



**Next Generation  
Literary Text  
Standards-Based  
Glossary**

Grades K-12

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act – the most major subdivision of a play; made up of scenes

allude – to mention without discussing at length

analogy – similarities between like features of two things on which a comparison may be based

analyze – to break into smaller components for the purpose of study or examination

approach – a way of dealing with something

aspect – a distinct feature

base word – a word that can stand alone without a prefix and/or suffix

beauty – the quality present in a thing or person that give intense pleasure/deep satisfaction to the mind, whether arising from sensory manifestation, a meaningful design or pattern, or something else

central idea – the thought, concept, notion, or impression that is of greatest importance in the text or portion of the text, it may be implied or stated

character – a personality in a literary work

citation – the exact location of a quotation or reference from a text brought forward as support (more useful when it includes a line number, paragraph, page number, and/or author)

climax – the highest point of tension/interest in the plot

compare – to note similarities

conflict – the struggle between opposing forces or ideas

contrast – to note differences

contribute – to be an important factor in; help to cause

convey – to communicate or make known

culture- the behaviors and beliefs, characterizations' of a particular group of people

describe – to give an account in words (of someone or something), including all the relevant characteristics, qualities, or events

dialogue – conversations between two or more persons/characters

discrepancy – difference

distinct – separate or different from

distinguish – to note differences

drama – a play; a prose or verse composition telling a story that is intended to be performed by actors

emphasis – special attention

episode – an incident or event that is a part of a larger sequence

evaluate – to decide the value or worth of after study

event – something that happens or happened

evidence – facts or information used as support for whether a belief or proposition is true or valid

explain – to make something clear by describing it in more detail or by revealing relevant facts or ideas

explanation – a statement that makes something clear by describing it in more detail or by revealing relevant facts or ideas

exposition – provides important background information and introduces the setting, characters, and conflict (in some cases)

fable – a short story, typically with animals as the characters, conveying a moral

falling action – the action that takes place after climax to reveal the final outcome of key events

first person - a method of storytelling in which the narrator is a character or observer in the story who conveys information to the reader from his/her

singular perspective; the narrator uses I, me, we to relate thoughts, experiences, and observations

folklore - the traditional beliefs, customs and stories of a community, passed through the generations by word of mouth

identify- recognize and name

illustration – an example or image serving to clarify or prove something

impetus – cause of; stimulus

incident – an individual occurrence or event

indepth – thorough; detailed

inference – a logical assumption based on observed facts from the text and one's own prior knowledge

interact – to act in such a way as to have an effect on another

interpretation – an explanation of the meaning of another's artistic or creative work

irony – the expression of one's meaning by using language that normally signifies the opposite, typically for humorous or emphatic effect

key details – important words or phrases

literal – the ordinary or usual meaning of words

meaning – what is intended to be, or actually is expressed or indicated

medium - a means of communicating information

metaphor – a comparison between two unlike things without the use of like or as

mystery - anything that is kept secret or remains unexplained or unknown

myth – a traditional, ancient story, usually with heroes and gods

narrator – the individual who relates or tells the story

non-literal – language that contains or uses figures of speech (e.g., simile, metaphor, personification, imagery, alliteration, onomatopoeia, hyperbole, idiom)

objective – not influenced by personal feelings or opinions in considering and representing facts

pattern – repetition of an element or elements in a work

plot – the pattern of events of a literary work, which includes: an exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution

poem – a composition, usually in verse, that may be characterized by a highly developed artistic form and by the use of heightened language and rhythm

point of view – the narrator's position in relation to the story being told

prefix – a word part added to the beginning of a root or base word

propel – to drive or cause to move forward or onward

prose – the ordinary form of spoken or written language, without metrical structure, as distinguished from poetry or verse

provoke – to incite or stimulate to action

recount – retell

reference – to mention

resolution – the conclusion of the conflict

reveal – to disclose; unveil; tell

rising action – the action that leads to the climax used to build suspense

root – a word part to which a prefix and/or suffix may be added to create a word

sarcasm – the use of irony to mock or convey contempt

satire – the use of humor, irony, sarcasm, ridicule, or exaggeration in exposing, denouncing, deriding, or exposing and criticizing people's stupidity or vices

series – a number of things or events of the same class coming one after another

sequence – the following of one thing after another

setting – where the story takes place

scene – a subdivision of an act of a play

scene\* - a single event that occurs in a particular time, and place

significant – important; of consequence

similar – alike

simile – a comparison of two unlike things using like or as

specific details – particular words or phrases

stanza – one of the major divisions of a poem; composed of two or more lines usually characterized by a common meter, rhyme, and number of lines

story – a narrative account, either real or fictitious, told in prose

strong – especially able, competent, or powerful

structure – the arrangement of and relationship between the parts or elements

style – the habitual, repeated patterns that differentiate one writer from another

subject - a person, place, thing, ore idea

successive – following in uninterrupted order

suffix – a word part added to the end of a root or base word

summary – a brief statement that contains the essential ideas of a longer passage

support – to hold up or serve as a foundation

surprise - to elicit or bring out suddenly and without warning

tension - suppressed suspense, anxiety, or excitement

theme – unifying or dominant idea

third-person limited – a method of story telling in which the non-participant narrator knows only the thoughts and feelings of a single character, while other characters are presented only externally

third-person omniscient – a method of story telling in which the (non-participant) narrator knows the thoughts and feelings of all characters in the story

tone – the author's, character's, or narrator's attitude toward a subject

topic – the subject of the text

traditional literature – ancient stories or poems of many cultures that originated in the oral or through story telling tradition; often attributed to different groups and cultures, but have no known original authors

uncertain – not known; questionable

understatement – the presentation of something as being smaller or less good or important than it actually is

untold – to be revealed; advance

visual – done, maintained, or executed by sight