

<u>Y10: Glossary of Literary Terms for English</u>		
Term	Definition	Translation
Adjective	A word that describes a noun.	
Adverb	A word that describes a verb, or how a verb is carried out e.g. she walked <u>quickly</u> .	
Alliteration	The same letter (or sound) at the beginning of two or more words that are next to each other or close together. Usually used to stress something.	
Allusion	Reference to a person, place, event or literary work that the writer assumes the reader will recognise.	
Anaphora	The repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of successive clauses / lines / sentences.	
Antagonist	The counterpart to the main character (protagonist) in a work of fiction.	
Assonance	The repetition of two or more vowel sounds, or of two or more consonant sounds, close together. Usually in a poem.	
Asyndeton	The omission or absence of a conjunction between parts of a sentence, as in: I came, I saw, I conquered.	
Cacophony	A harsh discordant mixture of sounds e.g <i>The pots and pans clanged and clamored on the ground.</i>	
Caesura	A pause that breaks the rhythm or pace in a line of poetry through use of punctuation (e.g. with a comma, colon, semi-colon, dash etc.).	
Connotation	Associations or ideas attached to words i.e. 'the word home connotes warmth, safety, family, a sense of belonging...'	

Dialogue	Words spoken by characters in a text.	
Dramatic Irony	When the audience or reader knows something the characters in the text do not.	
Ellipsis	Deliberate omission of a word, or words, using ellipsis points (...)	
Emotive Language	Words that have strong emotional intensity and create specific emotion(s).	
End-stopped Line	A line of poetry that ends with punctuation a full stop or has a natural pause.	
Enjambment	When the sentences within a poem run over the line breaks.	
Euphony	The quality of being pleasing to the ear: mists, mellow, close, sun, bless, vines and eves.	
Figurative Language	Writing, or dialogue that makes the writer's ideas more meaningful, descriptive or memorable. Includes metaphors, similes, hyperbole and personification. (Also known as non-literal language)	
Foregrounding	When a text begins with a word or phrase which creates a particular mood within the chapter / text. le "By foregrounding a description of sunlight, the writer creates a happy and positive tone"	
Foreshadowing	Clues suggesting the outcome of a story (but not when the outcome is deliberately revealed through the use of a narrator or flashback)	
Homophones	Words that sound the same but have different meanings e.g. made/maid, there/their/they're, two/too/to	

Hyperbole	Extreme exaggeration for effect	
Imagery	When words are used to paint a picture in the reader's mind	
Imperative	The form of a verb that gives an order or command	
Metaphor	Comparison of two things where one thing is said to be another. Powerful imagery tool, to make you imagine something	
Noun	A person, place or thing – they can be concrete / common nouns, proper nouns or abstract nouns.	
Onomatopoeia	Words which sound like the word they are describing e.g. buzz, crack.	
Oxymoron	A phrase in which the words contradict each other, usually for effect. e.g. "cold fire" or "sick health"	
Personification	Using a metaphor to make something seem human or giving human qualities to something that isn't human.	
Pronoun	A word that stands in place of a noun e.g. he, she, they, both	
Possessive Pronouns	Mine / my etc – these can convey a sense of ownership	
Collective Pronouns	We / Us / Our – creates a sense of community or shared experience	
Pathetic fallacy	The use of the weather, or the environment, to reflect human emotions or events	
Polysyndeton	Repetition of conjunctions in close succession (i.e. "we have ships and men and money and power")	

Repetition	A word said more than once. Usually used to stress it.	
Rhetorical Question	A question that does not require an answer, designed to make people think. Example: "Do we want to pay more taxes?"	
Sibilance	Alliteration specifically with the letter S – it can create a harsh hissing ‘s’ or a softer ‘sh’ sound.	
Simile	Comparing two things, but saying one is ‘like’ or ‘as’ another.	
Stanza	A group of lines in a poem organised into a group (i.e. a verse).	
Symbolism	The use of specific objects or images to represent abstract ideas.	
Theme	The central idea of the poem; what it is about. The main idea or message conveyed by / explored in the writing e.g. love, loyalty, power.	
Tone	The way the writer creates a mood or atmosphere in their writing. It reflects the writer’s attitude or feelings.	
Tricolon	Tricolon is a term for a series of three parallel words, phrases, or clauses.	

Terms Usually Specific to Poetry

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Terms Usually Specific to Drama

Audience	The people that are watching the play	
Dialogue	Words spoken by characters in a text.	
Dramatic Irony	When the audience knows something the characters in the play do not.	
Monologue	a long speech in a play; it is spoken by one person	
Soliloquy	A speech in a play in which an actor is talking to himself or herself, or to the audience; they are not talking to another actor.	
Stage Directions	Extra information written by the playwright about where actors should stand / how they should speak etc. They are in brackets and/or italics.	