

Department: English

Course: 11th Grade (Research Writing and American Lit)

2016-2017

TERM	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE/EXPLANATION/ COMPREHENSION SUPPORT
Anecdote	Offering a brief (often personal) narrative episode (can serve many functions: introducing an issue, serving as evidence, illustrating a point, acting as comic relief, etc.)	Any of the little stories I tell about my family, former students, etc.
Antagonist	A character or entity that stands in opposition to the protagonist	Voldemort (sorry for saying the name)
Argument	The combination of reasons, evidence, etc. that an author uses to convince an audience of his/her position.	Too comprehensive a concept for a brief example, so remember the idea that in effective rhetoric, every statement should help make the argument.
Attitude	The writer's personal views or feelings about the subject at hand	Difficult to get across in a short example, but something like "the deplorable state of this school" would convey that the author has a negative attitude towards the school.
Audience	Who the author is directing his or her message towards	For a resume, for instance, the audience is potential employers.
Climax	The point in the plot at which the conflict or tension hits the highest	When Montag sets Beatty on fire in <i>Fahrenheit 451</i>

	point	
Compare/Contrast	Comparing two or more entities incorporates discussing similarities and differences. Contrasting involves speaking only of the differences.	<p>“While Bill and Tom are both tall, one has red hair and the other black.”</p> <p>“Hybrid cars have a much smaller carbon footprint than traditional midsize vehicles.”</p>
Concession	Agreeing with the opposing viewpoint on a certain smaller point (but not in the larger argument)	“I agree that three interceptions against the Dolphins was a terrible performance by Tom Brady, but I still insist that he is a good quarterback.”
Conflict	The struggle between two opposing forces, usually the protagonist and antagonist; usually drives the plot forward	In <i>Fahrenheit 451</i> , the conflict is between Montag and his society (represented best by Beatty and Mildred) and the plot moves towards its climax as we see this conflict develop.
Connotation	The implied meaning of a word; we can think of words having positive, negative, or neutral connotations.	<p>Curious=positive connotation</p> <p>Nosy=negative connotation</p>
Counterargument	Argument(s) against the author’s position	If I argue in favor of switching to school uniforms at Cotter, a counterargument might be that it would stifle a student’s ability to express herself/himself.
Denotation	The literal, dictionary-definition of a word. (Compare to connotation)	A denotation of “tall” is “of great or more than average height”
Diction	The style of language used; the word choice (generally should be tailored to the audience and context)	You might say, “How’s it hangin’?” to your friend, but you would most likely say, “How are you today?” to your principal.

Evidence	Information presented with the intent to persuade the audience of the author's position	If arguing that Anne is a good student, I could reference her 4.0 GPA and her perfect SAT score as pieces of evidence.
Exemplification	Providing examples in service of a point	"Mr. Stevenson is a poor teacher: grades are never updated; he rambles constantly without getting to a point; his vocabulary is too esoteric; and he looks funny."
Figurative language	The use of language in a non-literal way (metaphor, simile, personification, etc.)	"Your love is like a red, red rose that's newly sprung in June. Your love's like a melody that's sweetly played in tune."
Genre	The specific type of work being presented	Broad genres are those like "fiction" or "poetry" or "nonfiction". More specific ones are "analytical essay" or "haiku."
Hyperbole	Overstating a situation for humorous or dramatic effect	"I'm so hungry I could eat a horse!"  "This is the worst day ever!"
Idiom	A commonly used phrase that signifies something very different than its literal meaning	"That costs an arm and a leg!" means "That is very expensive!"  "He's barking up the wrong tree," means "He's not correct at all."
Imagery	Any descriptive language used to evoke a vivid sense or image of something. (This is a broader term than figurative language.)	"The brown horse ate the green grass."  "She shines in beauty like the night of cloudless climes and starry skies..."  "So much depends on a red wheelbarrow glazed with rainwater beside the white chickens."
Implication	When something is suggested without being concretely stated	"Watch your wallet around Paul," implies that Paul is a thief, but does not directly say that he is.

Irony	At the most basic sense, saying the opposite of what you mean; also used to describe situations in which the results of an action are dramatically different than intended.	“I cannot wait to go to English class,” may very well be said ironically. Or, “Yippee! I get to read 26 pages of <i>Fahrenheit 451</i> before class tomorrow. I’m so excited!”
Objective	Based on facts; unbiased; not influenced by personal interpretations, feelings, or prejudices	A statement such as “My grade in English class was a C+” is objective.
Organization	How the parts of an argument are arranged in a piece of writing or a speech	Best explained by looking at examples
Plot	The pattern or sequence (the relationship) of the events that make up a story	Best explained by referring to actual stories/novels
Protagonist	The central figure in a story	Odysseus in <i>The Odyssey</i> , Montag in <i>Fahrenheit 451</i> , Harry Potter in the eponymous series
Purpose	The author’s persuasive intention	You want a new car. You give your parents a long speech with 13 reasons why you should have a new car. The purpose of your speech is to get the new car.
Repetition	Re-using a word or phrase repeatedly for effect and emphasis	“We run, and we run, and we run, like rats on a wheel.”
Rhetoric	The use of spoken or written words (or a visual medium) to convey your ideas and	Except for basic fact-gathering conversation, almost any communication is an example of rhetoric.

	convince an audience	
Sarcasm	Mockingly stating the opposite of what you mean (often quite reliant on irony)	“Nice one, Einstein,” might be said after someone presents a poorly thought-out idea
Satire	A genre of humorous and mocking criticism to expose the ignorance and/or ills of a given society	Stephen Colbert John Stewart Jonathan Swift’s “A Modest Proposal”
Setting	The time and location of a particular story	<i>The Great Gatsby</i> is set in the summer of 1922 in and around Long Island.
Speaker	The persona adopted by the author to deliver his or her message; may or may not actually be the same person as an author (persona is a good synonym; frequently called narrator when in fiction)	Important to remember is that author and speaker can be different.
Stanza	A set of lines in a poem grouped together and set apart from the other lines, either through a double-space or a different indentation	Best seen by looking at actual poems
Style	The author’s own personal approach to rhetoric in the piece; similar to voice.	Ernest Hemingway’s style is straightforward, for instance, while Thomas Pynchon’s is not.
Subjective	Based on or influenced by personal tastes, opinions, prejudices, etc.	A statement such as “My grade in English class was a C+ because Mr. Stevenson is an idiot who has no clue of

	(compare to objective)	the real beauty of my thoughts and writing” is subjective.
Symbolism	Using a symbol to refer to an idea or concept	Fire is often used as a symbol for passion or anger.
Syntax	The way sentences are constructed grammatically	“She likes pie,” is syntactically simple. On the other hand, “As it so happened, when Barbara got out of class early she liked to have a piece of pie—key lime or pecan, always—at the corner diner” is rather syntactically complicated.
Synthesis	Combining sources or ideas in a coherent way in the purpose of a larger point	A research paper should be a good example of synthesis.
Text	A written or printed work; defined by its content, not its form	Rather obvious examples include: <i>The Great Gatsby</i> , <i>Fahrenheit 451</i> , “A Noiseless Patient Spider,” and so on.
Theme(s)	Overarching idea(s) or driving premise(s) of a work	Themes often mentioned in high school graduation speeches include leaving behind a legacy, moving into the great unknown, changing the world, etc.
Thesis	A statement of what the writer of the work intends to focus upon, support, and prove	<i>Pride and Prejudice</i> : “It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife.”  “In this essay I will prove why strawberry shortcake is the very handiwork of God.”
Tone	The use of stylistic devices to reveal an author’s attitude toward a subject (see attitude)	Very close to attitude. The phrase “the deplorable state of this school” reveals the negative attitude, but the word choice (diction) of “deplorable” is a part of tone.
Understatement	Deliberately minimizing	“My dad wasn’t too mad that I criticized

	something, usually for humorous effect	the Packers, so I'm only grounded for 2 months."
Voice	An author's unique sound. Related to style.	Think of how there are some singers whose songs you'd know before you were told.