

LITERARY DEVICES

Introduction · A Literary Device is a departure from the ordinary form of expression, or ordinary clause of ideas in order to produce a greater effect. · Literary Devices can be classified on the basis of
a. Resemblance, as in Simile, Metaphor etc. b. Contrast, as in Antithesis and Epigram. c. Association, as in Metonymy and Synecdoche. d. Construction of a Sentence, as in Climax and Anticlimax.

Alliteration · Refrain · Oxymoron · Epigram · Irony · Pun · Metonymy · Synecdoche · Transferred Epithet · Litotes · Interrogation

Exclamation · Climax · Anticlimax · Onomatopoeia · Prosopopoeia · Ode · Ballad · Imagery · Supernaturalism (in Poetry)

METAPHOR · A metaphor is a literary figure of speech that describes a subject by asserting that it is, on some point of comparison, the same as another otherwise unrelated object. · Purpose? - used for rhetorical effect, thus highlighting the similarities between the two. · Example: America is a melting pot. · Example: He has a heart of gold. · The assignment was a breeze. · Her voice is music to his ears.

SIMILE · An indirect comparison between two things that are essentially unlike, using "like" or "as" to show the comparison. · Purpose? - used to make a description more emphatic or vivid. · Examples: · In her beautiful wedding dress, she was as pretty as a picture. · Crazy like a fox; as brave as a lion · The boxer fell like a ton of bricks.

PERSONIFICATION · Giving human qualities (such as: emotions, desires, sensations, gestures, and speech) to something that is essentially non-human. Examples: · The sun smiled down on us on that lovely June day. · Earth felt the wound; and Nature from her seat, Sighing, through all her works, gave signs of woe. - John Milton · Opportunity knocked on the door.

HYPERBOLE · An exaggeration. Examples: · She gave us a ton of homework. · We waited in line for a year! · I'm so hungry, I could eat a horse. · I told you a thousand times!

ALLITERATION · Repetition of a particular sound. Example: · The bloody watchman told a tale of torture and terror. · Don't dream it. Drive it. Jaguar - Advertising Slogan

ONOMATOPOEIA · When a word "sounds" like the sound it makes when spoken. Examples: · The owl hooted in the darkness. · The engine sputtered and died. Click to play video

PUN · A play on words. Example: · . . . and then there was the story about the dentist who joined the infantry because he liked to drill. · I fired my masseuse today. She just rubbed me the wrong way.

ALLUSION · Reference to a historical event, literary, political, psychological, or social person, place, thing, idea or event. Examples: · With all the D's and F's she received, she knew spelling was her Achilles heel. · Play Billy Joel Click to Play

SYMBOL · Something concrete that stands for something abstract. Example: · A rose may symbolize love, beauty, or perfection. Princess Diana was called England's Rose. · A dove = peace, apple = sin, flag = nation, light bulb = idea, skull and cross bones = poison, etc.

IRONY · The use of words to convey the opposite of their literal meaning; a statement or situation where the meaning is contradicted by the appearance or presentation of the idea. Example: · In 1912 the Titanic was touted as "100% unsinkable," and yet the ship sank on its maiden voyage.

OXYMORON · Contradictory words or phrases used to describe one thing. Examples: · Jumbo Shrimp · Great Depression, Known Secret, Pretty Ugly, Bitter Sweet, Deafening Silence · 'I can resist anything, except temptation.' - Oscar Wilde · 'I am busy doing nothing'

Simile · A comparison between two different kinds of objects having at least one point in common. · Usually introduced by words such as like, as, or so. · Examples:- a. As proud as a peacock.

b. *As bold as brass.* · A comparison of two things of the same kind is not Simile.

Metaphor · A comparison between two things as if they were one. · An implied simile. · Examples: - a. *The camel is the ship of the desert.* b. *Life is a dream.*

Personification · Personification is a literary device attributing human characteristics to inanimate objects or to animals. · Poets commonly use this technique to create images in the reader's mind and to give their writing a greater sensory appeal. · Example: - *In these lines the poet has personified Autumn as an old man Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store? Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find Thee sitting careless on a granary floor, Thy hair soft lifted by the winnowing wind; Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep, Drowsed with the fume of poppies,* - John Keats, *Ode to the West Wind*

Symbolism · Symbolism is a poetic device which is used to represent or recall something else possessing similar qualities especially an object representing an abstract thought or quality. · Examples: - a. In the poem "The Road Not Taken" the road symbolises the journey of life and the fork in the road is symbolic to the choices one makes in the journey. b. In "Ode to the West Wind" the west wind is symbolic of both death and rebirth.

Apostrophe · Apostrophe is a direct address to the dead, to the absent, or to a personified object or idea. · It is a special form of personification. · Examples: - a. *Oh ancestors, what would you say about this matter?* b. Antony addresses Caesar's corpse immediately following the assassination in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*: *O, pardon me, thou bleeding piece of earth, That I am meek and gentle with these butchers! Thou art the ruins of the noblest man That ever lived in the tide of times.* - Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*

Hyperbole · In hyperbole, statement is made emphatic by overstatement. · Examples: - a. *Our history professor is so old that he has lived through everything we've learned about ancient India.* b. *It was so cold, even the polar bears were wearing jackets.*

c. Our library is so old, its book pages are numbered with roman numerals ... written by the Romans.

Euphemism · Description of a disagreeable thing by an agreeable name. · Examples: - a. He has fallen asleep (i.e., he is dead). b. You are telling me a fairy tale. (i.e., a lie).

Antithesis · In antithesis a striking opposition or contrast of words or sentiments is made in the same sentence, employed to secure emphasis. · Examples: - a. Man proposes, God disposes. b. To err is human, to forgive is divine. c. Many are called, but few are chosen.

Alliteration · Alliteration is the occurrence of same sound at the beginning of adjacent or closely connected words. · Examples: - With many a curve my banks I fret By many a field and fallow, And many a fairy foreland set With willow-weed and mallow. - Alfred Lord Tennyson

Refrain · A refrain is a form of repetition in poems in which the same line, or part of it, is repeated at the end of each verse. · Example: - The line "For men may come and men may go But I go on for ever" is repeated in the poem The Brook by Alfred Lord Tennyson.

Oxymoron · A special form of antithesis, whereby two contradictory qualities are predicted at once of the same thing. · Examples: - a. So innocent arch, so cunningly simple. b. She accepted it as the kind of cruelty of the surgeon's knife.

Epigram · A brief pointed saying frequently introducing antithetical ideas which excite, surprise and arrest attention. · Example: - a. The child is the father of the man. b. Fools rush where angels fear to tread.

Irony · A mode of speech in which the real meaning is exactly opposite of that which is literally conveyed. · Examples: - a. "Mother will be happy to hear what you have done now," when Mother will not be at all happy. b. "Nice weather!" when it is raining. c. "I've been down so long it looks like up to me."

Pun · It is the use of a word in such a way in that it is capable of more than one application, the object being to produce a

ludicrous effect. • Example: - a. An ambassador is an honest man who lies abroad for the good of his country. b. A bicycle can't stand on its own because it is two tired.

Metonymy • In Metonymy (literally, a change of name.) an object designated by the name of something which is generally associated with it. • Examples: - a. The bench, for the judges. b. The laurel, for success. c. The Crown, for the king.

Synecdoche • In synecdoche, a part is used to designate the whole or the whole to designate a part. • Examples: - (i) Part used to designate the whole - a. Give us this day, our daily bread (i.e., food). b. He has many mouths (i.e., people) to feed. (ii) Whole used to designate a part - a. India (i.e., Indian Cricket Team) won the Twenty20 World Cup.

Transferred Epithet • An epithet is transferred from its proper word to another that is closely associated with it in the sentence. • Examples: - a. He passed a sleepless night. b. He has had a very happy morning.

Litotes • In litotes, an affirmative is conveyed by negation of the opposite, the effect being to suggest a strong expression by means of a weaker. • It is the opposite of hyperbole. • Examples: - a. The man is no fool (= very clever). b. I am not a little (= greatly) surprised.

Interrogation • It is the asking of a question not for the sake of getting an answer, but to put a point more effectively. • Also known as Rhetorical Question. • Examples: - a. Am I my brother's keeper? b. Who is here so vile that will not love his country?

Exclamation • In this device the exclamatory form is used to draw greater attention to a point than a mere bald statement of it could do. • Examples: - a. I laughed so hard that I cried! b. He couldn't believe that he won the race! c. Help! (sometimes exclamations are only one or two words) d. I can't wait to open my presents!

Climax • It is a literary device in which the parts of a sentence or paragraph are so arranged that each is built above its predecessor in importance or impressiveness. • Examples: - a. "One

equal temper of heroic hearts, Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield." - Ulysses Tennyson
b. *What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason, how finite in faculties! In action, how like an angel!*

Anticlimax · It is the opposite of Climax - a drop, often sudden and unexpected, from a dignified or important idea or situation to a trivial one or a descent from something sublime to something ridiculous. · In fiction and drama, this refers to action which is disappointing in contrast to the previous moment of intense interest or anything which follows the climax. The effect may be comic and is often intended to be. · Examples: - a. "The great Dalhousie, he, the god of war, Lieutenant-colonel to the earl of Mar." b. The pirates finally found the treasure chest... only to find it empty. They worked so hard to get this chest.. and it's a failure.

Onomatopoeia Onomatopoeia is a word or a grouping of words that imitates the sound it is describing, suggesting its source object, such as "click," "bunk", "clang," "buzz," "bang," or animal noises such as "oink", "slurp", or "meow".

Prosopopoeia In this literary device, an absent, dead, or imaginary person is represented as speaking or acting.

Ode A poem, expressing intense personal emotion, often addressed to a particular person or thing, marked by an exalted tone and varying meter and length of line.

Ballad A ballad is a story, usually a narrative or poem, in a song. It is a narrative song with a recurrent refrain.

Imagery Imagery is the use of vivid or figurative language to represent objects, actions, or ideas. It is any literary reference to the five senses (sight, touch, smell, hearing, and taste), used to create a picture in the mind.

Supernaturalism (In Poetry) Supernaturalism, often used in poems, is a belief in forces beyond ordinary human understanding or phenomena which are not subject to natural laws, and therefore beyond verifiable measurement.

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