

# 10 Most Common Literary Terms

Eng 1 CP

# Narrator

- The *voice* that tells the story
- Can be a character, but isn't always
- As a reader, decide if the narrator is reliable (or not)
- Think about the author's choice of narrator
  - Is the narrator biased?

# Point of View

- Whose eyes do we see the story through?
  - Can be through a character's point of view - or not!
- As a reader, ask yourself: how does the author's point of view affect the story?
- First, Second, and Third
  - First: I, me, my, we, ours
    - ex) Today is my birthday.
  - Second: you, yours
    - ex) You go to the store. You buy some milk for your cereal.
  - Third: he, she, they, the boys, the girls
    - ex) When they got to the beach, the boys ran to the water.

# Protagonist/Antagonist

- Protagonist: main character
  - Not *necessarily* the “good guy”
- Antagonist: force, thing, or character opposing the protagonist
  - Remember the conflicts we talked about!

# Characterization

- The personality of a character
- How to determine this:
  - What the character says
  - What the character does
  - What other characters say about them
  - How other characters react to them

# Plot

- Sequence of events in a story
- Broken into:
  - Exposition,
  - Conflict,
  - Rising Action,
  - Climax,
  - Falling Action,
  - Resolution
- Author chooses the order in which to reveal these

# Conflict

- Struggle between two forces
- Expressed as: \_\_\_\_\_ vs. \_\_\_\_\_
- Internal or external:
  - man vs. self
  - man vs. man
  - man vs. nature
  - man vs. society

# Theme

- The truth about life we learn from a story
  - **not** a judgement or moral/lesson
- Ask yourself:
  - What does the author teach us about \_\_\_\_\_ by having the protagonist endure this conflict?



# Allusion

- Reference to another text
  - film, play, meme, poem, novel, etc.
- 3 most common:
  - Bible
  - Shakespeare
  - Greek/Roman mythology

# Symbol

- A thing that represents something “bigger”
- ex) fire symbolizes → danger, death, rebirth
- ex) winter → death
- ex) spring → life
- What was the symbol in “Night Calls”?

# Irony

- Portrays the differences between:
  - reality and appearance (a.k.a. dramatic irony)
  - expectation and result (a.k.a. situational irony)
  - meaning and intention (a.k.a. verbal irony)