

# **A Handbook of Literary Terms**

**B. A. II Semester, English Literature**

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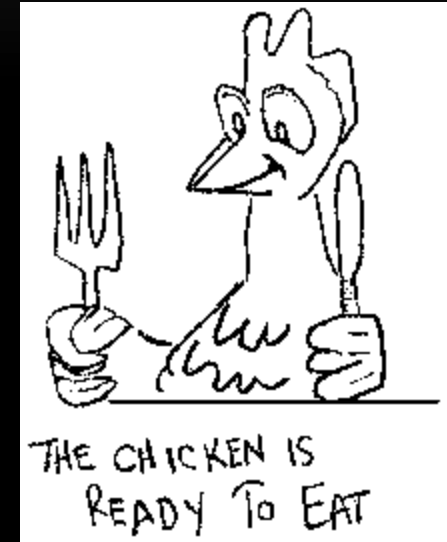
# A Handbook of Literary Terms- 10 Marks

## 1) AMBIGUITY -

Ambiguity is a word having two meanings. It has uncertainty of meaning.

This term is widely used in criticism to identify a poetic device; the use of a single word or expression to signify two or more references or feelings.

For ex- Come, thou mortal wretch.



## 2) ARCHAISM -

It is a figure of speech. The literary use of words and expressions that have become outmoded or old in the common speech are called archaism. When such words are used, it is called archaism.

For ex- Taper for Candle; Ere for Before; Hath for Has/Have etc.

### Archaism.

It is a word or phrase which are outdated, obsolete and out of use.

- ♥ enow - enough
- ♥ aye - yes
- ♥ nay - no
- ♥ ruth - pity; sorrow
- ♥ twain - two

### 3) EPIPHANY -

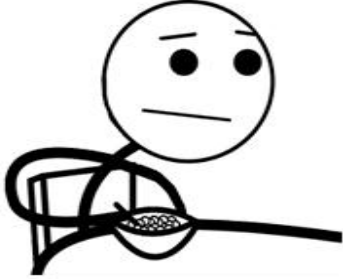
It means a manifestation or showing forth, and by Christian thinkers was used to signify a manifestation of God's presence within the created world. Thus, originally it was restricted to a religious context but has become the standard term for the description of the revelation of an ordinary object or scene in modern poetry, prose and fiction.



## 4) EUPHEMISM -

It is a figure of speech. It is the use of mild term for blunt one. When unpleasant facts are presented in a pleasant form, it is called Euphemism. Euphemism is used frequently with reference to such objects as- 'Religion'- Gosh darn! For God damn! 'Death'- Pass away for Die, and 'Bodily functions'- Comfort station for Toilet etc.

Daily **Vocab**



**Euphemism (यूफमिज़म)**

1. an inoffensive or indirect expression that is substituted for one that is considered offensive or too harsh (noun)

1. कठोर बात को कोमल रीति से कहना
2. प्रिय उक्ति
3. कठोर शब्दों के स्थान पर मधुर शब्दों का प्रयोग

Daily **Vocab** WHERE MEMES TEACH WORD POWER


"Bless your heart"  
the southern way  
to say  
"you're a  
dumbass"



someecards  
user card

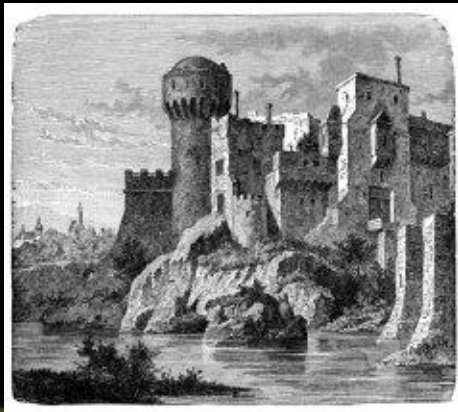
# EUPHEMISM

**Defintion : Makes something bad sound good.**  
"The old man passed away."



## 5) GOTHIC NOVEL -

The word Gothic originally referred to the Goths, a Germanic tribe. The gothic novel is an alternative term for gothic romance, which is inaugurated by Horace Walpole's 'Castle of Otranto' (1764). The setting of such novel is often gloomy castle furnished with dungeons. The typical story focused on the sufferings, beautiful use of ghosts, sensational and supernatural occurrences. The principal aim of such novels was to evoke horror and chilling terror.



## 6) NEW CRITICISM -

This term used for the first time by J.C. Ransom in his 'The New Criticism' (1941). It opposed the prevailing interest of scholars and critics of that era in the biographies of authors, the social context of literature and literary history by insisting that the proper concern of literary criticism is not with external circumstances but with detailed consideration of the work itself (Objective) as an independent entity. Notable critics of this mode were- Cleanth Brooks and R.P. Warren.

### New Criticism

- **Method of literary analysis, primarily for poems**
  - **"Text and Text Alone" Approach**
    - Text contains all necessary information for interpreting meaning
    - Text's meaning must be analysed independent of **author's beliefs, attitudes, values, emotions**; reader's emotional response is unimportant
  - **Poem = Object**
    - Evaluation follows scientific inquiry
    - Structured/Formulaic method of analysis
    - Organic Unity
    - Heresy of Paraphrase
- 



## 7) NARRATIVE -

A narrative is a story, whether told in prose or verse, involving events, characters, and what the characters say (Dialogues) and do (Actions). Some literary forms such as the novel and short story in prose, the epic and romance in verse are explicit narratives that are told by a narrator.

Daily Vocab



Narrative (नैरटिव / नेरटिव)

1. consisting of or characterized by the telling of a story (adj)
1. a message that tells the particulars of an act or occurrence or course of events; presented in writing or drama or cinema or as a radio or television program (noun)

1. इतिहास
2. कथा
3. गल्प संबंधी

Daily Vocab

WHERE MEMES TEACH WORD POWER



## 8) POINT OF VIEW -

Point of view is a way of story telling by writer. It is the mode established by an author by means of which the reader is presented with the characters, dialogues, actions, setting and events which constitute the narrative in a work of fiction. It is nothing but a particular point of view of the author to attract its readers.



## 9) STOCK CHARACTERS -

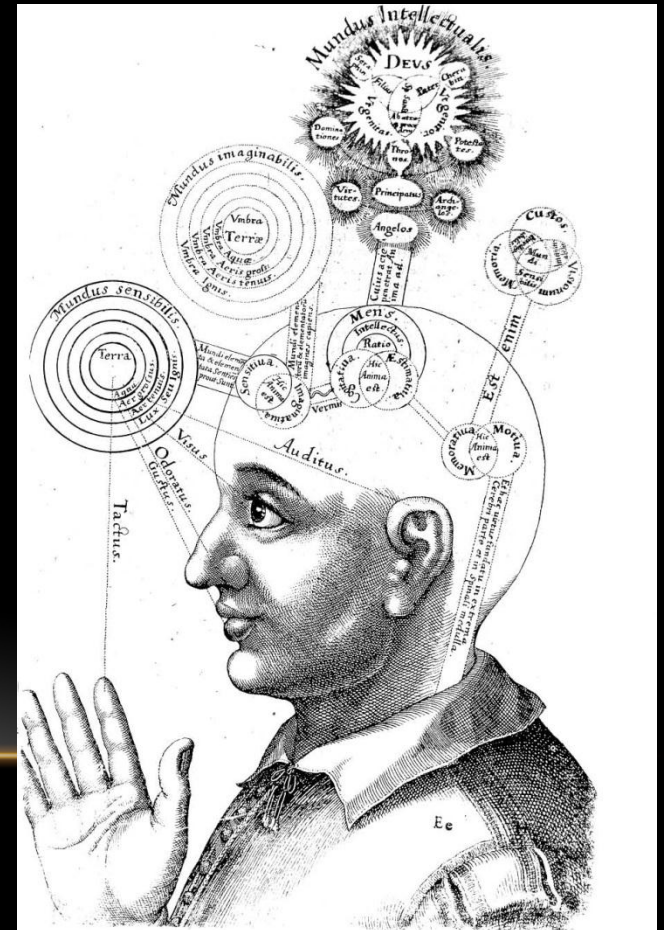
Stock characters are character types that occur repeatedly in a particular literary genre, and so are recognizable as a part of the conventions of the form. The old comedy of the Greeks and English had such stock characters like- Alazon- impostor or self-deceiving braggart; Eiron- self-derogatory and understanding etc. whose antics add an extra comic element to the comedy.



## 10) STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS -

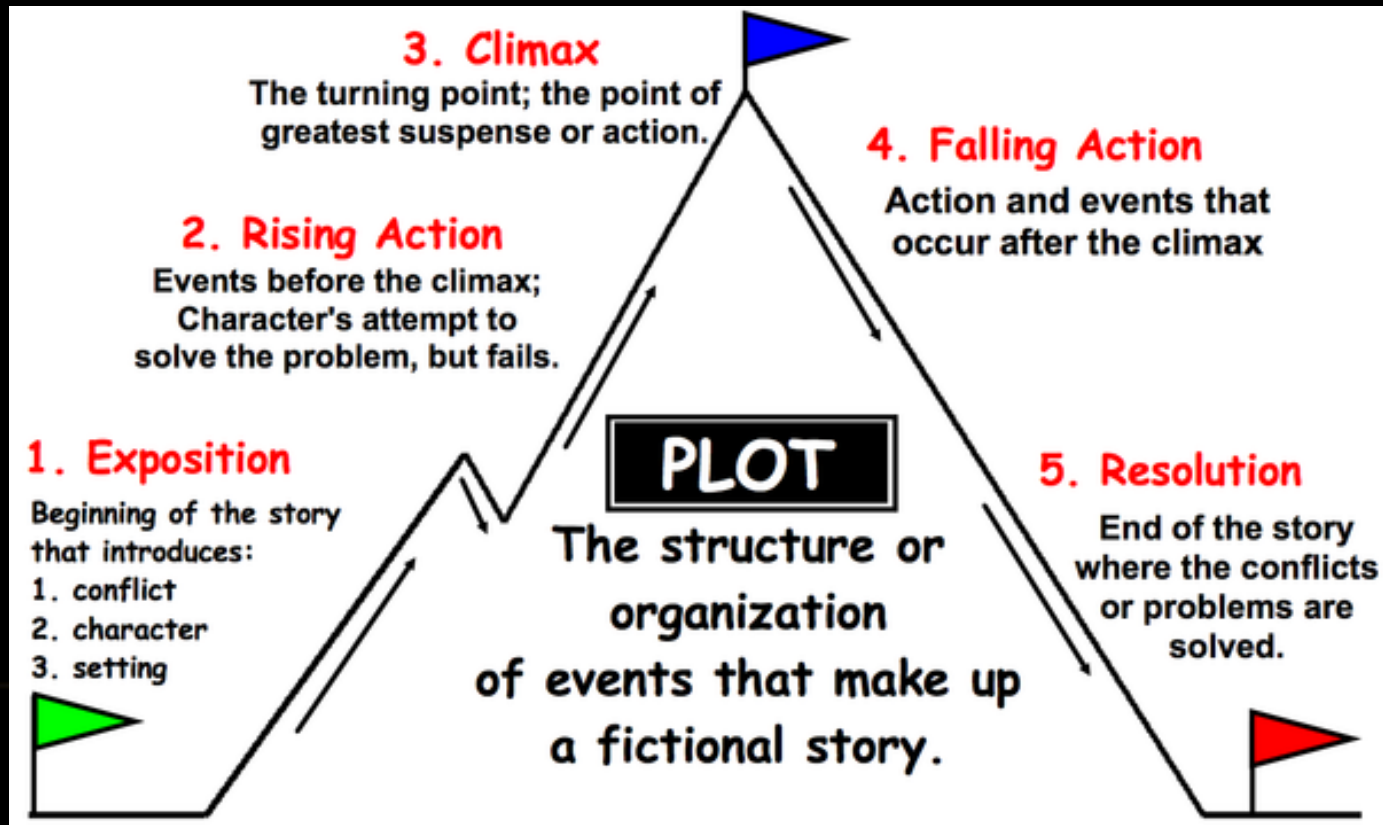
This term is used by William James in his 'Principles of Psychology' (1890) to describe the unbroken flow of perceptions, thoughts and feelings in the waking mind(Character's mental process); it has since been adopted to describe a narrative method in modern fiction (novel).

For ex- Long passages of introspection in which the narrator records in detail what passes through a character's mind, are found in almost all novelists of the present era.



## 11) PLOT -

Plot in a dramatic or narrative work is constituted by its events and actions, as these are rendered and ordered toward achieving particular artistic and emotional effects. There are a great variety of plot forms. For ex- some plots are designed to achieve tragic effects, and others to achieve the effects of comedy, romance, satire etc. Aristotle termed plot as 'Mythos' which may either simple plot or complex plot. Further plot is a continuous sequence of beginning, middle and end.




## 12) PARABLE -

A parable is a short story with a moral. A parable is a very short narrative story about human beings presented by the writer to give a moral or general lesson to audience. The parable was one of Jesus' favourite devices as a teacher. For ex- 'The good Samaritan', 'The prodigal son'.

**Daily Vocab** Parable (पेरबल / पैरबल)

1. a short moral story (often with animal characters)  
2. (New Testament) any of the stories told by Jesus to convey his religious message (noun)

1. नीति कथा  
2. उपमा  
3. दृष्टान्त




**Daily Vocab** WHERE MEMES TEACH WORD POWER

Fear not, all who repent of their sins, for the Father is merciful and will welcome you with open arms, bestowing His limitless grace on you.

**Luke 15:11-32**  
Parable of the Prodigal Son



God values and searches for each of His children lost in sinfulness. For the joy that comes with rescuing one, is far more than the joy of many who are safe.



**THE LOST SHEEP**

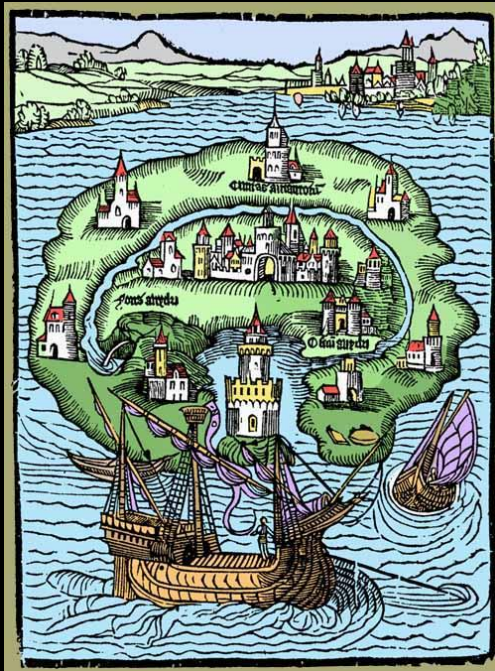
### 13) PICARESQUE -

'Picaro' is a Spanish word for 'Rogue'. It is a story dealing with rogues and their adventures. It is usually related to the novel, i.e. Picaresque novel, which is realistic in manner. So picaresque is a typical story concerned with rogues or rascals and their adventures.



## 14) UTOPIA -

It is an imaginary place with perfect social and political system. The term 'Utopia' designates the class of fictional writings that represent an ideal but non-existent political and social way of life. This term is taken from Sir Thomas More's Latin book, 'Utopia' (1515-16), which describes a perfect commonwealth.



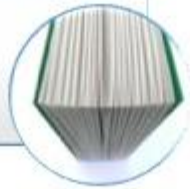
## 15) NOVELLA - (NOVELETTE)

The English name for the term novel is derived from the Italian 'Novella' (literally, a little new thing), which was a short tale in prose. In 14<sup>th</sup> century Italy there was a fashion for collections of such tales; some serious and some disgraceful. Currently the term 'novella' is often used as an equivalent for novelette: a prose fiction of middle length.

For ex- Joseph Conrad's 'Heart of Darkness'.

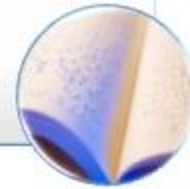
- A novel is a genre of fiction which is referred to as a long narrative prose which presents a quite lengthy story of a group of fictional or imaginary characters and events.

Novel



- Being slightly different from a novel in terms of its length, a novella is referred to as a genre of fiction which is longer than a short story but shorter than a novel.

Novella





## 16) DECORUM -

Decorum refers to the language of the character or speakers which must be appropriate to his status. As a term in literary criticism, decorum designates the view that there should be propriety or fitness, in the way that a literary genre, its subject matter, its characters and actions, the style of its narration and dialogue are matched to one another.

