

List of Literary Techniques

Technique	Description
Allusion	A reference to a recognized literary work, person, historic event, artistic achievement, etc. that enhances the meaning of a detail in a literary work.
Climax	The crisis or high point of tension that becomes the story's turning point—the point at which the outcome of the conflict is determined.
Conflict	The struggle that shapes the plot in a story.
Dramatic irony	When the reader or audience knows more about the action than the character involved.
Epiphany	A profound and sudden personal discovery.
Exposition	Setting and essential background information presented at the beginning of a story or play.
Falling action	A reduction in intensity following the climax in a story or play, allowing the various complications to be worked out.
Fate	An outside source that determines human events.
Figurative language	Language used in a non-literal way to convey images and ideas.
Figures of speech	The main tools of figurative language; include similes and metaphors..
First-person point of view	Occurs when the narrator is a character in the story and tells the story from his or her perspective.
Flashback	The description of an event that occurred prior to the action in the story.
Foreshadowing	A technique a writer uses to hint or suggest what the outcome of an important conflict or situation in a narrative

	will be.
Imagery	A distinct representation of something that can be experienced and understood through the senses (sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste), or the representation of an idea.
Irony	A contradiction in words or actions. There are three types of irony: verbal, situational, and dramatic.
Limited omniscient point of view	Occurs when a narrator has access to the thoughts and feelings of only one character in a story.
Metaphor	A figure of speech in which an implied comparison is made between one object and another that is different from it.
Objective point of view	A detached point of view, evident when an external narrator does not enter into the mind of any character in a story but takes an objective stance, often to create a dramatic effect.
Omniscient point of view	An all-knowing point of view, evident when an external narrator has access to the thoughts and feelings of all the characters in a story.
Persona	Literally, in Latin, “a mask.”
Plot	A connecting element in fiction; a sequence of interrelated, conflicting actions and events that typically build to a climax and bring about a resolution
Point of view	The perspective of the narrator who will present the action to the reader.
Resolution	The outcome of the action in a story or play.
Rising action	Conflicts and circumstances that build to a high point of tension in a story or play.

Situational irony	When the outcome in a situation is the opposite of what is expected.
Simile	A figure of speech that compares two objects or ideas that are not ordinarily considered to be similar, linked by using <i>like</i> or <i>as</i> .
Song	A lyrical musical expression, a source of emotional outlet common in ancient communities and still influential in contemporary culture.
Symbol	An object, person, or action that conveys two meanings: its literal meaning and something it stands for.
Third-person point of view	Occurs when the narrator tells the story using third-person pronouns (he, she, they) to refer to the characters.
Tone	In a literary work, the speaker's attitude toward the reader or the subject.
Verbal irony	When words are used to convey a meaning that is opposite of their literal meaning.