

Vocabulary

Study the vocabulary words and definitions below as a reference for this unit.

- adjective**a word that tells something about a noun or pronoun
- adverb**a word that tells something about a verb, adjective, or another adverb
- anecdote**a very brief account of a true event that is meant to entertain or inform
- antagonist**a character in conflict with the protagonist or main character
- audience**the readers to whom a piece of writing is directed or the listeners to whom a talk is directed
- autobiography**a work of nonfiction in which the author tells his or her own life story
- biographical sketch**a short work that allows the writer to capture the basic quality of the person's life in a few episodes or a single important event
- biography**a work of nonfiction in which the author tells the life story of another person
- character**a person or creature in a literary work

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climaxthe most suspenseful point in a (literary) work; the point at which one of the two opposing forces must give way to the other

comedya type of drama or literary work which has a happy ending and often points out human weaknesses and flaws in a humorous way

conflicta struggle between opposing forces (often characters); can be internal or external

connotationmeaning that comes from the emotions or ideas readers associate with particular words
Example: The word *home* means the place where one lives, but its connotation may suggest family, love, and comfort.

detailsthe added information about a topic

dialogueconversation between characters

diarya day-by-day account of the events that occur in a person's own life

direct characterizationcharacter traits passed on directly by the writer's description of a character

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- drama**a literary genre in the form of dialogue between characters; meant to be performed and seen rather than read
- essay**a short piece of writing on a single subject that expresses a specific point of view
- exposition**an introduction to the people, places, and situation important to the plot
- external conflict**conflict which occurs when a person struggles with another person or outside force
- falling action**the action that follows the climax
- fiction**writing based on imagination; may involve real people or events as well as invented ones
- figurative language**uses words in such a way that the reader sees something special or feels a particular way; uses words to describe and create images
Examples:
simile—makes comparisons using like or as
metaphor—describes one thing as being or is another
personification—describes an animal, object or idea as having *human characteristics*
- first-person point of view**the teller of the story who is also a character or observer in the story; uses *I* or *me*

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formthe way a piece of writing is organized or structured

genresdifferent categories into which literary works are grouped
Examples: short stories, novels, poems, essays, and plays

imagerywords that appeal to one or more of the five senses and create mental sights, sounds, smells, tastes, or touches

impliedthat which is indicated, suggested or understood; something not directly stated

indirect characterizationcharacter traits revealed indirectly by the way a character acts or speaks

internal conflictconflict which occurs when a person struggles within himself or herself

literary elementscommon ingredients that work together to make a story, poem, drama, or biography interesting to read

literaturewriting in which expression and form are important features, such as poetry, fiction, biography, essays, etc.; writing that has lasting value

metaphora comparison between two different or unlike things without using *like* or *as* in the comparison
Example: Each day *is* a blank sheet of paper.

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- mood**the feeling created by a story, play, or poem
- narrator**the speaker in a literary work
- nonfiction**writing based on real people, events, and facts rather than on imaginary ones
- novel**a long work of fiction in which characters and conflicts can be explored in great depth
- paragraph**a group of related sentences that present and develop one main idea
- personification**an expression that gives a human characteristic or action to an animal, object, or idea
Example: The sun smiled down on the hikers.
- play**a story written to be performed by actors
- plot**the skeleton or outline of a literary work; the sequence of the main events in a work
- poetry**a type of literature written in verse and expressing strong feelings
- protagonist**the main character

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- repetition**the use of words or phrases more than once for effect or emphasis
- resolution**an end to the story, in which remaining questions are answered and results of the climax are learned
- rhyme**sounds at the end of words which are repeated in the writing; used particularly in poetry
Examples: nap and rap
- rhythm**a pattern of beats based on stressed and unstressed syllables; used particularly in poetry
- rising action**the part of the plot that adds complications to the problems and increases the reader's interest
- setting**the time (when) and place (where) in which the story takes place
- short story**a short work of fiction usually focusing on a few characters and a single conflict
- simile**a comparison between two different or unlike things using *like* or *as* in the comparison
Example: My mind is as sharp as a tack.
- stanza**a group of lines in a poem considered a unit

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supporting detailsthe words used to support the main idea or topic sentence

Examples: Supporting details can describe a person, persuade an audience, or explain a process.

suspensea technique used to create uncertainty so that the reader will stay interested in the story

tall talea story, usually funny, containing unusually incredible or exaggerated characters and events
Examples: Paul Bunyan and Pecos Bill

tempothe speed at which words are spoken

themethe central idea or message of the literary work; often a lesson about life

thesis statementthe main point of the essay; the claim or opinion the rest of the essay will discuss or support

third-person point of viewstory told by someone not in the story using *he* or *she* to talk about characters

topic sentencethe sentence that tells the focus or main point of a paragraph

tragedya type of drama or literary work that shows the downfall or the destruction of a noble or outstanding person