

Literary Terms

9th Grade

The terms high-school essays are expected to use, grouped and defined.

The vocabulary a high-school essay is expected to use — precisely, not decoratively.

Diction	The writer's word choice, and its connotations.
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Syntax	Sentence construction — length, order, fragments.
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Tone	The writer's attitude towards the subject.
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Mood	The atmosphere the reader is put into.
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Motif	A recurring image or idea that builds meaning.
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Allusion	A reference to another text, myth or event.
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Juxtaposition	Two contrasting things placed side by side.
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Paradox	A statement that contradicts itself yet holds true.
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Oxymoron	Two contradictory words joined: deafening silence.
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Satire	Ridicule used to expose a flaw or folly.
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Verbal irony	Saying the opposite of what is meant.
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Situational irony	The outcome is the opposite of what is expected.
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Dramatic irony	The reader knows what a character does not.
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Anaphora	The same phrase repeated to open successive lines.
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Understatement	Deliberately making something sound smaller.
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Characterisation	Direct (told) or indirect (shown through action).
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● Two terms used exactly beat ten used loosely.