

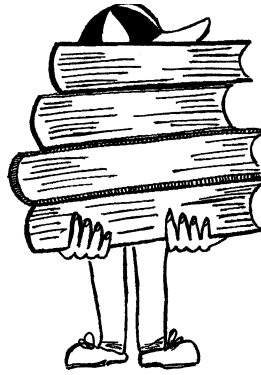
Literary Criticism Concepts

Volume 2: Terms



Jennifer Bussey





Congratulations! We salute you!
You are traveling down the road that will clarify some of the complexities of
the multitude of literary terms competitors should know!

For students seeking expertise in Literary Criticism, this edition of our Literary Concepts makes getting the "big picture" a breeze with easy-to-understand lists, tables, and charts. Volume 1, Literary History, gives context with at-a-glance overviews of periods and major writers in each period. Volume 2, Literary Terms, is organized by genre, with chapters on poetry, fiction, non-fiction, drama and more. Volume 3, Essay Skills, makes "sizing up" selections less daunting and can help turn shaky writers into concise, creative ones. This volume also helps students understand what judges are expecting and includes how-to's for pulling an essay together from beginning to end.

The author, Jennifer Bussey, is the author of all of our Literary Criticism products for UIL as well as our Ready Writing products. She completed her undergraduate degree in English and has a Master's Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies. Bussey is currently an independent writer specializing in literature; her work appears in reference books released nationally by major educational publishers, including *Contemporary Authors*, *Poetry for Students*, *Novels for Students*, *Epics for Students*, *Encyclopedia of American Poetry: The Twentieth Century*, and *Literature of Developing Nations*. Her work also appeared on the Web and in national magazines, and she recently completed her second anthology for *Events that Shaped History*. A skilled writer, Bussey takes our study materials and tests to a new and challenging level.

We are a small company that listens; we encourage comments. If there is an area that you would like fully explored, let us hear from you! Our best products have been developed from your suggestions, and we encourage your interchange with us.

LitCrit Concepts - Volume 2
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Preface: What This Guide Is and Isn't

Welcome to Lit Crit Concepts, Volume 2: Literary Terms. I was once in your shoes (many, many, many years ago), and now, as a writer for Hexco, I am in the trenches with you every year, studying the reading selections and *The Handbook* to prepare for the year of UIL Literary Criticism. I study so I can create materials to help you in the contest, and in your understanding of literature. I mean, you could have signed up for Number Sense or Kazoo Acrobatics, but you chose Literary Criticism, so I have to assume you are interested in literature!

Here's the rub, as Hamlet says. It can be difficult to tackle *The Handbook*. It is a whole lot of information, and while it is great—and it *is* great; I use it all the time in my career as a writer for educational publishers—it is hard to navigate. The alphabetical format is super-simple if you know exactly what you need to study, but what if you don't? What if you don't know what is basic knowledge, and what is advanced? Or how to group information and fit it together so it makes sense, and so you can actually remember it for the test? The last thing I want is to have your youthful spirit crushed by something as fun as literature. So, I put together guides to *The Handbook*, sort of like study notes to give you a better way to structure all that information. If you're an über-nerd, let me put it this way: Let's play *The Divine Comedy*! You be Dante, and I'll be Beatrice, your guide and commentator through Heaven (*The Handbook*). We won't have anyone be Virgil because he is the guide through Purgatory and the Inferno, and *The Handbook* certainly isn't either of those.

This volume covers literary terms, as they are presented in *The Handbook* and only in *The Handbook*. That's where your test questions are drawn, so why muddle things by adding other sources? Where I have found discrepancies or areas of confusion in *The Handbook*, I have told you so. That way, you shouldn't run into any surprises on any tests. If there is a matter of some debate, and you might read something different somewhere else, I have noted that, too. Keep in mind that this volume is *not* meant to be comprehensive, and it should definitely not replace your study of *The Handbook* itself. There are sections or topics that are merely summarized here, but you know where to go find more. I have used the same terminology and names, so looking something up in *The Handbook* will be easy. In some cases, like describing all the different kinds of stanzas, I have been intentionally concise because it helps you see similarities and differences if I stick to the basics. When you are ready, you have a solid foundation to go read more about the specifics. Also, in the interest of your time and your school's budget, I had to make some hard choices about what to include and what to omit. Sorry, young padawan.

A word on notation. As you read, if you see something in SMALL CAPS, that means there is an entry on that topic either in this volume or in the Literary Terms volume. If you see something that is Capitalized in the Middle of a Sentence, that means there is an entry on that topic in *The Handbook*. The simple notation is to point you to more information if you need it.

That's it! I really hope you find this helpful and encouraging as you study this year. We would love your feedback, so please feel completely free to email us at Hexco and let us know what you like and don't like. And, hey--Good luck in the contest!

–Jennifer Bussey

Fiction: Types

ADVENTURE STORY – Action is the focus, not characterization, motivation, or thematic development.

ALTERNATIVE HISTORY (OR, ALLOHISTORY) – Fiction based on some major change in historical or geographical reality. (*Examples: There have been novels in which the premise is that there was a different outcome in World War II, then the story follows the imagined results of those alternative outcomes.*)

ANTINOVEL – Fiction that adheres as closely as possible to what is literally real, as opposed to abstract, subjective, or figurative writing. Antinovels often have a non-linear structure. The best known author is Robbe-Grillet and his *Le Voyeur* is the best example of the antinovel.

ANTIREALISTIC NOVEL – The fictional cousin of Theater of the Absurd. The antirealistic novel uses fantasy and illogical elements and does away with conventions of fiction writing. Writers include James Joyce, Franz Kafka, Henry Miller, Samuel Beckett, Jorge Luis Borge, Toni Morrison, Joseph Heller, and the French Surrealists.

APPRENTICESHIP NOVEL – A novel about a young, impressionable person facing the world and trying to understand it. Usually, this protagonist comes away with some sort of philosophy or worldview. Often called a *BILDUNGSROMAN*. (*Examples: Butler's The Way of All Flesh, Joyce's A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, Maugham's Of Human Bondage, and Wolfe's Look Homeward, Angel.*)

CAMPUS NOVEL – Not surprisingly, this is a comic novel with a university setting.

CLOAK AND DAGGER – Novel about spies or intrigue; expect lots of secrets, uncertainty, enemies seen and unseen, romance, and the like. Authors include Ian Fleming (James Bond novels) and John Buchan.

CLOAK AND SWORD – Spanish novels in this vein feature cavaliers, beautiful women, and adventure. Their English counterparts feature swashbuckling excitement, gallant heroes sometimes in shady dealings, beautiful women, plot twists, courtly manners, and close calls. Often set in the Mediterranean. (*Examples: Dumas' Three Musketeers and the contemporary Pirates of the Caribbean movie series.*)

DETECTIVE STORY – Crime (often, murder) is the central event, and solving it comes through finding and piecing together clues. There is almost always a detective and almost never the known identity of the perpetrator until the end. Greatest author: Doyle.

DIME NOVEL – Cheaply published paperback meant to excite and intrigue, originally sold for a dime. Not known for its high literary merit, the dime novel is entertaining escapism. The American

IRONY – Presenting something in one way, when reality is different. Verbally, this means saying one thing and meaning another. In drama, irony usually relies on the audience knowing something at least one character does not, so his actions and words become ironic to the audience. Writers: Austen, Thackeray, Swift, Pope, Hardy, and James

Accismus – Fake, insincere, or hypocritical refusal of something. (*Examples: Caesar's turning away the crown in Shakespeare's play. Or, "That dress is exquisite on you!" "What, this old thing?"*)

Antiphrasis – Satirical expression that says the opposite of what the author or speaker really means.

Dramatic Irony – When the audience is privy to knowledge a character does not have, his words or actions may be ironic.

KENNING – Figurative wording to describe something, usually with a picturesque metaphor. (*Example: Crane's "red badge of courage" for "wound."*)

METAPHOR – A kind of analogy that equates one thing with another, praised by Aristotle as "the greatest thing by far" for poets. According to I.A. Richards, there are two parts to a metaphor–the tenor (subject of the comparison) and the vehicle (the image used to express the idea). So, if I say, "The back of my car is the city dump," the tenor is messiness, and the vehicle is the city dump.

Allegory – Extended metaphor where almost every element in the story–characters, things, settings, action–has some meaning other than what it seems, often an abstract idea played out in a concrete way. Names are very often intentional pointers to the author's real meaning. Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* is a great example because the main character, Christian, is leaving the City of Destruction in search of the Celestial City, but he encounters difficulties along the way in the Slough of Despair, Vanity Fair, and others. There has been critical debate in attempts to draw hard lines between symbolism and allegory. Types of allegories: parable, fable, exemplum, beast epic.

Dead Metaphor – Metaphor that has been around so long, the image it conveys is all but forgotten because the meaning of the comparison is so familiar.

METONYMY VS SYNECDOCHE – Both devices involve substitution. Metonymy is using an associated object to refer to the word itself. (*Example: The White House issued a statement today.*) Synecdoche is using a part to refer to the whole. (*Example: asking for a woman's hand in marriage*)

MOTIF – Element that gives foundation to a narrative. (*Examples: In the medieval romance, a queen being taken away by her fairy lover became a motif across stories. Another familiar motif is rags-to-riches.*) In literature, recurring related images, words, or actions that give unity to the work are motifs. (*Example: In O'Neill's "The Hairy Ape," he uses a motif of primates to underscore the theme of man's primal nature brought on by industrialization.*)