Literary Terms:

1. Abstract language- language that conveys ideas that are not concrete

2. Ad-hominid- “argument against the man [or person]”; a fallacy that involves replying to an argument or assertion by attempting to discredit the person offering the argument or assertion

3. Allegory- a narrative technique in which characters representing things or abstract ideas is used to convey a message or teach a lesson.

4. Allusion- A reference to a familiar literary or historical person or event, used to make an idea more easily understood.

5. Ambiguity- an expression whose meaning cannot be determined from its context; unclearness by virtue of having more than one meaning

6. Anachronism- something located at a time when it could not have existed or occurred

7. Analogy- Similarity in some respects between things that are otherwise dissimilar

8. Anaphora- The deliberate repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of several successive verses, clauses, or paragraphs

9. Anecdote- a short account of an interesting or humorous incident.

10. Annotation- A critical or explanatory note; a commentary.

11. Antithesis- the juxtaposition of contrasting words or ideas to give a feeling of balance; direct contrast; opposition.

12. Aphorism- A tersely phrased statement of a truth or opinion; an adage

13. Apostrophe- The direct address of an absent or imaginary person

14. Aside- A piece of dialogue intended for the audience and supposedly not heard by the other actors on stage.

15. Asyndeton- The omission of conjunctions from constructions in which they would normally be used

16. Atmosphere- The dominant tone or mood

17. Attitude- author’s opinion or position reflected in the work

18. Authority- Justification; grounds; an accepted source of expert information

19. Backing- The part of a book where the pages are stitched or glued together into the binding.

20. Balance- A stable mental or psychological state; A state of equilibrium
21. Begging the question- circular reasoning in which one assumes to be true what one is supposed to be proving

22. Black humor- grotesque or morbid humor used to express the absurdity, insensitivity, paradox, and cruelty of the modern world

23. Of, involving, or constituting a cause in a relationship; cause and effect relationships

24. The use of harsh or discordant sounds in literary composition, as for poetic effect.

25. Balanced, rhythmic flow, as of poetry or oratory

26. One of the principal divisions of a long poem

27. An inversion of the order of words or phrases, when repeated or subsequently referred to in a sentence; thus,

28. A fanciful poetic image, especially an elaborate or exaggerated comparison.

29. Characteristic of or appropriate to the spoken language or to writing that seeks the effect of speech; informal.

30. Something that is widely known; mutual understandings

31. Precise words to convey an idea antonym: abstract language

32. An idea or meaning suggested by or associated with a word or thing

33. The repetition of consonants or of a consonant pattern, especially at the ends of words, as in blank and think or strong and string.

34. A widely used and accepted device or technique, as in drama, literature, or painting: the theatrical convention of the aside

35. Increasing or enlarging by successive addition

36. A philosophical movement and theory of literary criticism that questions traditional assumptions about certainty, identity, and truth

37. Something signified or referred to; a particular meaning of a symbol. The most specific or direct meaning of a word

38. A minor or an inconsequential item or aspect

39. Examples: alliteration (ex bald, black); assonance (sleek, neat); onomatopoeia; rhyme

40. Choice and use of words in speech or writing.

41. Inclined to teach or moralize excessively.

42. To stray away from the topic or main subject

43. A harsh, disagreeable combination of sounds; discord
44. Irony that occurs when the meaning of the situation is understood by the audience but not by the characters in the play

44. Dramatic irony- when the reader is aware of an inconsistency between a fictional or non-fictional character’s perception of a situation and the truth of the situation

45. Either/ or reasoning- when the writer reduces an argument or issue to two polar opposites and ignores any alternatives

46. Elliptical- sentence structure, which leaves out something in the second structure i.e. - usually sub/verb in first sentence... second sentence drops the verb

47. Emotional appeal- when the writer appeals readers or emotions to excite and involve them

48. Epigram- a concise poem dealing pointedly and often satirically with a single thought or event and often ending with an ingenious turn of thought

49. Epigraph- a quotation or aphorism at the beginning of literature works to suggest a theme

50. Equivocation- when the writer uses two different senses in an argument

51. Ethical appeal- when the writer tries to persuade the reader to respect him/her bases on presentations of image of self through text

52. Euphemism- the substitution of an agreeable or inoffensive expression for one that may offend or suggest something unpleasant

53. Euphony- pleasing or sweet sound; produced by words so formed or combined as to please the ear

54. Explication- the act of interrupting or discovering the meaning of a text- involves close reading and special attention to figurative speech

55. Exposition- background info provided by the writer to enhance the readers understanding of the context

56. False analogy- when two cases are no sufficiently parallel to lead readers to accept a claim of connection for the two

58. Fiction- a product of a writers imagination: characters, plot, setting, etc.; described as lies told with the readers consent

59. Figurative language- a word or words used that are inaccurate literally, but describe by calling to mind sensations or responses that are evoked... shown by metaphors and similes

60. Foil- opposite characters paired together
62. Freight train- sentence consisting of three or more very short independent clauses joined by conjunctions

63. Generalization- when a writer basis a claim on an isolated example or asserts a claim as certain rather than probable

64. Genre- a category characterized by style, form, or content

65. Grotesque- a style of decorative art (fancy) that when compared to the natural turns the natural into absurdities or ugliness

66. Hubris- Excessive pride or self-confidence that leads a protagonist to disregard a divine warning or to violate an important moral law. In tragedies, hubris is a very common form of hamartia

67. Hyperbole- conscious exaggeration used to heighten effect. Not intended literally, hyperbole is often humorous

68. Imagery- the use of images, especially in a pattern of related images, often figurate, to create a strong, unified sensory impression

69. Inference/infer-ideas or facts that are implied or suggested rather than stated outright; evidence is usually

70. In medias res-latin for “in the middle of things” when literature starts in the middle of action, having to know what happened beforehand

71. Invective-Speech or writing that abuses, denounces, or attacks. It can be directed against a person, cause, idea, or system. It employs a heavy use of negative emotive language

72. Inversion-variation of the normal word order (subject 1st, then verb, then complement), which puts a modifier or verb as first in the sentence. The element that appears first is emphasized more than subject

73. Irony- when a reader is aware of a reality that differs from a character’s perception of reality (dramatic irony). The literal meaning of a writer’s words may be verbal

74. Jargon-Language that is used or understood only by a select group of people/example: particular trade or profession OR language that is dull and confusing, consisting mainly of unnecessary words, debased dialect or technical terms

75. Limited omniscient point of view- third person narrator who gives the reader access to the thoughts and feelings of one character, usually the protagonist.

76. Literal- language without exaggerating or embellishing the subject matter and without any tools of figurative language—straightforward/word for word meaning

77. Lyrical- poem expressing the subjective feelings and personal emotions of the poet. Such poetry is melodic, since it was originally accompanied by a lyre in recitals
78. Metaphor- a comparison of 2 things, often unrelated. A figurative verbal equation results where both "parts" illuminate each other

79. Mood- an atmosphere created by a writer’s word choice and the details selected

80. Moral- the lesson drawn from a fictional or non-fictional story. A heavily didactic story

81. Narrative techniques- refers to the way the author structures and presents his or her story.

82. Negative- positive sentence that begins by stating what is not true, and then ending by stating what is true

83. Non sequitur- Latin for “it does not follow” when one statement isn’t logically connected to another

84. Objectivity- a writer’s attempt to remove him/herself from any subjective, personal involvement in a story.

85. Objective camera eye narrator- third person narrator who only reports on what would be visible to a camera and cannot enter any consciousness or relay anything that couldn’t be physically witnessed. Only physical description is allowed.

86. Omniscient point of view- a type of third-person point of view with all-knowing narrators that describe not only the action and dialogue, but also what the characters think.

87. Oversimplification- when a writer obscures or denies the complexity of the issues in an argument

88. Oxymoron- a rhetorical antithesis. Juxtaposing two contradictory terms, like "wise fool.

89. Parable- A simple story illustrating a moral or religious lesson.

90. Paradox- A seemingly contradictory statement that may nonetheless be true

91. Parallelism- Likeness, correspondence, or similarity in aspect, course, or tendency.

92. Parody- a literary or artistic work that imitates the characteristic style of an author or a work for comic effect or ridicule.

93. Pastoral- Of, relating to, or being a literary or other artistic work that portrays or evokes rural life, usually in an idealized way.

94. a. Pathos- A quality, as of an experience or a work of art, that arouses feelings of pity, sympathy, tenderness, or sorrow.

b. Bathos- An abrupt, unintended transition in style from the exalted to the commonplace, producing a ludicrous effect.
95. Pedantic- Characterized by a narrow, often ostentatious concern for book learning and formal rules

96. Periodic sentence- a sentence in which the main clause or its predicate is withheld until the end

97. Persona- A voice or character representing the speaker in a literary work.

98. Personification- A figure of speech in which inanimate objects or abstractions are endowed with human qualities

99. Plaint- An utterance of grief or sorrow; a lamentation.

100. Point of view- the attitude or outlook of a narrator or character in a piece of literature, a movie, or another art form.

101. Polysyndeton- The repetition of conjunctions in close succession for rhetorical effect

102. a. Post hoc- in or of the form of an argument in which one event is asserted to be the cause of a later event simply by virtue of having happened earlier
   b. Ergo propter hoc- "After this, therefore because of this."
   Thus, mistaken reliance upon temporal succession alone as enough to establish the presence of a causal relationship between two events.

103. Predicate noun- a predicate noun is a noun (or noun phrase) that is used to predicate a description or identification of the subject.
   · He is a good man.
   · He became a mathematician.

104. Predicate adjective- a predicate adjective is an adjective that is used to predicate an attribute of the subject.
   · Roses are red. Noses often become red.
   · Noses often become red.

105. Prose- Ordinary speech or writing.

106. Red herring- something that draws attention away from the central issue.

107. Refutation- the overthrowing of an argument, opinion, testimony, doctrine, or theory, by argument or countervailing proof.

108. Repetition- A recitation or recital, especially of prepared or memorized material.

109. Rhetoric- The art or study of using language effectively and persuasively.

110. Rhetorical modes- although "rhetoric" originally referred to the art of public speaking, it has come to mean the practical effectiveness of verbal structures like speeches, essays, and stories. It most often refers to prose rather than poetry, poetics being its own separate branch of writing. Modes are definable kinds of writing within
composition and include, among others, description, narration, illustration, comparison, contrast, persuasion, cause and effect.

111. Rhetorical question- A question to which no answer is expected, or a statement that is formulated as a question but that is not supposed to be answered.

112. Rhetorical strategy- effective thinking, writing, and speaking strategies; rhetoricians analyze and evaluate what works and what does not work in a specific context.

113. Rhetorical techniques- the devices used in effective or persuasive language. The number of rhetorical techniques, like that of the resources of language, is long and runs from apostrophe to zeugma. The more common examples include devices like contrast, repetitions, paradox, understatement, sarcasm, and rhetorical question.

114. Sarcasms- a form of sneering criticism in which disapproval is often expressed as ironic praise.

115. Satire- a literary mode based on criticism of people and society through ridicule. The satirist aims to reduce the practices attacked by laughing scornfully at them and being witty enough to allow the reader to laugh, also.

116. Semantics- The meaning or the interpretation of a word, sentence, or other language form: We're basically agreed; let's not quibble over semantics. The study of relationships between signs and symbols and what they represent, or the study of meaning in language.

117. Setting- The background to a story; the physical location of a play, story, or novel. The setting of a narrative will normally involve both time and place.

118. Simile- A figure of speech in which two essentially unlike things are compared, often in a phrase introduced by like or as.

119. 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.

120. Stereotype- A conventional, formulaic, and oversimplified conception, opinion, or image.

121. Straw man- a person who is set up as cover or a front for a questionable enterprise. A weak argument set up to be easily refuted.

122. Stream of consciousness- A literary genre that reveals a character's thoughts and feelings by means of a long soliloquy. The continuous flow of ideas and feelings that constitute an individual's conscious experience.

123. Style- The combination of distinctive features of literary or artistic expression, execution, or performance characterizing a particular person, group, school, or era. The mode of expression in language; the characteristic manner of expression of an author.
124. Syllogism - A form of deductive reasoning consisting of a major premise, a minor premise, and a conclusion. Reasoning from the general to the specific; deduction.

125. Symbol/symbolism - something that represents something else by association, resemblance, or convention, especially a material object used to represent something invisible. The practice of representing things by means of symbols or of attributing symbolic meanings or significance to objects, events, or relationships.

126. Theme - An implicit or recurrent idea. The subject of a speech, essay, thesis, or discourse.


128. Tone - Accent or inflection expressive of a mood or emotion. The manner in which an author expresses his or her attitude; the intonation of the voice that expresses meaning.

129. Transition - Passage from one state, stage, subject, or place to another change. A movement, development, or evolution from one form, stage, or style to another.

130. Tri-colon - three parallel elements of the same length occurring together in a series.

131. Travesty - An exaggerated or grotesque imitation, such as a parody of a literary work. A comedy characterized by broad satire and improbable situations. A composition that imitates somebody's style in a humorous way.

132. Understatement - A disclosure or statement that is less than complete. Restraint or lack of emphasis in expression, as for rhetorical effect.

133. Unity - Such a combination of parts as to constitute a whole, or a kind of symmetry of style and character. Any of three principles of dramatic structure derived by French classicists from Aristotle's Poetics and requiring a play to have a single action represented as occurring in one place and within one day.