Literary Vocabulary

Elements and Techniques

**Allegory:** is the representation of ideas or moral principles by means of symbolic characters, events or objects. Example Aesop’s fables uses allegory to teach lessons.

**Alliteration:** the repetition of the initial sound (seven silly sisters sat)

**Allusion:** a reference to something that the author expects the reader to know.

**Characterization:** the method that writers use to communicate information about characters to the reader.

**Climax:** the moment when the action comes to the highest point of dramatic conflict.

**External Conflict:**

**Man vs. Society-** source of conflict is social tradition of concepts.

**Man vs. Man**- hero conflict with a villain.

**Internal Conflict:**

**Man vs. Self-** character against his or her own will, confusion or fear.

**Description:** verbal representation of characters scene, or action, used to make the story more vivid for the reader.

**Dialogue:** the actual word that a character speaks.

**Diction:** the author’s choice of words.

**Dramatic irony:** A technique that increases suspense by letting the reader know more about the dramatic situation than the characters know.

**\*Figurative Language – Figures of Speech:** The use of words in an imaginative, non-literal sense.

**Foreshadowing:** a writing technique that gives readers clues about the events that will happen later in the story.

**Flashback:** inserting a scene showing an earlier event.

**\*Hyperbole:** an exaggerated statement to make a strong effect.

**\*Imagery:** the use of details to describe one thing in terms of another to make vivid images of work pictures.

**Irony:** a situation or event that is the opposite of what is expected; a tone created when the speaker intends a meaning that is opposite to the words that are said.

**\*Metaphor:** a comparison between two objects that does not use like or as.

**Mood:** the overall feeling (light, happy, dark, or brooding) created by the author through the author’s choice of words.

**\*Onomatopoeia:** the use of words that sound like the things that they name.

**\*Oxymoron:** a combination of two contradictory words (jumbo shrimp)

**\*Personification:** a figure of speech that applies human qualities to objects, ideas, or animals.

**Plot:** the events that take place in the story.

**Point of view:** the perspective from which the story is told. First person, self, Third person, uses pronouns such as he, she, they, Omniscient, knows all, or limited.

**Protagonist:** the central character.

**\*Simile:** a comparison using like or as.

**Style:** the ways that an author uses language.

**Symbol:** an image, object, character of action that stand for an idea beyond the literal meaning.

**Theme:** the stories main idea (the message, what the story is about)

**\*Understatement:** a figure of speech in which the speaker says less than what he or she actually feels.