

Definitions of Terms

eu·phe·mism

<sup>1</sup>yooʃə ˌmizəm/

*noun*

1. a mild or indirect word or expression substituted for one considered to be too harsh or blunt when referring to something unpleasant or embarrassing.
2. "'downsizing' as a **euphemism for cuts**"
3. *syn*      4. polite term, indirect term, circumlocution, substitute,  
*ony*              alternative, understatement, genteelism
- ms:*      5. "'influential person' is the local euphemism for underworld don"

con·no·ta·tion

<sup>1</sup>känə ˈtāSH(ə)n/

*noun*

1. an idea or feeling that a word invokes in addition to its literal or primary meaning.
2. "the word "discipline" has unhappy connotations of punishment and repression"
3. *s*      4. overtone, undertone, undercurrent, implication, hidden meaning, nuance, hint,  
*y*              echo, vibrations, association, intimation, suggestion, suspicion, insinuation
- n*      5. "there was a connotation of distrust in his voice"
- o*
- n*
- y*
- m*
- s:*

Alliteration

the repetition of a single letter or combination of letters at the beginning of adjacent or nearby words

allusion

a reference in a text to another well-known text, person, event or thing

analysis

in literature, studying a text in order to determine its most important features

anaphora	a rhetorical feature that uses the same word or phrase at the beginning of clauses, phrases, or lines of poetry for effect
assonance	the repetition of sound between internal vowels in adjacent or nearby words
autobiography	the history of a person's life, as told by that person
Bildungsroman	a coming-of-age story; a story in which a young person has experiences that transform him or her into an adult
blank verse	unrhymed verse that has a set meter, pattern, and line length
cadence	the internal rhythm of a poem
characterization	how an author creates a clear picture of a character for the reader
clause	a group of words that has a subject and its predicate
coming-of-age story	a story that traces the main character's growth from childhood through maturity
compare	looking at how elements between two subjects are similar in literature
conflict	in literature, a struggle between opposing forces; challenges in the story that a main character has to confront and overcome
connotation	the deeper meaning of the word; how the word feels or the emotions it elicits
connotative meaning	the meanings and feelings we associate with a word, as opposed to the dictionary definition of that word
context	all of the information that must be considered when judging a person, place, or idea; the social or historical forces that shape a person, place, or idea; when referring to a text, the text that surrounds an unknown word or phrase

contrast	looking at how elements between two subjects are different in literature
decode	to break down a word into its component parts so you can understand it
denotation	the literal definition of a word
denotative meaning	the actual, dictionary definition of a word
dependent clause	a clause that cannot stand alone but rather depends on the rest of the sentence to express a complete thought; also called a subordinate clause
euphemism	a word or phrase that is used instead of one with unpleasant or offensive connotations
fantasy	literature that is based in imagination, rather than reality
figurative language	using non-literal words and phrases to draw attention to something's qualities, themes, or symbolic meaning; words and phrases used imaginatively to go beyond the literal meaning
free verse	poetry with no set meter; can be either rhymed or unrhymed
genre	in literature, a category of text that includes specific elements and characteristics
historical context	the geographic, social, political, and economic events that help shape and define any historical time period
imagery	the use of language to give a picture in one's mind
independent clause	a clause that can stand alone as a sentence
inference	determining meaning not from things told explicitly but rather drawing conclusions based on implications in the text
inflection	a change in the pitch of one's voice
irony	a contrast between what is stated and what is meant; when what happens is different from what

	is expected
lyric poetry	a poem that expresses the thoughts and feelings of the poet
meter	the beat or rhythm of poetry
modify	to describe another word in a sentence
narrative nonfiction	prose writing that tells a true story
novella	an abbreviated novel or extended short story
paraphrase	a restatement of a quote in literature, in different words from the original
phrase	a group of words that functions as a noun, verb, or other single part of speech
plot	the events that structure a story
point of view	the perspective from which a story is told
prose poem	a type of literature that combines features of both prose and poetry
protagonist	the main character in a story or novel; the "hero"
purpose	an author's goal when writing a novel; what a writer is hoping to achieve with their work
quotation	an exact reference or passage from a literary work
rhetorical features	the aspects of a speech that add interest or the use of effective or persuasive language
rite of passage	a formal or informal ceremony or event which marks a major transition in a person's life
setting	the place, time, and social context of a text
soliloquy	a dramatic technique in which a character speaks when alone, usually used to communicate thoughts to the audience
stanza	two or more lines of poetry that make up the smaller groupings within the poem
structure	the way an author arranges and organizes the

	poem
symbolism	attaching a deeper meaning, beyond the literal definition, to a person, object, or place
theme	the central message or underlying idea of a work of literature; a message about a particular topic being communicated through the text
thesis	a statement that directly expresses the author's purpose in writing the paper
tone	the speaker's attitude toward the audience or subject, as demonstrated through the author's choice of words, grammatical structure, and details
vernacular	common or everyday language
word choice	the way a writer chooses specific words to convey tone or meaning