

ESSENTIAL LITERARY TERMS

Study Guide Questions

1. A story in which a person or an object takes on a symbolic meaning is a(n) _____.
2. What device is being used when several words in a series begin with the same sound?
3. When a writer refers to a character from another novel, a(n) _____ is being made.
4. A(n) _____ compares two things so as to show their similarities.
5. The person or force in opposition to the protagonist is the _____.
6. A clever one-line observation about life is a(n) _____.
7. What device is used when a character speaks directly to something that is not human?
8. A book written about the author's own life is a(n) _____.
9. An ancient story form in poetic verse is a(n) _____.
10. A book written about someone's life (not the author's life) is a(n) _____.
11. A person or element presented as a person is a(n) _____.
12. The turning point of a story is also known as its _____.
13. A comedy ends _____ for the protagonist.
14. A comparison between two stunningly dissimilar things is a(n) _____.
15. What are the four basic kinds of conflict that can occur in stories?
16. The emotional content of a word or a phrase is its _____.

17. The literal meaning of a word is its _____.
18. The outcome of a story is its _____.
19. _____ has to do with a writer's choice of words.
20. A poem expressing sorrow about a death is a(n) _____.
21. A long, narrative poem about the feats of a hero is a(n) _____.
22. An apt quotation that supports the theme of a literary work is a(n) _____.
23. At the end of a literary work, the _____ lets the reader know what happened to characters.
24. A literary _____ is a descriptive phrase that helps to define a person's character.
25. A short piece of prose that expresses a point of view about a particular subject is a(n) _____.
26. A mild phrase used in place of an offensive expression is a(n) _____.
27. The _____ provides important background information.
28. A(n) _____ demonstrates a moral lesson.
29. A fabricated story is _____.
30. _____ language is not to be taken literally.
31. When a(n) _____ occurs, on-going action is interrupted so that a scene from the past can take place.
32. The character whose actions contrast with those of the main character is the _____.

33. _____ occurs when hints or clues suggest what may happen later in the story.
34. Gothic romance is a type of literary _____.
35. A gross exaggeration is _____.
36. When words create mental pictures, _____ is at work.
37. The technique used when the reader is plunged into the middle of a story is _____.
38. Name the three types of irony.
39. When the reader knows something that the characters don't know, what type of irony is being used?
40. A(n) _____ is full of woe and sorrow.
41. A(n) _____ is an elaborately descriptive phrase that relies heavily upon metaphors.
42. A short poem that expresses the speaker's personal thoughts or emotions is a(n) _____ poem.
43. What compares two dissimilar things by saying that one of the things actually is the other thing?
44. The overall feeling of a literary piece is its _____.
45. A repeated theme is a(n) _____.
46. An unverifiable story, often about mortals, is a(n) _____.
47. The person telling a story is the _____.
48. Prose writing that focuses on real events is _____.
49. Any fictional book-length narrative is a(n) _____.

50. A long short story is a(n) _____.
51. A long, formal, lyric poem about a lofty subject is a(n) _____.
52. What device is used when a word's sound imitates its meaning?
53. When two seemingly contradictory words are juxtaposed, a writer has created a(n) _____.
54. When something is true even when it seems as though it ought to be untrue, there is a(n) _____.
55. Any literary work that idealizes shepherds and/or rustic settings is a(n) _____.
56. A humorous imitation of a previous literary work is a(n) _____.
57. When something that is not human is endowed with human characteristics, _____ is being used.
58. A linked series of related events is the story's _____.
59. The hero, or the central character, is the _____.
60. A(n) _____ is a play on words.
61. The _____ follows the climax and ties up loose ends.
62. A literary piece set in an idealized world is a(n) _____.
63. A writer shows his or her contempt for society's shortcomings in a(n) _____.
64. The time and place of the story comprise its _____.
65. A(n) _____ compares two unlike things by using the words, "like" or "as."
66. A(n) _____ always acts and looks a certain way.

67. _____ refers to an author's characteristic way of writing.
68. A story within the main story is a(n) _____.
69. _____ makes a reader tense, nervous, or uneasy.
70. A(n) _____ stands for something.
71. A story's main idea is its _____.
72. The author's _____ expresses his or her attitude about the characters.
73. When the story's protagonist experiences a downfall or comes to an untimely end, the story is a(n) _____.
74. A(n) _____ minimizes the importance of what is being said.
75. The dominating tone of a literary work is its _____.
76. When two words are linked to a verb or adjective that is strictly appropriate to only one of them, the author has written a(n) _____.

Answers

1. A story in which a person or an object takes on a symbolic meaning is a(n) _____.

allegory

2. What device is being used when several words in a series begin with the same sound?

alliteration

3. When a writer refers to a character from another novel, a(n) _____ is being made.

allusion

4. A(n) _____ compares two things so as to show their similarities.

analogy

5. The person or force in opposition to the protagonist is the _____.

antagonist

6. A clever one-line observation about life is a(n) _____.

aphorism

7. What device is used when a character speaks directly to something that is not human?

apostrophe

8. A book written about the author's own life is a(n) _____.

autobiography

9. An ancient story form in poetic verse is a(n) _____.

ballad

10. A book written about someone's life (not the author's life) is a(n) _____.

biography

11. A person or element presented as a person is a(n) _____.

character

12. The turning point of a story is also known as its _____.

climax

13. A comedy ends _____ for the protagonist.

happily

14. A comparison between two stunningly dissimilar things is a(n) _____.

conceit

15. What are the four basic kinds of conflict that can occur in stories?

person vs. person/ person vs. society/ person vs. nature/ person vs. self

16. The emotional content of a word or a phrase is its _____.

connotation

17. The literal meaning of a word is its _____.

denotation

18. The outcome of a story is its _____.

dénouement

19. _____ has to do with a writer's choice of words.

Diction

20. A poem expressing sorrow about a death is a(n) _____.

elegy

21. A long, narrative poem about the feats of a hero is a(n) _____.

epic

22. An apt quotation that supports the theme of a literary work is a(n) _____.

epigraph

23. At the end of a literary work, the _____ lets the reader know what happened to characters.

epilogue

24. A literary _____ is a descriptive phrase that helps to define a person's character.

epithet

25. A short piece of prose that expresses a point of view about a particular subject is a(n) _____.

essay

26. A mild phrase used in place of an offensive expression is a(n) _____.

euphemism

27. The _____ provides important background information.

exposition

28. A(n) _____ demonstrates a moral lesson.

fable

29. A fabricated story is _____.

fiction

30. _____ language is not to be taken literally.

Figurative

31. When a(n) _____ occurs, on-going action is interrupted so that a scene from the past can take place.

flashback

32. The character whose actions contrast with those of the main character is the _____.

foil

33. _____ occurs when hints or clues suggest what may happen later in the story.

Foreshadowing

34. Gothic romance is a type of literary _____.

genre

35. A gross exaggeration is _____.

hyperbole

36. When words create mental pictures, _____ is at work.

imagery

37. The technique used when the reader is plunged into the middle of a story is _____.

in medias res

38. Name the three types of irony.

verbal irony/ dramatic irony/ irony of situation

39. When the reader knows something that the characters don't know, what type of irony is being used?

dramatic irony

40. A(n) _____ is full of woe and sorrow.

jeremiad

41. A(n) _____ is an elaborately descriptive phrase that relies heavily upon metaphors.

kenning

42. A short poem that expresses the speaker's personal thoughts or emotions is a(n) _____ poem.

lyric

43. What compares two dissimilar things by saying that one of the things actually is the other thing?

a metaphor

44. The overall feeling of a literary piece is its _____.

mood

45. A repeated theme is a(n) _____.

motif

46. An unverifiable story, often about mortals, is a(n) _____.

myth

47. The person telling a story is the _____.

narrator

48. Prose writing that focuses on real events is _____.

nonfiction

49. Any fictional book-length narrative is a(n) _____.

novel

50. A long short story is a(n) _____.

novella

51. A long, formal, lyric poem about a lofty subject is a(n) _____.

ode

52. What device is used when a word's sound imitates its meaning?

onomatopoeia

53. When two seemingly contradictory words are juxtaposed, a writer has created a(n) _____.

oxymoron

54. When something is true even when it seems as though it ought to be untrue, there is a(n) _____.

paradox

55. Any literary work that idealizes shepherds and/or rustic settings is a(n) _____.

pastoral

56. A humorous imitation of a previous literary work is a(n) _____.

parody

57. When something that is not human is endowed with human characteristics, _____ is being used.

personification

58. A linked series of related events is the story's _____.

plot

59. The hero, or the central character, is the _____.

protagonist

60. A(n) _____ is a play on words.

pun

61. The _____ follows the climax and ties up loose ends.

resolution

62. A literary piece set in an idealized world is a(n) _____.

romance

63. A writer shows his or her contempt for society's shortcomings in a(n) _____.

satire

64. The time and place of the story comprise its _____.

setting

65. A(n) _____ compares two unlike things by using the words, "like" or "as."

simile

66. A(n) _____ always acts and looks a certain way.

stereotype/ stock character

67. _____ refers to an author's characteristic way of writing.

Style

68. A story within the main story is a(n) _____.

subplot

69. _____ makes a reader tense, nervous, or uneasy.

Suspense

70. A(n) _____ stands for something.

symbol

71. A story's main idea is its _____.

theme

72. The author's _____ expresses his or her attitude about the characters.

tone

73. When the story's protagonist experiences a downfall or comes to an untimely end, the story is a(n) _____.

tragedy

74. A(n) _____ minimizes the importance of what is being said.

understatement

75. The dominating tone of a literary work is its _____.

voice

76. When two words are linked to a verb or adjective that is strictly appropriate to only one of them, the author has written a(n) _____.

zeugma