

## Rhetorical Terms to Know and Use

Establish **literal meaning** using the basic interrogative pronouns: who, what, when & where; apply how and why questions to determine **rhetorical** (figurative/stylistic) & **thematic impact**.

<b>WHO</b>	+ <b>WHAT</b>	+ <b>WHEN/WHERE</b>	+ <b>HOW</b>	= <b>WHY</b>
*Who is the piece about? *To whom might the characters have referred at the time of publication? *To whom might they apply now?	*What is the piece about? *To what historic events might this plot have referred at the time of publication? *To what events might it apply now?	*When and where is the piece set? * To what historic time and place might this setting have referred at the time of publication? *To what setting might it apply now?	*How do point of view & tone impact meaning? *How does the author's use of stylistic devices & strategies impact meaning?	*Why might the piece's thematic meaning resonate with audiences at the time of publication? Why might it resonate with audiences now?
<b>Characterization</b>	<b>Plot</b>	<b>Setting</b>	<b>Style</b>	<b>Theme</b>
<b>Agent</b>	<b>Act</b>	<b>Scene</b>	<b>Agency</b>	<b>Purpose</b>

### CHARACTERIZATION:

- Round/ flat, dynamic/static, stock, stereotype, foil, caricature
- Protagonist, antagonist, tragic hero, antihero, noble savage
- Motivation, development
- Sobriquet, allusion, tragic flaw (*hubris*), tragic error (*hamartia*), recognition (*anagnorisis*)

### SETTING:

- Historical, seasonal, temporal, geographical, regional, & cultural time & place
- Allusion, microcosm

### PLOT:

- Exposition, conflict/complication, rising action, climax, anticlimax, denouement, falling action, resolution, narrative
- Foreshadowing, suspense, epiphany, catastrophe, flashback, twist of fate, reversal (*peripeteia*), *deus ex machina*, melodrama, montage

### POINT OF VIEW:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Person/participant narration: interior monologue, dramatic monologue, letter narration, diary narration, subjective narration (naïve or unreliable narrator), detached autobiography, memoir
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Person/observer narration: anonymous narration: limited/selective omniscient (single, dual, or multiple character POV), omniscient

- Voice, persona, stream of consciousness

### **STYLE/VOICE:**

- **Tone:** implicit & explicit, didactic, mood, wit, pedantic
- **Diction:** denotation, connotation, euphemism, pejorative, semantics, colloquial, dialect, jargon, concrete, abstract, slang, cliché, invective
- **Syntax:** simple, compound, complex, complex-compound, declarative, imperative, interrogative, exclamatory, telegraphic, medium, long and involved, loose, periodic, balanced, natural order, inverse order, split order, juxtaposition, parallel, rhetorical
- **Figures of Speech:** metaphor, simile, apostrophe, personification, synecdoche, metonymy, hyperbole, understatement (litotes/meiosis), antithesis/chiasmus, paradox, oxymoron, pun, irony (situational, verbal, & dramatic), sarcasm, allusion, analogy, aphorism
- **Imagery:** tactile, auditory, visual, olfactory, taste
- **Sound devices:** alliteration, assonance, consonance, onomatopoeia, repetition, anaphora, refrain, rhyme (perfect/exact, slant/approximate/eye, internal, masculine, feminine), rhythm, meter, enjambment, euphony, cacophony
- **Symbolism:** concrete, abstract, natural, public/conventional, contextual, motif, archetype, allegory

### **THEME:**

- Literary and philosophical movements often contribute to theme: asceticism, determinism, dramatism, dualism/pluralism, existentialism, fatalism, hedonism, idealism, monotheism/polytheism, naturalism, nihilism, predestination, realism, romanticism, secular humanism, solipsism
- Destiny, free will, catharsis, ambiguity

\*\*\*\*\*If any of these terms is unfamiliar, please look it up in Barnet & Cain's *Short Guide to Writing about Literature*. There is a class set in the classroom bookcase. Please look up literary and philosophical movement terms online or in a reference dictionary.