**Literary Devices and Examples**

**Paradox:** A statement that seems to contradict itself, but in reality expresses a possible truth. *Example: “I’m a compulsive liar.” “You can save money by spending it.”*

**Pun:** A play on words that are identical or similar in sound but have sharply different meanings. It is used for serious or comic effect. *Example: Santa’s helpers are known as subordinate Clauses. I really wanted a camouflage shirt, but I couldn’t find one.*

**Repetition:** A device in which words, sounds and/or ideas are used more than once to enhance rhythm and to create emphasis. *“A horse is a horse, of course, of course,/And no one can talk to a horse of course/That is of course unless the horse is the famous Mister Ed.”*

**Simile:** A figure of speech that expresses resemblance between things of different kinds using 'like' or 'as'. *Examples: “Cute as a kitten.” “Busy as a bee.” “As happy as a clam.”*

**Onomatopoeia:** A word that phonetically imitates, resembles or suggests the source of the sound that it describes. *Example: “Gurgle.” “Hiss.”*

**Oxymoron:** A form of paradox that combines a pair of opposite terms into a single unusual expression. *Examples: “Great Depression.” “Jumbo Shrimp.” “Cruel to be kind.”*

**Personification:** A figure of speech in which an object or animal is given human feelings, thoughts or attitudes. *Examples: “The wind howled.” “The thunder grumbled.”*

**Metaphor:** Uses two nouns and compares or contrasts them to one another without using 'like' or 'as'. *Examples: “It’s raining men.” “The light of my life.”*

**Hyperbole:** A deliberate, extravagant and often outrageous exaggeration used for either serious or comic effect. *Examples: “I’ve told you a million times.” “I’m so hungry I could eat a horse.”*

**Symbol:** An image that means something more than is shown.

**Irony:** A contrast between appearance and reality. Usually one in which reality is opposite from what it seems. When one thing is expected to happen or be and the exact opposite occurs. *Example: “A traffic cop gets his license suspended for unpaid parking tickets.” “The Titanic was promoted as being 100% unsinkable; but, in 1912 the ship sank on its maiden voyage.”*

**Allusion:** A reference to a statement, person, place or event from literature, mythology, history, the Bible or the arts.

**Cliché:** A saying that is so common it is no longer interesting. Many similes, metaphors and idioms are clichés. *Examples: “A waste of time.” “Fit as a fiddle.” “Opposites attract.” “Cat got your tongue?” “Laughter is the best medicine.”*

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**Foreshadowing:** Clues that suggest events that are yet to occur.

**Anecdote:** A brief account of an interesting event intended to entertain or make a point.

**Plot:** The sequence of events or actions in a short story, novel, play or narrative poem.

**Motif:** A recurrent element in a literary work such as a pattern or strand of imagery or symbolism.

**Imagery:** Words that paint a picture that appeal to your five senses.

**Idiom:** An accepted expression that has a figurative rather than a literal meaning.

**Epiphany:** A sudden striking realization or understanding of something, or an 'ah ha!' moment.

**Satire:** Writing that ridicules something, often in order to bring about change; satire can poke at a person, a group of people, an attitude or a social situation.

**Details:** Facts revealed by the author or speaker that support the attitude or tone of the literary work.

**Archetype:** A type of character, action, situation or pattern that occurs over and over again in literature.

**Tone:** The author's attitude toward a subject, character or audience.

**Mood:** Emotional response of the reader to the text.

**Climax:** The most critical moment in the story or the point at which the main conflict is at its highest and then is decided one way or the other.

**Theme:** A central message or insight into life revealed through a literary work; a universal lesson about life or human nature.

**Exposition:** Foundation for the story consisting of setting, characters and their relationships, situation as it exists before conflict begins.