

RESEARCH: Resources

101 Literary Devices and Figures of Speech Compiled by Edward R. Raupp

Edward R. Raupp
Professor of Humanities
Gori State University
+995 599 11 66 56
edraupp@gmail.com
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5147-7835>

101 Literary Devices and Figures of Speech

- 1. adage.** a short, pointed, and memorable saying based on facts and considered true by the majority of people.
Tis better to have loved and lost/Than never to have loved at all.
Alfred Lord Tennyson
- 2. allegory.** Abstract ideas and principles using characters, figures, and events.
All animals are equal but a few are more equal than others.
George Orwell, *Animal Farm*
- 3. alliteration.** A number of words, having the same first consonant sound, occur close together in a series.
The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew.
Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*
- 4. allusion.** A brief and indirect reference to a person, place, thing or idea of historical, cultural, literary or political significance.
*Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme.* John Keats, *Ode on a Grecian Urn*
- 5. ambiguity.** A word, phrase, or statement that contains more than one meaning. Ambiguous words or statements lead to vagueness and confusion and shape the basis for instances of unintentional humor.
Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness. John Keats, *Ode on a Grecian Urn*
- 6. anachronism.** something that is out of time and out of place.
Ten thousand dollars to our general use. Shakespeare, *Macbeth*
- 7. anapest.** A metrical foot consisting of two short or unstressed syllables followed by one long or stressed syllable.
The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold.
Lord Byron, *The Destruction of Sennacherib*
- 8. anaphora.** A certain word or phrase is repeated at the beginning of clauses or sentences that follow each other.
I came, I saw, I conquered. Julius Caesar
- 9. anastrophe.** An inversion of the typical word order in a sentence.
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made: Nine bean-rows will I have there.
William Butler Yeats, *The Lake Isle of Innisfree*
- 10. antanaclassis.** A single word or phrase is repeated but in two different senses.
Put out the light, then put out the light. Shakespeare, *Othello*
- 11. antithesis.** Two opposite ideas put together in a sentence to achieve contrasting effect.
It was the best of times, it was the worst of times. Chas. Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*

- 12. anthropomorphism.** Attribution of human traits, emotions, or intentions to non-human entities.
Man is the only real enemy we have. Remove Man from the scene, and the root cause of hunger and overwork is abolished forever. Man is the only creature that consumes without producing.
Spoken by the pig, Old Major. George Orwell, Animal Farm
- 13. anticlimax.** A disappointing end to an exciting or impressive series of events.
He has seen the ravages of war, he has known natural catastrophes, he has been to singles bars.
Woody Allen, Speech to the Graduates
- 14. Antimetabole.** Derived from a Greek word which means “turning about.” It is a literary term or device that involves repeating a phrase in reverse order.
Fair is foul and foul is fair. *Shakespeare, Macbeth*
- 15. antithesis.** Places opposite things or ideas next to one another in order to draw out their contrast.
It was the best of times, it was the worst of times . . .
Charles Dickens, A Tale of Two Cities
- 16. aphorism.** A statement that contains a truth revealed in a terse manner.
Lord, what fools these mortals be! *Shakespeare, A Midsummer Night’s Dream*
- 17. apostrophe.** Addressing someone who is not present or is dead or speaks to an inanimate object.
*Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand?
Come, let me clutch thee!
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.* *Shakespeare, Macbeth*
- 18. assonance.** The repetition of vowel sounds (not just letters) in words that are close together. The sounds don’t have to be at the beginning of the word.
From what I’ve tasted of desire, I hold with those who favor fire. *Robert Frost*
- 19. asyndeton.** One or several conjunctions are deliberately omitted from a series of related clauses. *I came, I saw, I conquered. Attributed to Julius Caesar.*
An empty stream, a great silence, an impenetrable forest. The air was thick, warm, heavy, sluggish.
Joseph Conrad, Heart of Darkness
- 20. ballad.** A poem or song narrating a story in short stanzas, typically of unknown authorship, having been passed on orally from one generation to the next.
Samuel Taylor Coleridge, The Rime of the Ancient Mariner
- 21. bathos.** An amusingly failed attempt at presenting artistic greatness.
*So past the strong heroic soul away.
And when they buried him the little port
Had seldom seen a costlier funeral.* *Alfred Lord Tennyson, Enoch Arden*
- 22. burlesque.** A work intended to cause laughter by caricaturing the manner or spirit of serious works, or by ludicrous treatment of their subjects.
Jonathan Swift, A Modest Proposal
- 23. circumlocution.** Talking in circles, using many more words than necessary.
*She who must be obeyed. Of Hilda Rumpole, the wife of Horace Rumpole of Rumpole of the Bailey,
by John Mortimer*
- 24. cliché.** An expression so overused that it loses its original meaning or novelty. A cliché may also refer to actions and events that are predictable because of some previous events.
He is a diamond in the rough.
- 25. climax.** The highest point of tension in a plot.
*Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.* *Robert Frost, The Road Not Taken*

- 26. colloquialism.** A word or phrase that is not formal or literary and is used in ordinary or familiar conversation.
What's the use you learning to do right, when it's troublesome to do right and it ain't no trouble to do wrong, and the wages is just the same?
Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*
- 27. comparison.** A device in which a writer compares or contrasts two people, places, things, or ideas. Comparisons may include: analogy, juxtaposition, metaphor, simile, pun, and allegory.
Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? Shakespeare, *Sonnet 18*
- 28. conceit.** Uses an extended metaphor that compares two very dissimilar things.
*My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
Coral is far more red than her lips' red.* Shakespeare, *Sonnet 130*
- 29. conflict.** A literary element that involves a struggle between two opposing forces, usually a protagonist and an antagonist.
To be, or not to be – that is the question. Shakespeare, *Hamlet*
- 30. contrast.** Any difference between two or more tangible or abstract entities, such as characters, settings, opinions, tones, and so on. Contrast generally involves a juxtaposition of two unlike things in order to showcase their differences. To compare is to find things that are similar, while to contrast is to find differences.
I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice. Martin Luther King, Jr., *I have a dream speech*
- 31. dactyl.** A long syllable followed by two short syllables
*Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
'Forward, the Light Brigade!
Charge for the guns!' he said.
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.*
Alfred Lord Tennyson, *The Charge of the Light Brigade*
- 32. discourse.** Foucault defines discourse as, “Systems of thoughts composed of ideas, attitudes, and courses of action, beliefs and practices that systematically construct the subjects and the worlds of which they speak.”
*I marvel how Nature could ever find space
For so many strange contrasts in one human face:
There's thought and no thought, and there's paleness and bloom
And bustle and sluggishness, pleasure and gloom.*
William Wordsworth, *A Character*
- 33. doppelganger.** A German word meaning “look-alike,” or “double walker,” originally referred to a ghost, or shadow of a person; but in modern times it simply refers to a person that is a look-alike of another person.
... man is not truly one, but truly two. Robert Louis Stevenson, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*
- 34. ellipsis.** A literary device used in narratives to omit some parts of a sentence or event, which gives the reader a chance to fill the gaps while acting or reading it. It is usually written between the sentences as a series of three dots, like this: “...”
*... I was standing beside his bed and he was sitting up between the sheets, clad in his underwear, with a great portfolio in his hands.
“Beauty and the Beast...Loneliness...Old Grocery House...Brook'n Bridge....”*
F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*

- 35. epigraph.** A phrase, quotation, or poem that is set at the beginning of a document.
"Lawyers, I suppose, were children once." Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird*
- 36. epistrophe.** Repetition of the same word or phrase at the end of successive clauses.
There is no Negro problem. There is no Southern problem. There is no Northern problem. There is only an American problem. Lyndon B. Johnson
- 37. epithet.** A descriptive term or qualifier that identifies an attribute. It is a useful literary or rhetorical device when describing a character for the reader. While a modern use of epithets can be derogatory, classic literary epithets are an important element of literature.
Thou mad mustachio purple-hued maltworms! Shakespeare, *Henry IV*
- 38. euphemism.** A mild, indirect, or vague term that often substitutes for a harsh, blunt, or offensive term.
...not a lie. It was being economical with the truth. Sir Robert Armstrong
- 39. exaggeration.** A statement that makes something worse, or better, than it really is.
If I could work my will," said Scrooge indignantly, "Every idiot who goes about with 'Merry Christmas' on his lips, should be boiled with his own pudding, and buried with a stake of holly through his heart. He should!"
Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol*
- 40. exclamation.** A short expression writers use to express emotion. It can stand alone or appear at the beginning or end of a sentence. It can convey emotions without necessarily connecting to the main idea, and neither a subject nor verb needs to be present in order to define an interjection.
Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud) / How fast she nears and nears!
Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Rime of Ancient Mariner*
- 41. fable.** A succinct fictional story, in prose or verse, that features animals, legendary creatures, plants, inanimate objects, or forces of nature that are anthropomorphized, and that illustrates or leads to a particular moral lesson (a "moral"), which may at the end be added explicitly as a concise maxim or saying.
Slow and steady wins the race. Aesop, *The hare and the tortoise.*
- 42. farce.** A literary genre and type of comedy that makes use of highly exaggerated and funny situations aimed at entertaining the audience. Farce is also a subcategory of dramatic comedy, which is different from other forms of comedy as it only aims at making the audience laugh.
Many of Shakespeare's comedies are based on mistaken identity and the gradual piling-up of confusion and chaos. In Comedy of Errors, for instance, there are two sets of identical twins who frequently get confused for one another. (In fact, this play was so influential that "comedy of errors" is sometimes used as a general term to describe farcical stories.
- 43. flashback.** A device that moves an audience from the present moment in a chronological narrative to a scene in the past. Often, flashbacks are abrupt interjections that further explain a story or character with background information and memories.
So was I once myself a swinger of birches. And so I dream of going back to be. Robert Frost, *Birches*
- 44. foreshadowing.** The audience receives hints or signs about the future. It suggests what is to come through imagery, language, or symbolism. It does not directly give away the outcome, but rather, suggests it.
*Life were better ended by their hate,
Than death prorogued, wanting of thy love* Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet.*
- 45. hendiadris.** A figure of speech used for emphasis, in which three words are used to express one idea.
wine, women and song
- 46. hubris.** Excessive pride or overconfidence. It's when somebody gets so confident that they start to believe they're invincible. As a result, they make foolish decisions that ultimately bring about their defeat.
Mary Shelley's Frankenstein is a classic story about the hubris of playing God. In the novel, Dr. Victor Frankenstein decides to create sentient life in his laboratory, a task that would put him on a

par with the other great creator of life – God. Frankenstein’s creation, however, proves impossible to control and becomes a curse on its creator.

- 47. humor.** There are several types of devices that create humor. Humor is, in fact, the end product and not the device itself. These devices are: hyperbole/exaggeration, incongruity, slapstick, surprise, sarcasm, irony, and pun.

You mistake me, my dear. I have a high respect for your nerves. They are my old friends. I have heard you mention them with consideration these twenty years at least.

Jane Austen, Pride and Prejudice

- 48. hyperbaton.** The typical, natural order of words is changed as certain words are moved out of order.

Some rise by sin, and some by virtue fall. Shakespeare, Measure for Measure

- 49. hyperbole.** Exaggeration for emphasis.

*Neptune’s ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? No. This my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
Making the green one red.*

Shakespeare, Macbeth

- 50. iamb.** A foot containing an unaccented syllable followed by an accented syllable in a single line of a poem.

*She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that’s best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes;
Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.*

Lord Byron, She walks in beauty

- 51. imagery.** Descriptive language that can function as a way for the reader to better imagine the world of the piece of literature and also add symbolism to the work.

*My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.
He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound’s the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake. Robert Frost, Stopping by woods on a snowy evening.*

- 52. interrogation.** A literary device by which a statement is made in the form of a question to give the idea more rhetorical force.

*What happens to a dream deferred?
Does it dry up like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore-
And then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over-
like a syrupy sweet?*

Langston Hughes, Harlem

- 53. irony.** There is a contrast between what is said and what is meant, or between appearance and reality.

Yet Brutus says he was ambitious; and Brutus is an honorable man.

Shakespeare, Julius Caesar

- 54. isocolon.** A sentence or series of sentences composed of two or more phrases of similar structure and length.

Nothing that’s beautiful hides its face. Nothing that’s honest hides its name.

C. S. Lewis, Till We Have Faces

- 55. juxtaposition.** Two or more ideas, places, characters, and their actions are placed side by side to develop comparisons and contrasts.
Merry and tragical? Tedious and brief? That is hot ice, and wondrous strange snow! How shall we find the concord of this discord?
Shakespeare, A Midsummer Night's Dream
- 56. kairos.** Exactly the right time to say or do a particular thing. It refers to making exactly the right statement at exactly the right moment.
Abraham Lincoln gave his Gettysburg Address at exactly the right time to articulate the higher purpose of the battle, which was not just to dedicate a burial ground but to preserve the United States of America.
- 57. legend.** A story about human events or actions that has not been proved or documented in real history. For example, *Washington Irving, The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*
- 58. limerick.** A comic verse, containing five anapestic (unstressed/unstressed/stressed) lines, in which the first, second, and fifth lines are longer, rhyme together, and follow three metrical feet. The third and fourth lines rhyme together, are shorter, and follow two metrical feet.
*There was a small boy of Quebec
Who was buried in snow to his neck
When they said, 'Are you friz?'
He replied, 'Yes, I is —
But we don't call this cold in Quebec.*
Rudyard Kipling
- 59. litotes.** A figure of speech and form of verbal irony in which understatement is used to emphasize a point by stating a negative to further affirm a positive, often incorporating double negatives for effect.
No, 'tis not so deep as a well nor so wide as a church-door.
Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet
- 60. malapropism.** The mistaken use of an incorrect word in place of a word with a similar sound, resulting in a nonsensical, sometimes humorous utterance.
One word, sir. Our watch, sir, have indeed comprehended (apprehended) two auspicious (suspicious) persons, and we should have them this morning examined before your worship.
Shakespeare, Much Ado About Nothing
- 61. masque.** A form of aristocratic entertainment in England in the 16th and 17th centuries, originally consisting of pantomime and dancing but later including dialogue and song, presented in elaborate productions given by amateur and professional actors.
Shakespeare's masque plays are Henry VIII, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Romeo and Juliet, and The Tempest.
- 62. meiosis.** The use of understatement to highlight a point, or explain a situation, or to understate a response used to enhance the effect of a dramatic moment.
*I am a very foolish fond old man,
Fourscore and upward, not an hour more or less;
And, to deal plainly,
I fear I am not in my perfect mind.*
Shakespeare, King Lear
- 63. metaphor.** A figure of speech in which a word or phrase is applied to an object or action to which it is not literally applicable.
All the world's a stage.
Shakespeare, As You Like It.
- 64. metonymy.** A figure of speech in which one thing is replaced with a word closely associated with it.
The pen is mightier than the sword. *Edward Bulwer-Lytton in Cardinal Richelieu.*
- 65. metanoia.** A self-correction. It's when a writer or speaker deliberately goes back and modifies a statement that they just made, usually either to strengthen it or soften it in some way.
I have my shortcomings, through my own fault and through my failure to observe the admonitions of the gods – and I may almost say, their direct instructions.
Marcus Aurelius, Meditations

- 66. mood.** A literary element that evokes certain feelings or vibes in readers through words and descriptions. It is referred to as “the atmosphere of a literary piece, as it creates an emotional setting that surrounds the readers. Mood is developed in a literary piece through various methods, including setting, theme, tone, and diction.”
(Literarydevices.net)
The river, reflecting the clear blue of the sky, glistened and sparkled as it flowed noiselessly on.”
Charles Dickens in *Pickwick Papers*
- 67. motif.** An image, sound, action, or other figure that has a symbolic significance, and contributes toward the development of a theme. Motif and theme are linked in a literary work, but there is a difference between them. In a literary piece, a motif is a recurrent image, idea, or symbol that develops or explains a theme, while a theme is a central idea or message.
The central idea of the co-existence of good and evil in Harper Lee’s To Kill a Mocking Bird is supported by several motifs. Lee strengthens the atmosphere by a motif of Gothic details, in recurrent images of gloomy and haunted settings, supernatural events, and a full moon. Another motif in the narrative is the small town life of Maycomb, which depicts goodness and pleasantness in life.
(Literarydevices.net)
- 68. onomatopoeia.** A word that imitates the natural sounds of a thing. It creates a sound effect that mimics the thing described, making the description more expressive and interesting.
He saw nothing and heard nothing but he could feel his heart pounding and then he heard the clack on stone and the leaping, dropping clicks of a small rock falling.
Ernest Hemingway, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*
- 69. oxymoron.** A contradiction of terms pairing two words together that are contradictory.
I am a deeply superficial person. Andy Warhol
- 70. palindrome.** A number, a word, a sentence, a symbol, or sign that can be read forward as well as backward, or in reverse order with the same effects and meanings.
Able was I ere I saw Elba. Purportedly attributed to Napoleon Bonaparte
- 71. parable.** A short story with a moral lesson at the end.
The Good Samaritan. Told by Jesus in *The Holy Bible*
- 72. paradox.** Contrary to expectations, existing belief, or perceived opinion, it is a statement that appears to be self-contradictory or silly, but which may include a latent truth. It is also used to illustrate an opinion or statement contrary to accepted traditional ideas. A paradox is often used to make a reader think over an idea in an innovative way.
The child is father of the man. William Wordsworth, *My heart leaps up*
- 73. parody.** An imitation of a particular writer, artist, or genre, exaggerating it deliberately to produce a comic effect.
Jonathan Swift’s Gulliver’s Travels is a parody of travel narratives, as well as a satire on contemporary England. As the empire of England spread to far off lands, it became a center of navigation and exploration.
- 74. pastiche.** A creative work that imitates another author or genre. It’s a way of paying respect, or honor, to great works of the past. Pastiche differs from parody in that pastiche isn’t making fun of the works it imitates
Quentin Tarantino’s Kill Bill films are a simultaneous pastiche of two genres: westerns and kung fu movies. In these films, the camera techniques and dialogue are highly reminiscent of these two classic genres, and the creativity of the movie comes from mixing the disparate genres together.
- 75. pathetic fallacy.** A figure of speech in which the natural world or some part of it is treated as though it had human emotions.
Nature abhors a vacuum.
- 76. peripeteia.** A sudden change in a story which results in a negative reversal of circumstances. Peripeteia is also known as the turning point, the place in which the tragic protagonist’s fortune

changes from good to bad. This literary device is meant to surprise the audience, but is also meant to follow as a result of a character's previous actions or mistakes.

Thus in Oedipus, the messenger comes to cheer Oedipus and free him from his alarms about his mother, but by revealing who he is, he produces the opposite effect. Aristotle

- 77. persona.** Refers to the voice of a particular kind of character—the character who is also the narrator within a literary work written from the first-person point of view.

A unique persona is the un-named female narrator of Charlotte Perkins Gilman's story "The Yellow Wallpaper."

- 78. personification.** A kind of metaphor in which an inanimate object, abstract thing, or non-human animal is described in human terms.

Because I could not stop for Death –

He kindly stopped for me –

The Carriage held but just Ourselves –

And Immortality.

Emily Dickinson, Because I could not stop for Death

- 79. platitude.** An obvious, simple, and easily understood statement with little meaning or emotional weight.

See thou character. Give your thoughts no tongue,

Nor any unproportion'd thought his act. Be familiar, but by no means vulgar...

Do not dull thy palm with entertainment of each new-hatcht, unfledged comrade'

(Translation: steer clear of people pleasing for the sake of acceptance, not duty)

Beware of entrance to a quarrel... Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice.

Costly thy habit as thy wallet can buy, but not expressed in fancy; rich, not gaudy;

For the apparel often proclaims the man.

Neither a borrower nor a lender be: for loan often loses both itself and friend.

This above all, to thine own self be true; ... Thou canst be false to any man.'

Shakespeare, in Hamlet, Polonius to Laertes

- 80. pleonasm.** A case in which one uses too many words to express a message, either by mistake or as a tool for emphasis.

The most unkindest cut of all.

Shakespeare, Julius Caesar

- 81. polysyndeton.** A literary device that uses multiple repetitions of the same conjunction (and, but, if, etc.), most commonly the word "and."

And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing." 1 Corinthians 13:2

- 82. prologue.** A short introductory section that gives background information or sets the stage for the story to come.

Two households, both alike in dignity,

In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,

From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,

Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.

From forth the fatal loins of these two foes

A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life;

Whose misadventured piteous overthrows

Do with their death bury their parents' strife.

The fearful passage of their death-mark'd love,

And the continuance of their parents' rage,

Which, but their children's end, nought could remove,

Is now the two hours' traffic of our stage;

The which if you with patient ears attend,

What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.

Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet

- 83. pun.** A joke based on the interplay of homophones, words with the same pronunciation but different meanings. It can also play with words that sound similar, but not exactly the same. The joke's humor (if any) comes from the confusion of the two meanings.
Ask for me tomorrow, and you shall find me a grave man.
Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet
- 84. repetition.** The repeating of a word or phrase, a common device used to add emphasis and stress in writing and speech.
There are many types of repetition in rhetoric, but below are some of the most common.
(literaryterms.net)
a. Epizeuxis: repetition of a word in sequence. "Why, why, why?!"
b. Anaphora: repetition of a word at the beginning of each phrase or clause. "She looked to the left, she looked to the right, she looked straight ahead."
c. Mesodiplosis: repetition of a word in the middle of each phrase or clause. "One, but not two; three, but not four; five, but not six."
d. Epistrophe: repetition of a word at the end of each phrase or clause. "Every day I'm happy because you love me, I'm more fulfilled because you love me, I have everything because you love me."
- 85. sarcasm.** A form of verbal irony that mocks, ridicules, or expresses contempt. It's really more a tone of voice than a rhetorical device. One says the opposite of what one means (verbal irony) and doing it in a particularly hostile tone.
Exodus 14:11, asked of Moses who was leading the Israelites from Egypt:
"Was there a lack of graves in Egypt, that you took us away to die in the wilderness?"
- 86. satire.** The use of humor, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to expose and criticize people's stupidity or vices.
There are three types of satire:
Juvenalian. This is the strongest type of satire as it attacks a single target in a vicious way. The most common form of this satire is political satire, which attacks politicians and pundits. Animal Farm, 1984, Fahrenheit 451, A Clockwork Orange.
Menippean. This type of satire is similar in harshness to Juvenalian, but it attacks a more general target. An example is religious satire, which attacks sacred figures or religious beliefs. Utopia, Gargantua and Pantagruel.
Horatian. This type of satire makes fun of things in a soft or even loving manner. It's usually a form of parody that is intended to make people think. Gulliver's Travels.
- 87. simile.** The use of "like" or "as" to compare two different things and show a common quality between them.
*O my Luve is like a red, red rose
That's newly sprung in June;
O my Luve is like the melody
That's sweetly played in tune.*
Robert Burns, A red, red rose
- 88. soliloquy.** A kind of monologue, or an extended speech by one character. It is not given to another character, and there is no one around to hear it. Instead of another character, it is delivered to a surrogate, to the audience, or to no one in particular.
To be, or not to be, that is the question:
Shakespeare, Hamlet
- 89. spondee.** A metrical foot consisting of two long syllables.
*Were he not gone,
The woodchuck could say whether it's like his
Long sleep, as I describe its coming on,
Or just some human sleep.*
Robert Frost, After Apple-Picking
- 90. spoonerism.** A verbal error in which a speaker accidentally transposes the initial sounds or letters of two or more words, often to humorous effect.
Shel Silverstein authored a book called "Runny Babbit: A Billy Sook"

- 91. stereotype.** Assuming that “they’re all alike.” It’s looking at a whole group of people and assuming that they all share certain qualities.
Only boys can play sports. Asians are good at math.
- 92. surrealism.** A literary and artistic movement in which the goal is to create something bizarre and disjointed, but still somehow understandable.
*My wife with the hair of a wood fire
 With the thoughts of heat lightning
 With the waist of an hourglass
 With the waist of an otter in the teeth of a tiger. Andre Breton, Freedom of Love*
- 93. synecdoche.** A literary device in which a part of something represents the whole, or it may use a whole to represent a part.
*O no! It is an ever-fixed mark
 That looks on tempests and is never shaken.”
 (The phrase “ever-fixed mark” refers to a lighthouse.) Shakespeare, Sonnet 116*
- 94. synesthesia.** Describes or associates one sense in terms of another, most often in the form of a simile. Sensations of touch, taste, sight, hearing, and smell are expressed as being intertwined or having a connection between them.
*E’en such made me that beast withouten peace,
 Which, coming on against me by degrees
 Thrust me back thither where the sun is silent. Dante, Inferno, The Divine Comedy*
- 95. tautology.** The repetitive use of phrases or words that have similar meanings. It is expressing the same thing, an idea, or saying, two or more times.
*To Carthage then I came
 Burning burning burning burning. T. S. Eliot, The Wasteland*
- 96. tone.** The attitude of a writer toward a subject or an audience. generally conveyed through the choice of words, or the viewpoint of a writer on a particular subject.
All morons hate it when you call them a moron. J. D. Salinger, Catcher in the Rye
- 97. transferred epithet.** An adjective usually used to describe one thing is transferred to another.
*Lay your sleeping head, my love
 Human upon my faithless arm. W. H. Auden, Lullaby*
- 98. tricolon.** A series of three parallel words, phrases, or clauses.
Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children. Dwight Eisenhower, Chance for Peace speech, 1953
- 99. trope.** The use of figurative language, via word, phrase or an image, for artistic effect, such as using a figure of speech. The word has also come to be used for describing commonly recurring literary and rhetorical devices, motifs or clichés in creative works. Here the trope is irony:
*ANTONY: The noble Brutus
 Hath told you Caesar was ambitious.
 If it were so, it was a grievous fault,
 And grievously hath Caesar answered it.
 Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest—
 For Brutus is an honorable man;
 So are they all, all honorable men—
 Come I to speak in Caesar’s funeral.
 He was my friend, faithful and just to me.
 But Brutus says he was ambitious,
 And Brutus is an honorable man. Shakespeare, Julius Caesar*
- 100. truism.** A statement that is obviously true and says nothing new or interesting.
You can observe a lot by watching. New York Yankees catcher Yogi Berra

- 101. understatement.** When a writer presents a situation or thing as if it is less important or serious than it is in reality. It describes something with less strength than would be expected. Understatement is the opposite of hyperbole or overstatement. Three types of understatement are:
- Ironic Understatement: It could have been worse.*
 - Comedic understatement: Damn! We're in a tight spot! (O Brother, Where art thou?)*
 - Modest Understatement: I can't believe I did so well!*
 - Polite Understatement: I think we have different opinions on this subject.*

References

- Dictionary.com/ (2020).
Literary Devices. (2020a). Definition and examples of literary terms. Full list of literary devices. <https://literarydevices.net/>
Literary Devices. (2020b). Literary Devices, Terms, and Elements. <http://www.literarydevices.com/>
Okanagan College. (2020). Glossary of common literary terms. https://www.okanagan.bc.ca/sites/default/files/2020-03/literary_terms.pdf
Poetry Foundation. (2020). Glossary of poetic terms. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/learn/glossary-terms>
Prep Scholar. (2020). The 31 literary devices you must know. <https://blog.prepscholar.com/list-of-literary-devices-techniques>
Your Dictionary. (2020). Figure of speech examples. <https://examples.yourdictionary.com/figure-of-speech-examples.html>