~ n ~ tells the audience what the personality of the character is.

Example: "The patient boy and quiet girl were both well mannered and did not disobey their mother."
Explanation: The author is directly telling the audience the personality of these two children. The   boy is "patient" and the girl is "quiet."

indirect characterization ~ n ~ shows things that reveal the personality of a character.

There are five different methods of indirect characterization.

Speech: What does the character say? How does the character speak?
Thoughts: What is revealed through the character's private thoughts and feelings?

Effect: What is revealed through the character's effect on other people? How do other characters feel or behave in reaction to the character?

Actions: What does the character do? How does the character behave?

Looks: What does the character look like? How does the character dress?

climax ~ n ~ (cli"max)   a decisive moment that is of maximum intensity or is a major turning point in a plot of a narrative or drama.

cliché ~ n ~ (klee-shey)   a trite, stereotyped expression; a sentence or phrase, usually expressing a popular or common thought or idea, that has lost originality, ingenuity, and impact by long overuse. *Live and learn* is an example of a cliché.

compare/contrast ~ v ~ (k*uh* m-**pair**/k*uh* n-**trast**)
to compare and contrast is to identify the similarities and differences of two or more subjects. Compare and contrast is also a pattern of organizing an entire piece of writing.

conflict ~ n ~ (con"flict)   opposition between characters or forces in a narrative or drama, especially opposition that motivates or shapes the action of the plot (man vs. man, man vs. nature, man vs. society, man vs. himself, man vs. supernatural, man vs. machine).

dialogue ~ n ~ (dī′ə-lôg′)   conversation between two or more people.

dynamic character ~ n ~ (dahy-nam-ik kar-ik-ter)
a literary or dramatic character who undergoes an important inner change, as a change in personality or attitude. Ebenezer Scrooge is a dynamic character.

ellipsis ~ n ~ (ĭ-lĭp′sĭs)   a mark or series of marks (---, ... or …., for example) used in writing or printing to indicate an omission, especially of letters or words.

exposition ~ n ~ (ek-sp*uh*-zish-*uh* n)
dialogue, description, etc., that gives the audience or reader the background of the character(s) and the present situation.

falling action ~ n ~ (fô′lĭng ăk′shən)
the events of a dramatic or narrative plot following the climax.

fiction ~ n ~ (fic"tion)   a literary work whose content is produced by the imagination and is not necessarily based on fact. Not real.

figurative language ~ n ~ (fĭg′yər-ə-tĭv-lăng′gwĭj)
speech or writing that departs from literal meaning in order to achieve a special effect or meaning. Speech or writing employing figures of speech.

flashback ~ n ~ (flăsh'băk')   a device in the narrative of a motion picture, novel, etc., by which an event or scene taking place before the present time in the narrative is inserted into the chronological structure of the work.

footnote ~ n ~ (fo͞ot'no̅t')   an explanatory or documenting note or comment at the bottom of a page, referring to a specific part of the text on the page.

foreshadow ~ v ~ (fôr-shad-ow)   to present an indication or a suggestion of beforehand. A hint of events to come.

genre ~ n ~ (zhän'rə)   a type or class. A category of artistic composition, as in music or literature, marked by a distinctive style, form, or content.

homograph ~ n ~ (hom-*uh*-graf)   words that are spelled the same, but have different meanings and may have different pronunciations. *Wind* (breeze) and *wind* (clock) are examples of homographs.

homonym ~ n ~ (hom"o*nym)   one of two or more words that have the same sound and the same spelling but differ in meaning. *Bat* (baseball) and *bat* (mammal) are examples of homonyms.

homophone ~ n ~ (hom"o*phone)   one of two or more words that are pronounced the same but differ in meaning, origin, and spelling. *Night* (time of day) and *knight* (soldier) are examples of homophones.

hyperbole ~ n ~ (hī-pûr'bə-lē)   a figure of speech in which exaggeration is used for emphasis or effect.

I could sleep for a year is an example of hyperbole.

idiom ~ n ~ (id-ee-uh m)   an expression whose meaning is not predictable from the usual meanings of its constituent elements. *Pull the wool over someone's eyes* is an example of an idiom.

imagery ~ n ~ (ĭm'ĭj-rē)   a set of mental pictures or images. The use of vivid or figurative language to represent objects, actions, or ideas.

infer ~ v ~ (ĭn-fûr')   to conclude from evidence or premises. *The detectives' inferences will help them solve the crime.*

irony ~ n ~ (ī'rə-nē)   incongruity between what might be expected and what actually occurs. A form of speech in which the real meaning is concealed or contradicted by the words used. Irony involves the perception that things are not what they are said to be or what they seem. *It is ironic that the CEO of Nike*

doesn't have a pair of sneakers with him on the day his friends ask him to play basketball.

literal ~ adj. ~ (l"er*al)   in accordance with, involving, or being the primary or strict meaning of the word or words; not figurative or metaphorical; really; actually.

metaphor ~ n ~ (mĕt′ə-fôr′)   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 without using like or as. *Life is a rollercoaster* is an example of a metaphor.

mood ~ n ~ (mood)   the feeling or atmosphere that a write creates for the reader. Descriptive words, imagery, and figurative language all influence the mood of a work.

non-fiction ~ n ~ (non-fic"tion)   fact; real. *Michael Jordan's Life* is an example of a non-fiction book.

onomatopoeia ~ n ~ (ŏn′ə-măt′ə-pē′ə)

        the formation or use of words such as *splash* or *boom* that imitate the sounds associated with the objects or actions they refer to.

oxymoron ~ n ~ (ox`y*mo"ron)   incongruous (discrepant) terms are combined, as in *clean dirt*, *jumbo shrimp,* or *plastic glasses* to form a seemingly self-contradictory effect.

palindrome ~ n ~ (păl′ĭn-drōm′)   a word, phrase, verse, or sentence that reads the same backward or forward. *Racecar, Hannah,* and *Stanley Yelnats* are examples of palindromes.

personification ~ n ~ (per*son`i*fi*ca"tion)

        a figure of speech in which inanimate objects or abstractions are endowed with human qualities or are represented as possessing human form. *The pen danced across the paper* is an example of personification.

plagiarism ~ n ~ (plā′jə-rĭz′əm)

        the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work.

plot ~ n ~ (plot)   the plan, scheme, or main story of a literary or dramatic work, as a play, novel, or short story.

point of view ~ n ~ (point uhv vyoo)

        the position of the narrator in relation to the story, as indicated by the narrator's outlook from which the events are depicted and by the attitude toward the characters.

First-Person Point of View
    The "first person" or "personal" point of view relates events as they are perceived by a single

character. The main character "tells" the story and may offer opinions about the action and characters which differ from those of the author.

Singular Pronouns: *I, me, myself, mine, my*. **Plural Pronouns**: *we, us, ourselves, ours, our*.

Second-Person
Much less common than omniscient, third person, and first person is the "second person" point of view, wherein the author tells the story as if it is happening to the reader.

Singular Pronouns: *you, yourself, yours, your*. **Plural Pronouns**: *you, yourselves, yours, your*.

Third-Person
The "third person" point of view presents the events of the story from outside of any single character's perception, much like the omniscient point of view, but the reader must understand the action as it takes place and without any special insight into characters' minds or motivations.

Singular Pronouns: *she, her, herself, hers, her, he, him, himself, his, it, itself, its*.
Plural Pronouns: *they, themselves, them, those*.

Third-Person Omniscient
The "third person omniscient" gives the reader an "all knowing" perspective, unrestricted by time or place, from which to see actions and look into the minds of characters. This allows the author to comment openly on characters and events in the work.

Singular Pronouns: *she, her, herself, hers, her, he, him, himself, his, it, itself, its*.
Plural Pronouns: th*ey, themselves, them, those*.

protagonist ~ n ~ (pro-tag-o-nist)

the leading character, hero (male), or heroine (female) of a drama or other literary work.

resolution ~ n ~ (rez-*uh*-loo-sh*uh* n) a solution, accommodation, or settling of a problem, controversy, etc.

rising action ~ n ~ (r ī zing ă k ʹ sh ə n)

the events of a dramatic or narrative plot preceding (occur before) the climax.

setting ~ n ~ (set"ting)

the time, place, and circumstances in which a narrative or drama takes place.

simile ~ n ~ (simi"*le)

a figure of speech in which two essentially unlike things are compared, often in a phrase introduced by *like* or *as*. *The walls were painted blue like the sky* is an example of a simile.

stanza ~ n ~ (st ă n ʹ z ə)

one of the divisions of a poem, composed of two or more lines usually characterized by a common pattern of meter, rhyme, and number of lines.

static character ~ n ~ (stat-ik kar-ik-ter)

a literary or dramatic character who undergoes little or no inner change;

a character who does not grow or develop.

suspense ~ n ~ [suh-spens]   a feeling of growing tension and excitement experienced by a reader. Suspense makes a reader curious about the outcome of a story or an event within a story. A writer creates suspense by raising questions in the reader's mind. The use of foreshadowing is one way that writers create suspense.

symbolism ~ n ~ (sĭm'bə-lĭz'əm)

the practice of representing things by means of symbols or of attributing symbolic meanings or significance to objects, events, or relationships.

synonym ~ n ~ (sĭn'ə-nĭm')   a word having the same or nearly the same meaning as another word or other words in a language. *Cool* is a synonym for *cold.*

theme ~ n ~ (theme)   an ingredient of a literary work which gives the work unity. The theme provides an answer to the question *What is the work about?* Unlike plot, which deals with the action of a work, theme concerns itself with a work's message or contains the general idea of a work.

tone ~ n ~ (tone)   the writer's attitude toward his or her subject. Words such as angry, sad, and humorous can be used to describe different tones.

voice ~ n ~ [vois]   the writer's unique use of language that allows a reader to "hear" a human personality in the writer's work. Elements of style that contribute to a writer's voice can reveal much about the author's personality, beliefs, and attitudes.

word choice ~ n ~   The success of any writing depends on the writer's choice of words. Words not only communicate ideas but also help describe events, characters, setting and so on. Word choice can make a writer's work sound formal or informal, serious or humorous. A writer must choose words carefully depending on the goal of the piece of writing. For example, a writer working on a science article would probably use technical, formal words; a writer trying to establish the setting in a short story would probably use more descriptive words.

Parts of Speech:

adjective ~ n ~ (ăj'ĭk-tĭv)   a word that modifies a noun or pronoun by describing, refining, or qualifying it. Adjectives answer the questions:
Which one? How many? What kind?

adverb ~ n ~ (ăd'vûrb)   any word(s) that modify a verb, adjective, or other adverbs.

article ~ n ~ (är'tĭ-kəl)   the part of speech used to indicate nouns and to specify their application, such as *a, an, the.*

conjunction ~ n ~ (kən-jŭngk'shən)

the part of speech that serves to connect words, phrases, clauses, or sentences such as *and, but, or, as, because* etc.

interjection ~ n ~ (ĭn'tər-jĕk'shən)

words used to express strong feeling or sudden emotion. They are included in a sentence usually at the start to express a sentiment such as surprise, disgust, joy, excitement, or enthusiasm such as *Wow! Yes! No!*

noun ~ n ~ (noun)

the part of speech that names a person, place, thing, or idea.

common noun: word(s) that do not specify a specific person, place or thing and are not capitalized (*boy, river, ship, happiness*).

proper noun: word(s) that specify a specific person, place, or thing that has a name and is capitalized (*Vic, New York,* or *Knicks*).

preposition ~ n ~ (prĕp'ə-zĭsh'ən)

the part of speech that indicates the relationship, often spatial, of one word to another. She paused <u>at</u> the gate. This tomato is ripe <u>for</u> picking. They talked the matter over head <u>to</u> head. Some common prepositions are *at, by, for, from, in, into, on, to, and with.*

pronoun ~ n ~ (prō'noun')

word that replaces a noun in a sentence, such as *he, she, it, we, us, they* etc.

verb ~ n ~ (vûrb)

part of speech that expresses action, existence, or occurrence.