

Name: _____

Date: _____

Period: _____

Build a Home

Understanding Literary Devices

Directions: This is the master list of literary devices employed by authors, big and small, in places around the world. Let's pretend that literature- all forms of literature- compose one big story. This one big story is the compilation of all the stories that there ever were. Every story has a foundation. So, let's pretend that literature is our neighborhood and each story is a house in our neighborhood (it's a really big neighborhood). It is a neighborhood where all the houses are unique and different. Each house has its own homeowners or renters. Each person brings to the house their own style, their own tastes, and their own way of living. The house is characterized by the people who live in it and by the style that encompasses it. (Just like books are characterized by the relationships in it, the atmosphere, and the author's creative twists). So, every house, like every story seems different... however, they are all very similar too. They are built with 2x4s and they have a foundation. They all have roofs, windows, doors, floors, etc. They all have the same basic elements, even though they might be seemingly different. They are all very similar. In our neighborhood (all literature), each house (a story in the grand story of stories) has a foundation of basic essentials. We call these basic essentials: literary devices. A literary device is a technique used by the other to create a special effect. Just like the difference between carpet and wood floors in a house. They both have a different effect on the way the house looks and the way the floor feels on our feet. Both the hard wood floor and the carpet are literary devices. They create a special effect. When we read a story, I want you to look for these literary devices. I want you to keep an eye on what the author is doing behind the words or with the words. If you learn them now, life will be easier later.

Decision Point No. 1: Build a Foundation

Before you begin writing a piece of literature, you must decide which format you would like to employ. If we are pouring a concrete foundation, how many square feet are we looking at? What kind of house do you envision? Is this going to be a giant house? A novel? Is this going to be a small cottage? Maybe a novella? Is this a little hole-in-the-wall place? A poem? Is this a small shotgun house? A short story? Is this going to be an apartment? A series? So, we start by pouring the foundation.

Decision Point No. 2: Walls

Let's build the walls. We are going to use 2x4s, but where do you want the walls? How do you want to divide up your house? Are we going to do crazy angles? Are we going to have large grandiose rooms with high ceilings? Are we going to use chapters or stanzas? Or is this going to be prose? What do you want? How do we want to break up the space? How do we want to group it?

Decision Point No. 3: Windows, Doors, Etc.

Plot Development. What kind of lighting are you looking for? Are you going more for the dark, sinister, emotions? Or maybe the light, jovial, emotions? Or maybe a complication of both? How do we envision the basic plot? What doors will be opened? What doors will be closed? Where will there be conflict?

Decision Point No. 4: Who will live here?

Character Development. These are two very important words in literary analysis. We've got two things going on in a text. The first is the aesthetic of recognition. We need to somehow relate to the text in a way that piques our interest. Then, comes the aesthetic of exploration. This is the parts in a piece where we experience feelings and encounters that maybe we could not or have not experienced. When you build a home, you want to have in mind the type of people you picture living there. It is the same way with a text. What type of characters do we have? What type of audience will be able to identify with this?

Decision Point No. 5: Fixtures, Furniture, & Style

Atmosphere & Writing Style. Each piece of literature has a tone to it, much like a house. Each house has a different decorative style, different hues (colors), and different fixtures. Each piece of literature has its own literary devices- like maybe I want a couch, a coffee table, and fire place in the living room- so I am going to throw in an extended metaphor (a conceit), an oxymoron, and some irony. But, maybe Sarah wants a flat screen TV, a futon, and a side table in her living room- so she is going to throw in a simile, a hyperbole, and an understatement. These styles are different, but they are still fundamentally similar. There is still something to sit on, something to sit in front of, and something to sit your stuff on- same structure- different technique or style.

Your Turn: Build a Home

While building your home, be sure to include at least 250-300 words. You also need to include at least six (6) literary devices. Be creative and critical. You need to have a plot line. You need to have a character. You need to have a tone and create an atmosphere in your piece. Remember to include the two aesthetics: recognition & exploration.

Literary Devices Selected (& Defined):

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Name: _____

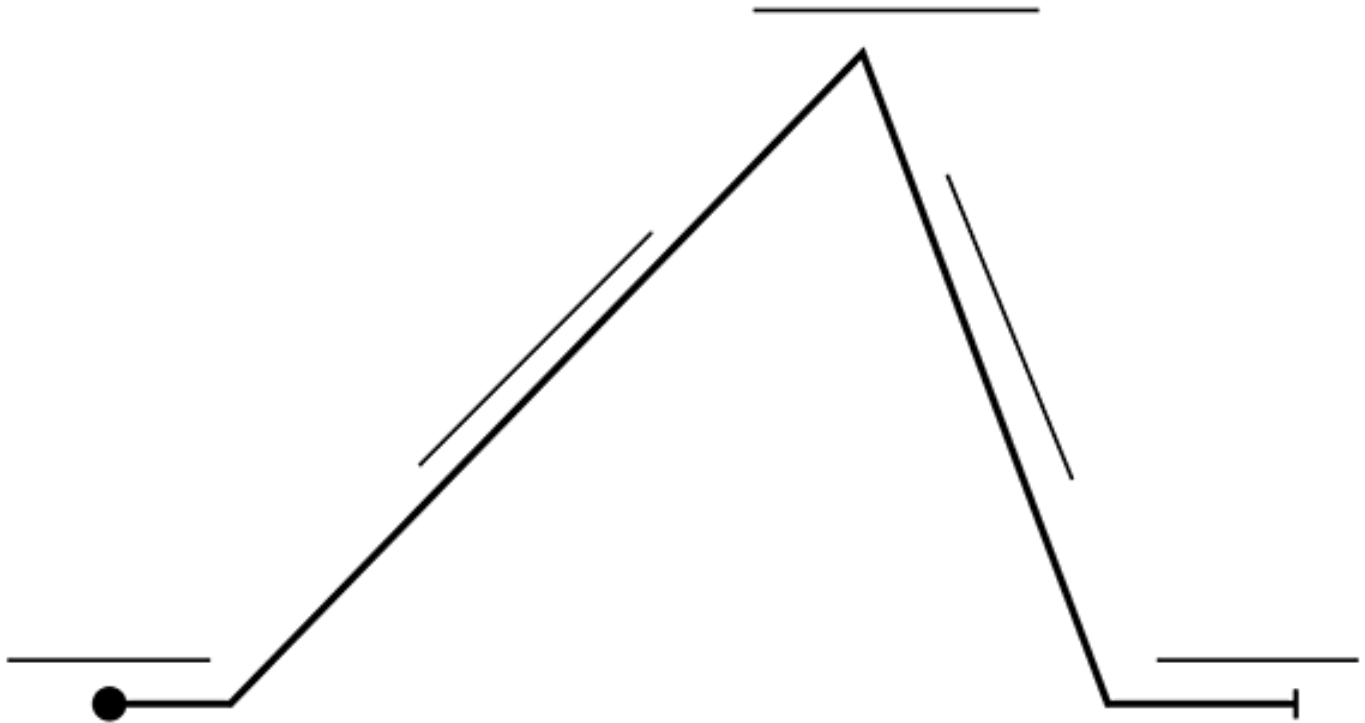
Date: _____

Period: _____

Plot Development

Reviewing Plot Diagramming

Plot Diagram



www.timvandevall.com | copyright © 2013 Dutch Renaissance Press

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.