

Broken Arrow Public Schools

3rd Grade Literary Terms and Elements

Terms NEW to 3rd Grade Students:

Beat- a sound or similar sounds, recurring at regular intervals, and produced to help musicians keep rhythm or give a pattern of rhythm to a poem as it is read

Chronological Order-the normal sequence of events in a story. The order of events told from the first to the last in their proper order.

Details- the support or descriptions of events, **setting**, or **characters** that make images of them clearly imagined by the reader. Vivid details create sharp, realistic images of even unrealistic characters or settings.

Essay- a short piece **of non-fiction** writing, usually giving the author's perspective on a topic. There are four main modes of essays: **Narrative**, **Descriptive**, **Expository**, and **Persuasive (Argumentative)**. Essays of each mode can be written in a variety of patterns, including **comparison/ contrast**, **cause/ effect**, **definition**, analysis, classification, **chronological order**, spatial relation, **process**, and research.

Exaggeration-impossible events. To represent as greater than is actually the case. To overstate.

Fantasy- a story that takes place in an unreal world, often with **characters** and events that cannot exist in the real world. The magic world of Harry Potter is a modern fantasy world with dragons and unicorns.

Haiku-a Japanese poem without rhyme, but set in three lines totaling 17 syllables—5 in the first line, 7 in the second, and 5 again in the third. Most haikus focus on a clear image in an attempt to create a strong emotional response in the reader. Many are about nature.

Cowboy Haiku
With a cool, night wind
distant frogs croak, coyotes howl,
moon smiles over all

Historical Fiction- fictional stories whose setting is in a particular time in history, usually to use the cultural **setting** or historical events as part of the **plot**. These can be about ancient times or modern (contemporary) times.

Humor- writing that is meant to entertain in a light manner, not serious; often in funny or absurd situations.

Hyperbole- a figure of speech in which exaggeration is used for emphasis or effect. *“I would wait in line a million years to see that movie!”*

Idiom- a group of words that cannot be understood by the regular meaning of the words. (example: *Sam froze in his steps.* No one believes that Sam is so cold he literally froze.)

Main idea- the message, **purpose**, or thought that the writer is wanting to relate to the reader.

Metaphor- a type of **figurative language** that compares two unlike things but does not use the words like or as. *The thorny hedges were fierce guardians keeping the children from playing on the lawn in front of the mansion.*

Mystery- a story that creates suspense with a **plot** that has something missing, someone killed or some other uncertain event characters try to uncover and understand.

Persuasion- writing or speaking meant to encourage someone to do something. Persuasive writing is used to convince a reader that something is good or bad, that something needs to be changed, or that something should be done.

Plot- the main events in the story—“what happens.” Not to be confused with the **theme**, which is the message, or lesson that the writer wants to relate.

Realistic Fiction- stories that are made-up, but are about things that could happen to real people.

Short Story- a made-up story that is not long enough to be published as a book. A short story might tell a complete story or only be part of a bigger story.

Simile- figurative language that is a comparison of two things, usually using **like**, **as**, or **than** to point out the comparison: “He is as strong **as** an ox!” “She studies all the time—she’s as sharp as a tack!” “That book is heavier **than** a box of rocks!”

Suspense- a feeling of uncertainty about what will happen next.

Theme- the moral, lesson, or message that the writer wants the reader to understand from the story. Some stories have themes and some do not.

Voice- the attitude of a writing created by the stylistic approach of the writer. The writer's voice may be serious, humorous, formal, friendly, or just about any other attitude that someone can show.

Terms taught in Previous Years:

Alliteration- The repetition of the same sounds or the same kinds of sounds at the beginning of words or in stressed syllables.

Digby the dog likes to dig in the dirt.

Author- person who writes something.

Autobiography- the story of a person's life written by that person, telling the story of your own life is an autobiography.

Biography- the story of a person's life.

Cause and Effect- the reason (cause) something happened and what happened (effect) to it.

Watering the flowers makes them grow.

Cause: watering **Effect:** flowers grow.

Character- any of the people, animals, or creatures who are involved with the story.

Compare and Contrast- to look at two people or almost any two things and tell how they are alike and/or different.

Dialogue- The dialogue is what the characters are saying.

Fable- a short story or **poem** that teaches a lesson (moral). Usually fables show animals acting like people.

Fact- information or details about a real event, person, place, or time. Facts are important **details** in **non-fiction** writing.

Fairy Tale- a story that is made-up and has magical creatures or people. Some fairy tales tell a lesson, like fables. Some fairy tales you might know are "Cinderella," "Rumpelstiltskin," and "The Frog Prince."

Fiction- writing, a story, that is not true and is not meant to be thought to be true. Fiction stories are written to entertain, to relate a **theme** to the readers, or both.

Folk Tale- a made-up story that tells about how a group of people live. The beliefs, values, habits, common problems, and even language of this group will be part of the story.

Infer (Inference)- to come to an understanding of something through reasoning; to reason through information in order to draw a conclusion not stated.

Informational Text- any non-fiction writing that is meant to give the reader information or knowledge about a subject rather than just tell the story about someone's life or give someone's opinion about a subject.

Legend- a story that is at least part made-up, and might be part real. These stories are usually about great deeds or amazing adventures, but there is no historical proof for it. Legends might have magical creatures or might not. The **characters** in a legend might have been real people or might have been made up. Legends are usually more made-up than real, even when they are about real people and we want to believe them.

The story that George Washington chopped down a cherry tree when he was a boy and then told his father, "I cannot tell a lie, I chopped down the cherry tree" is a legend and most likely never happened.

Non-fiction- writing that is true and is meant to relate information, ideas, **opinions**, or **facts** to the reader. Non-fiction writing will have a **main idea**.

Onomatopoeia- words that are spelled like the sound they represent. *Bark. Pop. Zip. Pow.*

Opinion- a person's feelings or ideas about a subject, person, event, or any other topic. Everyone can have opinions about something, and opinions are considered **non-fiction**, but it is very important to remember that opinions are not **facts** and do not prove that the ideas of the writer are true.

Poetry/Poem- writing that does not use standard sentence structure and paragraph formatting. Often poems use **rhythm** and **rhyme** as part of their structure and will have specific line length and be set in **stanzas** rather than normal paragraphs.

Prose- writing that uses the normal patterns and structures of usage and grammar, rather than in lines and **stanzas** like poetry. Everything written except for poems is prose.

Purpose- the **Main Idea** of the story, the message the writer is wanting the reader to understand: *to entertain, to inform, or to persuade.*

Rhyme- the repetition of the final vowel or vowel sound and all succeeding consonant sounds in two or more words.

Wing rhymes with sing. Hopped rhymes with stopped.

Rhyme scheme- the pattern of the lines in poetry, both **rhyming** and unrhymed lines. The word ending the first line is designated “a,” as are the lines ending with a word that rhymes with it. The next line that does not rhyme with the first is designated as “b,” as are all lines that rhyme with it. And so forth. The two **stanzas** below from “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star” show the poems pattern of rhyming couplets:

Twinkle, twinkle, little star!	a
How I wonder what you are,	a
Up above the world so high,	b
Like a diamond in the sky.	b
When the glorious sun is set,	c
When the grass with dew is wet,	c
Then you show your little light,	d
Twinkle, twinkle all the night.	d

Rhythm- rise and fall of the voice produced by the alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables in language. It can be the flow from one idea or image to the next in poetry. Many poems have a rhythm.

Sequence- the order of things in a group or set. The sequence of a story is beginning, middle, and then end. A writer will use the sequence of events as a means of organization.

Setting- the time and place of a story. When and where the story takes place.

Stanza- a group of lines in a poem. A stanza is the equivalent of a paragraph in **poetry**.

Tall Tale- a story that is made-up that tries to tell how natural events came to be. Tall tales were not meant to be believed, but are supposed to be a little silly and too strange to be true. Pecos Bill, Paul Bunyan, Babe the Blue Ox, and John Henry are all famous tall tale characters.

Text- a piece of writing, in whole or part. It can be any selection of writing, large or small, **fiction** or **non-fiction**, **prose** or **poetry**.

Title- the name of a story, poem, or book. The title will be on the cover and title page of a book.