Allegory
Definition: An allegory is a symbolism device where the meaning of a greater, often abstract, concept is conveyed with the aid of a more corporeal object or idea being used as an example. Usually a rhetoric device, an allegory suggests a meaning via metaphoric examples.
Example: Faith is like a stony uphill climb: a single stumble might send you sprawling but belief and steadfastness will see you to the very top.

Alliteration
Definition: Alliteration is a literary device where words are used in quick succession and begin with letters belonging to the same sound group. Whether it is the consonant sound or a specific vowel group, the alliteration involves creating a repetition of similar sounds in the sentence. Alliterations are also created when the words all begin with the same letter. Alliterations are used to add character to the writing and often add an element of 'fun' to the piece.
Example: The Wicked Witch of the West went her own way. (The 'W' sound is highlighted and repeated throughout the sentence.)

Allusion
Definition: An allusion is a figure of speech whereby the author refers to a subject matter such as a place, event, or literary work by way of a passing reference. It is up to the reader to make a connection to the subject being mentioned.

Analogy
Definition: An analogy is a literary device that helps to establish a relationship based on similarities between two concepts or ideas. By using an analogy we can convey a new idea by using the blueprint of an old one as a basis for understanding. With a mental linkage between the two, one can create comprehension regarding the new concept in a simple and succinct manner.
Example: In the same way as one cannot have the rainbow without the rain, one cannot achieve success and riches without hard work.

Anastrophe
Definition: Anastrophe is a form of literary device wherein the order of the noun and the adjective in the sentence is exchanged. In standard parlance and writing the adjective comes before the noun but when one is employing an anastrophe the noun is followed by the adjective. This reversed order creates a dramatic impact and lends weight to the description offered by the adjective.
Example: He spoke of times past and future, and dreamt of things to be.

Anthropomorphism
Definition: Anthropomorphism can be understood to be the act of lending a human quality, emotion or ambition to a non-human object or being. This act of lending a human element to a non-human subject is often employed in order to endear the latter to the readers or audience and increase the level of relativity between the two while also lending character to the subject.
Example: The raging storm brought with it howling winds and fierce lightning as the residents of the village looked up at the angry skies in alarm.

Aphorism
Definition:
An aphorism is a concise statement that is made in a matter of fact tone to state a principle or an opinion that is generally understood to be a universal truth. Aphorisms are often adages, wise sayings and maxims aimed at imparting sense and wisdom. It is to be noted that aphorisms are usually witty and curt and often have an underlying tone of authority to them.
Example: Upon seeing the shoddy work done by the employee the boss told him to "either shape up or ship out".

Archetype
Definition: An archetype is a reference to a concept, a person or an object that has served as a prototype of its kind and is the original idea that has come to be used over and over again. Archetypes are literary devices that employ the use of a famous concept, person or object to convey a wealth of meaning. Archetypes are immediately identifiable and even though they run the risk of being overused, they are still the best examples of their kind.
Example: Romeo and Juliet are an archetype of eternal love and a star-crossed love story.

Assonance

Definition: Assonance refers to repetition of sounds produced by vowels within a sentence or phrase. In this regard assonance can be understood to be a kind of alliteration. What sets it apart from alliterations is that it is the repetition of only vowel sounds. Assonance is the opposite of consonance, which implies repetitive usage of consonant sounds.
Example: “A long song”. (Where the ‘o’ sound is repeated in the last two words of the sentence)

Asyndeton
Definition:
Asyndeton refers to a practice in literature whereby the author purposely leaves out conjunctions in the sentence, while maintaining the grammatical accuracy of the phrase. Asyndeton as a literary tool helps in shortening up the implied meaning of the entire phrase and presenting it in a succinct form. This compact version helps in creating an immediate impact whereby the reader is instantly attuned to what the writer is trying to convey. Use of this literary device helps in creating a strong impact and such sentences have greater recall worth since the idea is presented in a nutshell.
Example: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.

Authorial Intrusion
Definition: Authorial Intrusion is an interesting literary device wherein the author penning the story, poem or prose steps away from the text and speaks out to the reader. Authorial Intrusion establishes a one to one relationship between the writer and the reader where the latter is no longer a secondary player or an indirect audience to the progress of the story but is the main subject of the author’s attention.
Example: In many olden novels, especially in suspense novels, the protagonist would move away from the stream of the story and speak out to the reader. This technique was often used to reveal some crucial elements of the story to the reader even though the protagonist might remain mystified within the story for the time being.

Caesura
Definition: This literary device involves creating a fracture of sorts within a sentence where the two separate parts are distinguishable from one another yet intrinsically linked to one another. The purpose of using a caesura is to create a dramatic pause, which has a strong impact. The pause helps to add an emotional, often theatrical touch to the sentence and conveys a depth of sentiment in a short phrase.
Example: Mozart- oh how your music makes me soar!

Connotation
Definition: Connotation is a complex literary device wherein the intended meaning is not stated clearly and is instead conveyed through covert, indirect means. Connotations leaves a little of the meaning unstated so that the reader can decode it for himself.
Example: And once again, the autumn leaves were falling. This phrase uses ‘autumn’ to signify something coming to an end.

Consonance
Definition: Consonance refers to repetition of sounds produced by consonants within a sentence or phrase. In this regard consonance can be understood to be a kind of alliteration. What sets it apart from alliterations is that it is the repetition of only consonant sounds. Consonance is the opposite of assonance, which implies repetitive usage of vowel sounds.
Example: Sing sweet songs for suzy.

Denotation
Definition: Denotation refers to expressing a meaning or the significance of a part of a story in a straightforward, clear-cut manner. There is no roundabout, covert manner employed and hence denotation is the opposite of connotation.
Example: He packed his bags and made his way out of the house, leaving his old life behind forever.

Diction
Definition: Diction is the distinctive tone or tenor of an author’s writings. Diction is not just a writer's choice of words it can include the mood, attitude, dialect and style of writing. Diction is usually judged with reference to the prevailing standards of proper writing and speech and is seen as the mark of quality of the writing. It is also understood as the selection of certain words or phrases that become peculiar to a writer.
Example: Certain writers in the modern day and age use archaic terms such as ‘thy’, ‘thee’ and ‘wherefore’ to imbue a Shakespearean mood to their work.

Ekphrastic
Definition: Ekphrastic refers to a form of writing, mostly poetry, wherein the author describes another work of art, usually visual. It is used to convey the deeper symbolism of the corporeal art form by means of a separate medium. It has often been found that ekphrastic writing is rhetorical in nature and symbolic of a greater meaning.

Example: A photograph of an empty landscape can convey desolation, abandon and loss. Similarly, one can convey the same sentiments and concepts by using phrases such as ‘an empty doorway’ or ‘a childless nursery’.

Epithet
Definition: An epithet is a literary device that is used as a descriptive device. It is usually used to add to a person or place’s regular name and attribute some special quality to the same. Epithets are remarkable in that they become a part of common parlance over time. These descriptive words and phrases can be used to enhance the persona of real and fictitious places, objects, persons and divinities.
Example: “Alexander the Great” is the epithet commonly used to refer to Alexander III of Macedon. The young king has come to be recognized by this epithet in all of history and popular culture owing to his spectacular achievements in creating one of the largest-ever historical empires.

Hyperbaton
Definition: A hyperbaton is a literary device wherein the author plays with the regular positioning of words and phrases and creates a differently structured sentence to convey the same meaning. It is said that by using a hyperbaton, words/ phrases overstep their conventional placements and result in a more complex and intriguing sentence structure. This literary device is used to add more depth and interest to the sentence structure.
Example: “Alone he walked on the cold, lonely roads”. This sentence is a variation of the more conventional, “He walked alone on the cold, lonely roads”.

Hyperbole
Definition: A hyperbole is a literary device wherein the author uses specific words and phrases that exaggerate and overemphasize the basic crux of the statement in order to produce a grander, more noticeable effect. The purpose of hyperbole is to create a larger-than-life effect and overly stress a specific point. Such sentences usually convey an action or sentiment that is generally not practically/ realistically possible or plausible but helps emphasize an emotion.
Example: “I am so tired I cannot walk another inch” or “I’m so sleepy I might fall asleep standing here”.

Imagery
Definition: In literature, one of the strongest devices is imagery wherein the author uses words and phrases to create “mental images” for the reader. Imagery helps the reader to visualize and therein more realistically experience the author’s writings. The usage of metaphors, allusions, descriptive words and similes amongst other literary forms in order to “tickle” and awaken the readers’ sensory perceptions is referred to as imagery. Imagery is not limited to only visual sensations, but also refers to igniting kinesthetic, olfactory, tactile, gustatory, thermal and auditory sensations as well.
Example: The gushing brook stole its way down the lush green mountains, dotted with tiny flowers in a riot of colors and trees coming alive with gaily chirping birds.

Internal Rhyme
Definition: In literature the internal rhyme is a practice of forming a rhyme in only one lone line of verse. An internal rhyme is also known as the middle rhyme because it is typically constructed in the middle of a line to rhyme with the bit at the end of the same metrical line.
Example: The line from the famed poem Ancient Mariner, “We were the first that ever burst”.

Irony
Definition: The use of irony in literature refers to playing around with words such that the meaning implied by a sentence/ word is actually different from the literal meaning derived. Often, irony is used to suggest the stark contrast of the literal meaning being put forth. The deeper, real layer of significance is revealed not by the words themselves but the situation and the context in which they are placed.
Example: Writing a sentence such as, “Oh! What fine luck I have!”. The sentence on the surface conveys that the speaker is happy with their luck but actually what they mean is that they are extremely unhappy and dissatisfied with their (bad) luck.

Juxtaposition
Definition: In literature, juxtaposition is a literary device wherein the author places a person, concept, place, idea or theme parallel to another. The purpose of juxtaposing two directly/indirectly related entities close together in literature is to highlight the contrast between the two and compare them. This literary device is usually used for etching out a character in detail, creating suspense or lending a rhetorical effect.
Example: In Paradise Lost, Milton has used juxtaposition to draw a parallel between the two protagonists, Satan and God, who he discusses by placing their traits in comparison with one another to highlight their differences.

Kennings

Definition: The use of Kennings in literature is characteristically related to works in Old English poetry where the author would use a twist of words, figure of speech or magic poetic phrase or a newly created compound sentence or phrase to refer to a person, object, place, action or idea. The use of imagery and indicative, direct and indirect references to substitute the proper, formal name of the subject is known as kennings. The use of kennings was also prevalent in Old Norse and Germanic poetry.
Example: Kennings are rare in modern day language. Here are a few examples from Beowulf: Battle-sweat = blood; Sky-candle = sun

Metaphor
Definition: Metaphors are one of the most extensively used literary devices. A metaphor refers to a meaning or identity ascribed to one subject by way of another. In a metaphor, one subject is implied to be another so as to draw a comparison between their similarities and shared traits. The first subject, which/who is the focus of the sentences is usually compared to the second subject, which is used to convey/carry a degree of meaning that is used to characterize the first. The purpose of using a metaphor is to take an identity or concept that we understand clearly (second subject) and use it to better understand the lesser-knownelement (the first subject).

Metonymy
Definition: Metonymy in literature refers to the practice of not using the formal word for an object/subject and instead referring to it by using another word that is intricately linked to the formal name/word. It is the practice of substituting the main word with a word that is closely linked to it.
Example: When we use the name “Washington D.C” we are talking about the U.S’ political hot seat by referring to the political capital of the United States because all the significant political institutions such as the White House, Supreme Court, the U.S. Capitol and many more are located her. The phrase “Washington D.C.” is metonymy for the government of the U.S. in this case.

Motif
Definition: The literary device ‘motif’ is any element, subject, idea or concept that is constantly present through the entire body of literature. Using a motif refers to the repetition of a specific theme dominating the literary work. Motifs are very noticeable and play a significant role in defining the nature of the story, the course of events and the very fabric of the literary piece.
Example: In all the famed fairytales, the motif of a ‘handsome prince’ falling in love with a ‘damsel in distress’ and the two being bothered by a wicked step-mother/ evil witch/ beast and finally conquering all and living ‘happily ever after’ is a common motif.

Negative Capability
Definition: The use of negative capability in literature is a concept promoted by poet John Keats, who was of the opinion that literary achievers, especially poets, should be able to come to terms with the fact that some matters might have to be left unsolved and uncertain. Keats was of the opinion that some certainties were best left open to imagination and that the element of doubt and ambiguity added romanticism and specialty to a concept.

Onomatopoeia
Definition: The term ‘onomatopoeia’ refers to words whose very sound is very close to the sound they are meant to depict. In other words, it refers to sound words whose pronunciation to the actual sound/noise they represent.
Example: Words such as grunt, huff, buzz and snap are words whose

Oxymoron
Definition: Oxymoron is a significant literary device as it allows the author to use contradictory, contrasting concepts placed together in a manner that actually ends up making sense in a strange, and slightly complex manner. An oxymoron is an interesting literary device because it helps to perceive a deeper level of truth and explore different layers of semantics while writing.
Example: little value, sweet sorrow

Paradox
Definition: A paradox in literature refers to the use of concepts/ ideas that are contradictory to one another, yet, when placed together they hold significant value on several levels. The uniqueness of paradoxes lies in the fact that a deeper level of meaning and significance is not revealed at first glance, but when it does crystallize, it provides astonishing insight.
Example: High walls make not a palace; full coffers make not a king.

Pathetic Fallacy
Definition: Pathetic fallacy is a type of literary device whereby the author ascribes the human feelings of one or more of his/her characters to non-human objects or nature or phenomena. It is a type of personification, and is known to occur more by accident and less on purpose.
Example: The softly whistling teapot informed him it was time for breakfast.

Personification
Definition: Personification is one of the most commonly used and recognized literary devices. It refers to the practice of attaching human traits and characteristics with inanimate objects, phenomena and animals.

Point of View
Definition:
In literature, the 'point of view' is a literary device that depicts the manner in which a story is narrated/ depicted and who it is that tells the story. Simply put, the point of view determines the angle and perception of the story unfolding, and thus influences the tone in which the story takes place. The point of view is instrumental in manipulating the reader's understanding of the narrative. In a way, the point of view can allow or withhold the reader access into the greater reaches of the story. Two of the most common point of view techniques are the first person, wherein the story is told by the narrator from his/ her standpoint and the third person wherein the narrator does not figure in the events of the story and tells the story by referring to all characters and places in the third person with third person pronouns and proper nouns.

Portmanteau
Definition: In literature, this device refers to the practice of joining together two or more words in order to create an entirely new word. This is often done in order to create a name or word for something by combining the individual characteristics of 2 or more other words.
Example: The word "smog" is a portmanteau that was built combining "fog" and "smoke" and "smog" has the properties of both fog and smoke.

Puns
Definition: Puns are a very popular literary device wherein a word is used in a manner to suggest two or more possible meanings. This is generally done to the effect of creating humor or irony or wryness. Puns can also refer to words that suggest meanings of similar-sounding words. The trick is to make the reader have an "ah!" moment and discover 2 or more meanings.
Example: Santa's helpers are known as subordinate Clauses.

Rhyme Scheme
Definition: The rhyme scheme is the practice of rhyming words placed at the end of the lines in the prose/ poetry. Rhyme scheme refers to the order in which particular words rhyme. If the alternate words rhyme, it is an "a-b-a-b" rhyme scheme, which means "a" is the rhyme for the lines 1 and 3 and "b" is the rhyme affected in the lines 2 and 4.

Satire
Definition: The use of satire in literature refers to the practice of making fun of a human weakness or character flaw. The use of satire is often inclusive of a need or decision of correcting or bettering the character that is on the receiving end of the satire. In general, even though satire might be humorous and may "make fun", its purpose is not to entertain and amuse but actually to derive a reaction of contempt from the reader.

Setting
Definition: In literature, the word 'setting' is used to identify and establish the time, place and mood of the events of the story. It basically helps in establishing where and when and under what circumstances the story is taking place.

Simile
Definition: Similes are one of the most commonly used literary devices; referring to the practice of drawing parallels or comparisons between two unrelated and dissimilar things, people, beings, places and concepts. By using similes a greater degree of meaning and understanding is attached to an otherwise simple sentence. The reader is able to better understand the sentiment the author wishes to convey. Similes are marked by the use of the words 'as' or 'such as' or 'like'.
Example: He is like a mouse in front of the teacher.

Spoonerism

Definition: Spoonerism refers to the practice of interchanging the first letters of some words in order to create new words or even to create nonsensical words in order to create a humorous setting. While they are often unintentional and known as a “slip of the tongue”, in literature they are welcomed as witty word-play.
Example: The phrase “flesh and blood” being spoken as a character as “blesh and flood” in urgency and heightened emotion.

Stanza
Definition: The term stanza refers to a single, related chunk of lines in poetry. It basically refers to one unit or group of lines, which forms one particular faction in poetry. The most basic kind of stanza is usually 4 lines per group, with the simplest rhyme scheme “a-b-a-b” being followed.

Stream of consciousness
Definition: The phrase ‘stream of consciousness’ refers to an uninterrupted and unhindered collection and occurrence of thoughts and ideas in the conscious mind. In literature, the phrase refers to the flow of these thoughts, with reference to a particular character’s thinking process. This literary device is usually used in order to provide a narrative in the form of the character’s thoughts instead of using dialogue or description.

Synecdoche
Definition: A synecdoche is a literary devices that uses a part of something to refer to the whole. It is somewhat rhetorical in nature, where the entire object is represented by way of a faction of it or a faction of the object is symbolized by the full.
Example: “Weary feet in the walk of life”, does not refer to the feet actually being tired or painful; it is symbolic of a long, hard struggle through the journey of life and feeling low, tired, unoptimistic and ‘the walk of life’ does not represent an actual path or distance covered, instead refers to the entire sequence of life events that has made the person tired.

Synesthesia
Definition: While the term synesthesia literally refers to a medical condition wherein one or many of the sensory modalities become joint to one another, in literature it refers to the depiction of a strong connection, link or bond between the different senses. Characters in literature are sometimes described to be experiences synesthesia. Synesthesia is the conflation of the senses.
Example: The Sound of Blue by Hollu Payne which portrays synesthesia with respect to the Romantic ideal.

Syntax
Definition: Syntax in literature refers to the actual way in which words and sentences are placed together in the writing. Usually in the English language the syntax should follow a pattern of subject-verb-object agreement but sometimes authors play around with this to achieve a lyrical, rhythmic, rhetoric or questioning effect. It is not related to the act of choosing specific words or even the meaning of each word or the overall meanings conveyed by the sentences.
Example: The sentence "The man drives the car" would follow normal syntax in the English language. By changing the syntax to "The car drives the man", the sentence becomes awkward.

Theme
Definition: The theme of any literary work is the base topic or focus that acts as a foundation for the entire literary piece. The theme links all aspects of the literary work with one another and is basically the main subject. The theme can be an enduring pattern or motif throughout the literary work, occurring in a complex, long winding manner or it can be short and succinct and provide a certain insight into the story.

Tone
Definition: The tone of a literary work is the perspective or attitude that the author adopts with regards to a specific character, place or development. Tone can portray a variety of emotions ranging from solemn, grave, and critical to witty, wry and humorous. Tone helps the reader ascertain the writer’s feelings towards a particular topic and this in turn influences the reader’s understanding of the story.

Understatement
Definition: This literary device refers to the practice of drawing attention to a fact that is already obvious and noticeable. Understating a fact is usually done by way of sarcasm, irony, wryness or any other form of dry humor. Understating something is akin to exaggerating its obviousness as a means of humor.