

1. abstract	a typically complex style in writing that discusses intangible questions like good and evil, and seldom uses examples to support its points	16. apostrophe	an address to someone not present, or to a personified object or idea
2. academic	as an adjective describing style, this word means dry and theoretical writing; when a piece of writing seems to be sucking all the life out of its subject with analysis	17. archaism	the use of deliberately old-fashioned language, sometimes used to create a feeling of antiquity
3. accent	in poetry, refers to the stressed portion of a word	18. aside	a speech (usually just a short comment) made by an actor to the audience, as though momentarily stepping outside of the action on stage
4. aesthetic, aesthetics	can be used as an adjective meaning "appealing to the senses," as a noun meaning a coherent sense of taste, or as a plural meaning the study of beauty	19. aspect	a trait or characteristic
5. allegory	a story in which each aspect of the story has a symbolic meaning outside the tale itself, as seen in many fables	20. assonance	the repeated use of vowel sounds, as in "Old King Cole was a merry old soul"
6. alliteration	the repetition of the initial consonant sounds; consonant clusters coming closely cramped and compressed--no coincidence	21. atmosphere	the emotional tone or background that surrounds a scene
7. allusion	a reference to another work or famous figure; can be topical or popular (topical referring to a current event and popular referring to something from popular culture)	22. ballad	a long, narrative poem, usually in very regular meter and rhyme; typically has a naive folksy quality, a characteristic that distinguishes it from epic poetry
8. anachronism	"misplaced in time," such as when an actor playing Brutus in Julius Caesar forgets to take off his wristwatch	23. bathos	when writing strains for grandeur it can't support and tries to elicit tears from every little hiccup
9. analogy	a comparison usually involving two or more symbolic parts and employed to clarify an action or a relationship	24. black humor	the use of disturbing themes in comedy
10. anecdote	a short narrative	25. bombast	pretentious, exaggeratedly learned language, such as when one tries to be eloquent by using the largest, most uncommon words
11. antecedent	the word, phrase, or clause that a pronoun refers to or replaces	26. burlesque	a broad parody, one that takes a style or a form, such as a tragic drama, and exaggerates it into ridiculousness
12. anthropomorphism	when inanimate objects, animals, or natural phenomena are given human characteristics, behavior, or motivation in literature		
13. anticlimax	occurs when an action produces far smaller results than one had been led to expect; frequently comical in nature		
14. antihero	a protagonist who is markedly unheroic: morally weak, cowardly, dishonest, or any number of other unsavory qualities		
15. aphorism	a short and usually witty saying, such as: "'Classic'? A book which people praise and don't read." --Mark Twain		

1. cacophony	in poetry, using deliberately harsh, awkward sounds	22. doggerel	crude, simplistic verse, often in sing-song rhyme, of which limericks are a kind
2. cadence	the beat or rhythm of poetry in a general sense, for example iambic pentameter	23. dramatic irony	when the audience knows something that the characters in the drama do not
3. canto	a section division in a long work of poetry; divides a long poem into parts the way chapters divide a novel	24. dramatic monologue	when a single speaker in literature says something to a silent audience
4. caricature	a portrait (verbal or otherwise) that exaggerates a facet of personality		
5. catharsis	the "cleansing" of emotion an audience member experiences, having lived (vicariously) through the experiences presented on stage		
6. chorus	in drama, the group of citizens who stand outside the main action on stage and comment on it		
7. classic	can mean typical or an accepted masterpiece		
8. coinage	a new word, usually one invented on the spot; the technical term is "neologism"		
9. colloquialism	a word or phrase used in everyday conversational English that isn't a part of accepted "schoolbook" English		
10. complex	suggests that there is more than one possibility in the meaning of words (image, idea, opposition); not "dense"		
11. conceit	a startling or unusual metaphor; a metaphor developed and expanded upon over several lines		
12. connotation	everything else besides its literal meaning that a word suggests or implies		
13. consonance	the repetition of consonant sounds within words rather than at their beginnings		
14. controlling image	when a metaphor/image dominates and shapes the entire work		
15. couplet	a pair of lines that end in rhyme		
16. decorum	when writing (or a character's speech) is styled according to social station, and in accordance with the occasion		
17. denotation	the literal meaning of a word		
18. dense	suggests that there is more than one possibility in the meaning of words (image, idea, opposition); not "complex"		
19. diction	the author's choice of words		
20. dirge	a song for the dead; its tone is typically low, heavy, and melancholy		
21. dissonance	the grating of incompatible sounds		

1. elegy	a type of poem that meditates on death or morality in a serious, thoughtful manner	22. interior monologue	a term from novels and poetry, not dramatic literature; refers to the writing that records the mental talking that goes on inside a character's head
2. elements	the basic techniques of each genre of literature	23. inversion	switching the customary order of elements in a sentence or phrase
3. enjambment	the continuation of a syntactic unit from one line or couplet of a poem to the next with no pause	24. irony	an undertow of meaning, sliding against the literal meaning of the words; or, more crudely, a statement that means the opposite of what it seems to mean
4. epic	a very long narrative poem on a serious theme in a dignified style		
5. epitaph	lines that commemorate the dead at their burial place		
6. euphemism	a word or phrase that takes the place of a harsh, unpleasant, or impolite reality		
7. euphony	when sounds blend harmoniously		
8. explicit	to say or write something directly and clearly		
9. farce	today we use the word to refer to extremely broad humor, but writers of earlier times used it as a more neutral term meaning a funny play or comedy		
10. feminine rhyme	lines rhymed by their final two syllables		
11. first person narrator	a narrator who is a character in the story and tells the tale from his or her point of view		
12. foil	a secondary character whose purpose is to highlight the characteristics of a main character, usually by contrast		
13. foot	the basic rhythmic unit of a line of poetry; formed by a combination of two or three syllables, either stressed or unstressed		
14. foreshadowing	an event or statement in a narrative that suggests, in miniature, a larger event that comes later		
15. free verse	poetry written without a regular rhyme scheme or metrical pattern		
16. genre	a subcategory of literature		
17. gothic	a sensibility that first showed up in the middle of the eighteenth century; involves mysterious gloomy castles, weird screams from the attic, etc		
18. hubris	the excessive pride or ambition that leads to the main character's downfall		
19. hyperbole	exaggeration or deliberate overstatement		
20. implicit	to say or write something that suggests or implies but never says it directly or clearly		
21. in medias res	Latin for "in the midst of things"		

1. lament	a poem of sadness or grief over the death of a loved one or over some other intense loss
2. lampoon	a satire
3. loose sentence	a sentence complete before its end
4. lyric	a type of poetry that explores the poet's personal interpretation of and feelings about the world; when used to describe a tone it refers to a sweet, emotional melodiousness
5. masculine rhyme	a rhyme ending on the final stressed syllable
6. means, meaning	what makes sense, what's important; can be literal, which is concrete and explicit, or emotional
7. melodrama	a form of cheesy theater in which the hero is very, very good, the villain mean and rotten, and the heroine oh-so-pure
8. metaphor	a comparison or analogy that states one thing is another
9. metaphysical conceit	a startling or unusual metaphor, or a metaphor developed and expanded upon over several lines, but reserved for metaphysical poems only
10. metonym	a word that is used to stand for something else that it has attributes of or is associated with
11. nemesis	the protagonist's archenemy or supreme and persistent difficulty
12. neologism	a new word, usually one invented on the spot; the technical term for coinage
13. objectivity	an impersonal or outside view of events
14. omniscient narrator	a third-person narrator who sees, like God, into each character's mind and understands all action going on
15. onomatopoeia	words that sound like what they mean
16. opposition	a pair of elements that contrast sharply; not necessarily "conflict" but rather a pairing of images whereby each becomes more striking and informative because it's placed in contrast to the other one
17. oxymoron	a phrase composed of opposites; a contradiction

1. parable	a story that instructs, like a fable or an allegory
2. paradox	a situation or statement that seems to contradict itself, but on closer inspection, does not
3. parallelism	repeated syntactical similarities used for effect
4. paraphrase	to restate phrases and sentences in your own words; to rephrase
5. parenthetical phrase	a phrase set off by commas that interrupts the flow of a sentence with some commentary or added detail
6. parody	the work that results when a specific work is exaggerated to ridiculousness
7. pastoral	a poem set in tranquil nature, or even more specifically, one about shepherds
8. pathos	when the writing of a scene evokes feelings of dignified pity and sympathy
9. periodic sentence	a sentence that is not grammatically complete until it has reached its final phrase
10. persona	the narrator in a non-first-person novel; the shadow-author
11. personification	giving an inanimate object human qualities or form
12. plaint	a poem or speech expressing sorrow
13. point of view	the perspective from which the action of a novel (or narrative poem) is presented
14. prelude	an introductory poem to a longer work of verse
15. protagonist	the main character of a novel or play
16. pun	the usually humorous use of a word in such a way to suggest two or more meanings
17. refrain	a line or set of lines repeated several times over the course of a poem
18. requiem	a song of prayer for the dead
19. rhapsody	an intensely passionate verse or section of verse, usually of love or praise
20. rhetorical question	a question that suggests an answer

1. satire	attempts to improve things by pointing out people's mistakes in the hope that once exposed, such behavior will become less common	20. unreliable narrator	when the first-person narrator is crazy, a liar, very young, or for some other reason not entirely credible
2. simile	just like a metaphor but softens the full-out equation of things, often, but not always, by using like or as	21. utopia	an idealized place; imaginary communities in which people are able to live in happiness, prosperity, and peace
3. soliloquy	a speech spoken by a character alone on stage	22. zeugma	the use of a word to modify two or more words, but used for different meanings
4. stanza	a group of lines in verse, roughly analogous in function to the paragraph in prose		
5. stock characters	standard or clichéd character types: the drunk, the miser, the foolish girl, etc		
6. stream of consciousness	like first-person narration but, instead of the character telling the story, the author places the reader inside the main character's head and makes the reader privy to all of the character's thoughts as they scroll through her consciousness		
7. subjective	a treatment that uses the interior or personal view of a single observer and is typically colored with that observer's emotional responses		
8. subjunctive mood	a grammatical situation that involves the words "if" and "were"; it is a hypothetical situation, a kind of wishful thing		
9. suggest	to imply, infer, indicate		
10. summary	a simple retelling of what you've just read		
11. suspension of disbelief	the demand made of a theater audience to accept the limitations of staging and supply the details with imagination; also, the acceptance on an audience's or reader's part of the incidents of plot in a play or story		
12. symbolism	a device in literature where an object represents an idea		
13. syntax	the ordering and structuring of words		
14. technique	the methods, the tools, the "how-she-does-it" ways of the author		
15. theme	the main idea of the overall work; the central idea		
16. thesis	the main position of an argument		
17. tragic flaw	the weakness of character in an otherwise good (or even great) individual that ultimately leads to his demise		
18. travesty	a grotesque parody		
19. truism	a way-too-obvious truth		