

GLOSSARY

Author's Purpose: The intention or reason for writing a **text** (e.g. to persuade, to entertain, to describe, to explain).

Assonance: similar vowel sounds in stressed syllables that end with different consonant sounds. Assonance differs from rhyme in that rhyme is a similarity of vowel and consonant. "Lake" and "fake" demonstrate rhyme; "lake" and "fate" demonstrate assonance.

Bloom's Taxonomy: Benjamin Bloom created this taxonomy for categorizing the level of abstraction of questions that commonly occur in educational settings. The taxonomy provides a useful structure in which to categorize questions. Students are using critical thinking skills when answering and writing questions on the comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation levels.

1. **Knowledge** --- Skills demonstrated include observation and recall of information; knowledge of dates, events, places; knowledge of major ideas; mastery of subject matter. Question Cues include list, define, tell, describe, identify, show, label, collect, examine, tabulate, quote, name, who, when, where, etc.
2. **Comprehension** --- Skills demonstrated include understanding information; grasp meaning; translate knowledge into new context; **interpret** facts, compare, contrast; order, group, infer causes. Question clues include summarize, describe, **interpret**, contrast, predict, associate, distinguish, estimate, differentiate, discuss, extend.
3. **Application** --- Skills demonstrated include use information; use methods, concepts, theories in new situations; solve problems using required skills or knowledge. Question clues include apply, demonstrate, calculate, complete, illustrate, show, solve.
4. **Analysis** --- Skills demonstrated include seeing patterns, organization of parts, recognition of hidden meanings and identification of components. Question clues include analyze, separate, order, explain, connect, classify, arrange, divide, compare, select, explain, infer.
5. **Synthesis** -- Skills demonstrated include use old ideas to create new ones; generalize from given facts; relate knowledge from several areas; predict, draw conclusions. Question clues include combine, integrate, modify, rearrange, substitute, plan, create, design, invent, what if?, compose, formulate, prepare, generalize, rewrite.
6. **Evaluation** --- Skills demonstrated include compare and discriminate between ideas; assess value of theories, presentations; make choices based on reasoned argument; verify value of evidence; recognize subjectivity. Question clues include assess, decide, rank, grade, test, measure, recommend, convince, select, judge, explain, discriminate, support, conclude, compare, summarize.

(Adapted from: Bloom, B.S. (Ed.) (1956) *Taxonomy of educational objectives: The classification of educational goals: Handbook I, cognitive domain*. New York; Toronto: Longmans, Green.)

Characterization: the method an author uses to reveal characters and their personalities.

1. **Direct characterization:** when an author tells us directly what a character is like or what a person's motives are
2. **Indirect characterization:** when an author shows us a character but allows us to interpret for ourselves the kind of person we're meeting

Clauses: A clause is a group of related words that has both a subject and a predicate.

1. **Independent clause:** a clause that presents a complete thought and can stand as a **sentence** (e.g., A whole group of boys went swimming)
2. **Dependent clause:** a clause that does not present a complete thought and cannot stand as a **sentence** (e.g., when I go to town on Saturday)

Costa's Levels of Questioning: Arthur L. **Costa** describes three levels of questioning. For students to be thinking critically, they need to be on levels 2 and 3.

1. Gathering and Recalling Information (input) --- completing, counting, defining, describing, identifying, listing, matching, naming, observing, reciting, scanning, selecting
2. Making Sense Out of Information Gathered (processing) --- analyzing, categorizing, classifying, comparing, contrasting, distinguishing, experimenting, explaining, grouping, inferring, making analogies, organizing, sequencing, synthesizing

3. Applying and Evaluating Actions in Novel Situations (output) --- applying a principle, evaluating, extrapolating, forecasting, generalizing, hypothesizing, imagining, judging, model building, predicting, speculating

Consonance: the use at the ends of verses of words in which the final consonants in the stressed syllables agree but the vowels that precede them differ (e.g., add/read, bill/ball, born/burn).

Dénouement: resolution of or undoing of the central "problem" or complication of the story.

Editing: Often the final step in the writing process where the writer works on turning a revised writing piece into a clear, stylistic and accurate copy. **Editing** deals with the line-by-line changes the writer makes to improve the smoothness, readability and accuracy of the writing. When **editing** and **editing**, writers should pay special attention to the traits of **sentence** fluency, word choice and correct conventions.

Essay: a multi-paragraph composition in which ideas on a special topic are presented, explained, argued for or described in an interesting way.

Flat character: a character that is constructed around a single idea or quality; a character with a one-dimensional personality and predictable behavior who does not change over the course of action in a **text**.

Fiction: Stories created from the writer's imagination or invented. Novels and short stories are **fiction**.

Figurative language: language that goes beyond the normal meaning of the words used. See *figure of speech*.

Figure of speech: is a literary device used to create a special effect or feeling by making some type of interesting or creative comparison. Some common figures of speech include:

1. **Antithesis:** an opposition, or contrast, of ideas: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times . . ." Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*
2. **Hyperbole:** an exaggeration or overstatement: "I have seen this river so wide it had only one bank." Mark Twain, *Life on the Mississippi*.
3. **Metaphor:** a comparison of two unlike things in which no word of comparison (as or Like) is used: "A green plant is a machine that runs on solar energy." *Scientific American*.
4. **Metonymy:** the substituting of one word for another related word: "The White House has decided to create more public service jobs." (*White House* is substituted for *president*.)
5. **Personification:** a literary device in which the author speaks of or describes an animal, object, or idea as if it were a person: "The wind danced across the meadow."
6. **Simile:** a comparison of two unlike things using the words *like* or *as*: "She stood in front of the altar, shaking like a freshly caught trout." Maya Angelou, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*.
7. **Understatement:** a way of emphasizing an idea by talking about it in a restrained manner: "Aunt Polly is prejudiced against snakes." (She was terrified of them.) Mark Twain, *Adventures of Tom Sawyer*.

Genre: A **genre** is a category or type of literature. Literature is commonly divided into three major **genres**: **poetry, prose and Drama**. Each major **genre** is in turn divided into smaller **genres**, as follows:

1. **Poetry:** Lyric Poetry, Concrete Poetry, Dramatic Poetry, **Narrative** Poetry and Epic Poetry
2. **Prose:** **Fiction** (novels, short Stories) and **nonfiction** (biography, autobiography, letters, essays and reports)
3. **Drama:** serious drama and tragedy, comic drama, melodrama and farce

Historic present tense: this verb tense expresses actions that occurred in the past using present tense forms. It is used with authors to express the concept that the ideas in their books live on, even after they have died. "Emily Dickinson personifies death as a gentle friend in the line, 'Because I would not stop for death, He kindly stopped for me.'"

Iambic pentameter: the form that 90% of all verse is written in. An *iamb* is five iambic feet strung together (e.g., úpon). Pentameter means that the line has five feet (or ten syllables), which may or may not rhyme as the poet prefers/intends.

Interpret: A reading process that builds from inference; reading that relies on prediction, drawing conclusions and making connections among ideas, events, characters or other **texts**.

Irony: The contrast between appearance and reality. Irony surprises the reader or audience with the unexpected. This surprise comes from the contrast between the truth and what merely appears to be true. There are three basic types of irony.

1. **Verbal Irony:** The incongruity between what a speaker says and what the words actually mean.
2. **Situational Irony:** The contrast between what a character expects and what actually happens.
2. **Dramatic Irony:** The contrast between what a character knows and what the reader or audience knows.

Literal type of reading: A reading process that is exact and conveys the precise meaning of **text** with minimal inference; e.g. recalling details, following directions or sequencing events.

Mode (Form): The way a piece of writing is organized or structured. Usually a writer selects the **mode** of writing that best fits the audience and **purpose** of the writing. The following describe specific **modes** of writing.

1. **descriptive:** A form of writing with its **purpose** being the picturing of a scene or setting. Though often used apart for its own sake, it is more frequently integrated with other forms of writing, especially with **narrative** writing. **descriptive** writing is most successful when its details are carefully selected according to some **purpose** and to define a **point of view**, when its images are concrete and clear and when it makes discreet use of words of color, sound and motion.
2. **Expository:** A form of writing with the **purpose** of explaining the nature of an object, an idea or a theme. Exposition may exist apart from the other **modes** of writing, but frequently two or more of the **modes** are blended: description aiding exposition, persuasion being supported by exposition, narration reinforcing by example an exposition. The following are some of the methods used in exposition: identification, definition, classification, illustration, comparison/contrast and analysis.
3. **Narrative:** A form of writing with the **purpose** of retelling an event or a series of events. Narration may exist by itself, but is most likely integrated with description. The main **purpose** of narration is to interest and entertain, but it may be used to instruct and inform. There are two forms of narration:
 - **Simple narration: non-fiction**, which usually tells about an event or events that the writer has experienced. The writing contains a clear beginning, middle and end and is generally chronological in its arrangement of details, a newspaper account of a fire or a memoir
 - **Narrative with plot: fiction**, with characters, setting, **plot**, problem and solution. The writing is less often chronological and more often arranged according to a preconceived artistic principle determined by the nature of the **plot** and type of story intended
4. **Persuasive:** A form of writing organized with a beginning, middle and end in which the writer clearly states an opinion on a topic that is specific, timely and debatable (people have differing opinions about it). In **persuasive** writing, the writer's opinion is supported with specific points that contain example, reason and/or detail. The **purpose** of **persuasive** writing is to convince a reader that this opinion is worthy of his or her consideration. It is often combined with exposition. It differs from exposition technically in its aim, exposition simply making an explanation.

Non-fiction: **texts** created based on the writer's observations or experiences that really happened. Documentaries, **essays** and research reports are examples of **non-fiction**.

Paraphrase: a type of **summary** that is written in your own words. It is particularly good for clarifying the meaning of a difficult or symbolic piece of writing (some poems, proverbs, documents). Because it often includes your **interpretation**, it is sometimes longer than the original.

Plagiarism: literary theft that occurs when a writer steals details, **plot** or language from another writer and uses it as his or her own without giving credit for the work to the original author or source. To avoid

plagiarism, document everything you borrow, not only direct quotations and **paraphrases** but also information and ideas.

Plot: the series of related events in a story or play, sometimes called the story line. Most short-story **plots** contain the following elements: **exposition** (tells us who the characters are and introduces their conflict), **complications** (situations which arise as the characters take steps to resolve their conflicts), **climax** (that exciting or suspenseful moment when the outcome of the conflict is imminent) and **resolution or dénouement** (when the story's problems are all resolved and the story ends).

Point of view: the vantage point from which the writer tells a story. In broad terms, there are four main points of view: first person, third-person limited, third person omniscient and third-person objective.

1. In **first-person point of view**, one of the characters in the story tells the story, using first-person pronouns (e.g., *I* and *we*). With this **point of view**, the reader can know only what the narrator knows.
2. In the **third-person limited point of view**, an unknown narrator (usually thought of as the author) tells the story, but this narrator zooms in to focus on the thoughts and feelings of only one character. This **point of view** gets its name because the narrator refers to all the characters as *he*, *she* and *they*. Like the first-person **point of view**, however, this **point of view** also limits us to the perceptions of one character, but in this case, the narrator can tell us many things about the character that the character himself might be unaware of.
3. In the **omniscient point of view**, an omniscient or "all-knowing" narrator tells the story. Third-person pronouns (*he*, *she* and *they*) are also used. However, this narrator, instead of focusing on one character, often tells us everything about many characters: their motives, weaknesses, hopes, childhoods and sometimes even their futures. This narrator can also comment directly on the character's actions.
4. In the **objective point of view**, a narrator who is totally impersonal and objective tells the story, with no comment on any characters or events. The objective **point of view** is like the **point of view** of a movie camera: it is totally impersonal and what we know is only what the camera might see. The narrator never gives any direct revelation of the characters' thoughts or motives.

Product: a **text** produced to share with a public audience (e.g., a written paragraph or **essay**, film, on-line journal, oral presentation, PowerPoint presentation, outline).

Purpose: the specific reason a person has for writing; the goal of writing.

Revision: a step in the writing process when the writer reviews an early draft with the **purpose** of improving the way ideas are expressed in the writing. When revising, the writer should pay special attention to the traits of ideas organization and voice.

Round character: a character that is developed with enough detail to represent a complex and multi-faceted personality; a realistic, believable character that is a blend of both good and bad traits and who changes over the course of action in the story or novel either physically or psychologically or both.

Sentence: a **sentence** is made up of one or more words that express a complete thought. A **sentence** begins with a capital letter and ends with a period, question mark or exclamation point.

1. **simple sentence**: a **sentence** with only one complete thought (**INDEPENDENT CLAUSE**). It may have either a simple or compound subject or either a simple or compound predicate (e.g., My face and hair look and feel terrible.)
2. **compound sentence**: a **sentence** made up of two or more simple **sentences** (also called **independent clauses**) that are joined by a coordinate conjunction, punctuation or both, e.g., I try to avoid illness, but the flu bug always finds me.
3. **complex sentence**: a **sentence** that contains one **independent clause** and one or more **dependent clauses** (e.g., Even though I feel down, I plan to carry on.)
4. **compound-complex sentence**: a **sentence** that contains two or more **independent clauses** and one or more **dependent clauses** (e.g., The Statute of Liberty was sculpted by Frédéric-Auguste Bartholdi, but the internal framework was designed by Alexandre-Gustave Eiffel, who later designed the Eiffel Tower in Paris.)

Summary: a document that captures the major ideas of a **text** in your own words. The opening **sentence** should be a clear statement of the main idea of the original selection. Stick to the essential information (e.g., names, dates, times, places). Try to state each important idea in one clear **sentence**. Use a concluding **sentence** that ties all of your thoughts together and brings the **summary** to an effective end.

Syntax: the order and relationship of words in a **sentence**.

Text: applying the National Council of Teachers of English definition, **text** is expanded from just words on paper (books, newspaper articles, magazine articles, etc.) to include film, oral presentations, drama, media resources, on-line sources, music video, PowerPoint, etc.

Theme: the statement about life that a writer is trying to get across in a **text**. In most cases, the theme will be implied rather than directly spelled out. Longer **texts** may have several themes.

Thesis statement: a statement of the **purpose**, intent, or main idea of an **essay**. A well-written **thesis statement** may be used as map to plan main-body paragraphs in an **essay**.

NOTE: Glossary definitions were written after reviewing the following resources:

Burke, Jim. *Reading Reminders: Tools, Tips, and Techniques*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2000.

Elements of Literature, Fifth Course. Austin, Texas; Holt, Reinhart and Winston; 1997.

Holman, C. Hugh. *Handbook to Literature, Fourth Edition*. Indianapolis; Bobbs-Merrill; 1983.

Quirk, Randolph, and Sidney Greenbaum. *A Concise Grammar of Contemporary English*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973.

Sebranek, Patrick, Dave Kemper and Verne Meyer. *Write Source 2000, A Guide to Writing, Thinking and Learning*. Wilmington, Massachusetts; Write Source; 1999.