

A Mini-Dictionary of Common Literary Terms (updated for 2022)

Allegory	A narrative work in which events, actions, characters, settings or objects represent specific abstractions or ideas. Often has a religious, moral or historical meaning.
Alliteration	The repetition of initial consonants in words next to or close to each other. It can be used to draw emphasis to specific ideas, build atmosphere, or to alter the rhythm and structure in a poem.
Allusion	A reference to someone or something assumed to be well-known.
Anachronism	The placement of someone or something associated with a particular time in history in the wrong time period. Often used to add humour, make a statement, or to break the fourth wall.
Anagnorisis	The moment in a plot or story, specifically a tragedy, where the character makes a critical discovery. This discovery is often startling and produces a change from ignorance to knowledge.
Antithesis	The use of two phrases that have a similar structure and word-order, but which are opposing or contrasting in meaning. It is used to highlight the differences between two entities. In everyday usage, it can refer more broadly to opposing ideas.
Assonance	The repetition of the same <u>vowel</u> sounds.
Atmosphere	The emotional tone that pervades a section or the whole of a literary work. Often used interchangeably with mood .
Bathos	An unexpected anti-climax or when there is a sudden and ridiculous shift in tone to something trivial.
Bildungsroman	Refers to a coming-of-age novel, which depict the developments of their protagonists from youth to adulthood, focusing on the psychological, emotional, and moral changes these characters undergo.
Burlesque	A type of satire, where the subject matter being imitated is deliberately distorted in order to amuse or to achieve a comedic effect.
Caricature	The exaggerated portrayal of a character, often for comical purposes.
Conceit	A comparison between dissimilar objects, intended to provoke readers into thinking about the subject matter in a new way. A conceit differs from a metaphor in that the comparison is meant to be novel, often to surprising or shocking effect.
Conflict	The struggle between two opposing forces. Conflict in literature could be external (e.g. protagonist vs antagonist, protagonist vs outside

	forces) or internal (e.g. a character's psychological struggle – virtue vs vice; duty to society vs personal desires).
Connotation	The suggestions or associations that a word <u>implies</u> . Connotation is distinct from denotation , which refers to the dictionary meaning of a word.
Consonance	The repetition of the same <u>consonant</u> sounds.
Denouement	Dramatic outcome or showdown.
Deus Ex Machina	A Latin phrase that translates to “god in the machine”. Refers to a plot device where a seemingly unsolvable conflict or impossible problem is solved by the sudden appearance of an unexpected person, object, or event.
Diction	The choice of words and phrases used. It does <u>NOT</u> refer to the literal definition of a word/phrase.
Dissonance	The use of harsh sounds that are unpleasant and usually disruptive to the flow of speech and text.
Dramatic Irony	A plot device in a drama / play, whereby the audience knows more about the situation than the characters do. This allows for the speech of the characters to function at multiple levels of meaning, creating suspense and humour.
Ellipsis	Punctuation mark consisting of three dots in a row (i.e. “...”).
Euphemism	A word or expression used in lieu of a harsher alternative. Often used to soften the impact of something blunt or shocking, though euphemism can also be used for comic effect.
Euphony	The use of pleasant or harmonious sounds, usually meant to create a soothing effect.
Figurative Language	Metaphorical or non-literal language that describes its subject in terms of something else. Also known as figures of speech . Examples of figurative language include symbols, personification, metaphors, allegories, irony, metaphors, similes, etc.
Foreshadowing	An advance hint of what to come later in the story. Often appears at the beginning of a story / scene / chapter, to help the reader develop expectations about characters or events yet to occur in the plot.
Hamartia	The fatal flaw that leads to the downfall of a tragic hero or heroine.
Hubris	The trait of arrogance or excessive self-confidence, leading a character to overstep limits, thus causing their downfall.

Hyperbole	Exaggerated language. Often used for purposes of emphasis or satire.
Image	A mental picture or impression that appeals to one (or more) of the reader's five senses. Imagery refers a group of <u>related</u> images.
Irony	<p>Refers to a contrast between reality and what the characters / readers / audience expects. It can also refer to the contrast between what a character is saying, vs what they mean. Irony is often used to create humour or to emphasize the tragedy of a situation.</p> <p>Common types of irony include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Verbal irony: contrast between what is said and what was meant; includes sarcasm - Situational irony: a discrepancy between expected and actual outcomes. - Dramatic irony: (see above)
Juxtaposition	Refers to images, objects or concepts that are radically different being placed near each other for contrasting purposes. Juxtaposition differs from antithesis (see above) in that the juxtaposed subject is not necessarily described using a similar structure or word order.
Metaphor	The comparison of one thing to another, without the use of the words "like" or "as". An extended metaphor occurs when a metaphor is developed throughout the entire text and is most commonly found in poems.
Metonymy	When an object is referred to by a term closely associated with it. (e.g. referring to the entire American financial market as "Wall Street", which is a street in the New York business district.)
Motif	An object, character, incident or image which recurs frequently throughout a text. Usually points to an issue or theme that the writer wishes to highlight.
Mood	The overall emotional impact or quality of a scene or a text.
Onomatopoeia	The use of words that resemble or suggest the sounds they are referring to. Usually used to bring the scene to life for the reader.
Oxymoron	A phrase or even a compound word which consists of two terms directly opposite in meaning. Often used to convey the paradox or a contradiction inherent in a situation.
Parody	A mocking imitation of the style of a literary work or works, ridiculing the stylistic habits of an author or school by the exaggeration of characteristic features.

Pastoral	A genre of writing concerned with individuals (usually a shepherd) living a simple, idyllic life in the countryside, focusing on one's wholesome connection to nature and the outdoors. Pastoral writing tends to idealise bucolic country living in order to criticise the pressures of urban life.
Pathetic Fallacy	A type of personification which specifically refers to nature, wherein nature is described as having human emotions, feelings or characteristics.
Peripeteia	Refers to the dramatic reversal of circumstances or turning point within a narrative, usually that of the protagonist's descent towards inevitable tragedy.
Pathos	Refers to an appeal to the audience's emotions – usually with the intention of arousing pity, compassion or sorrow.
Personification	<p>The attribution of human qualities such as speech, feelings and actions to non-human things.</p> <p>This term is distinct from anthropomorphism, in that personification consists of figurative attribution (e.g. your laptop hates you), while anthropomorphism consists of the non-human thing literally acquiring a human quality (e.g. Winnie the Pooh is an anthropomorphised bear).</p>
Poetic Justice	A situation in which everyone is rewarded as they deserve – e.g. good is rewarded, while evil is punished.
Prose	Ordinary writing, as opposed to verse.
Pun	A play on words in which a writer either uses a word with two or more contradictory meanings (i.e. a double entendre), or two words which sound the same, but which have different spellings.
Rhetorical Question	Refers to a question that requires no answer because the answer is obvious and need not be stated. It is usually used to make a point, especially in an argument.
Setting	Refers to the time, place, physical details, and circumstances in which a situation occurs. Settings include the background, atmosphere or environment in which characters live and usually include physical characteristics of the surroundings.
Simile	The comparison of one thing to another, making use of the words "like" or "as".
Speaker	The narrative voice within a poem. This voice is NOT necessarily that of the poet. This term is distinct from persona , which refers to the dramatic identity or <u>fictional</u> "I" that a poet might adopt.

	<i>Teachers' Note: students are advised to use the term speaker rather than persona in their essay analysis.</i>
Style	An author's / poet's distinctive way of writing.
Symbol	A person, place, object, animal, word, action or image that represents a larger idea, issue or value.
Synecdoche	When a term for a part of something is used to substitute for the whole thing. (e.g. "all hands on deck" – the word "hand" is being used in place of the word sailor, and the hands are a part of the sailor's body)
Syntax	Refers to word order, language structures and grammar.
Tension	Refers to the emotions of excitement, anxiety and/or fear that are being evoked in the readers or audience due to unresolved conflict in the story. This term is distinct from suspense , which refers to the feeling of wanting to know what happens next.
Tone	The attitude or emotional register of a speaker's voice, as conveyed through diction, images, etc.
Voice	<p>Refers to the form or format through which a narrator (prose) or speaker (poetry) relates the story to the reader.</p> <p>The main types of narrative voice are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - First-person: the narrator / speaker speaks with the pronoun "I". (Note: again, NOT necessarily that of the poet's!) - Second-person: the narrator / speaker addresses an ambiguous "you" – "you" could be the reader, another character, the narrator themselves, or be left open to interpretation. - Third-person: the narrator / speaker exists outside of the story's action and relates events to readers, referring to characters by their names or third-person pronouns (e.g. he, she). <p>Third-person narratives sometimes employ an omniscient point of view (i.e. narrator knows everything possible), usually in order to encourage a reader to accept a particular interpretation of events. They might also employ a point of view with limited omniscience (i.e. narrator does not have complete knowledge), which allows for a clearer focus on certain characters while leaving the motivations of other characters uncertain or vague.</p> <p>Some texts may employ unreliable narrators, whose interpretation of events cannot always be trusted due to bias or incomplete knowledge.</p>

Terms specific to Poetry

Blank Verse	Unrhymed iambic pentameter (i.e. ten syllables in a line). Out of all the English metrical forms, blank verse most closely mimics the natural rhythms of speech. During the Elizabethan era, blank verse was recruited as the standard metrical form used in plays.
Caesura	A pause or natural break within a line of poetry. Caesuras are often used to break the rhythmic flow of a poem, which can place more emphasis on specific points or create different tones and feelings.
Couplet	Two adjacent rhyming lines of poetry. Couplets are used to provide emphasis or a sense of finality at the end of the English/ Shakespearean sonnet.
End-stopped Line	A line in verse with punctuation at its end.
Enjambement	The use of run-on lines in a poem. Often used to help the speaker's ideas to flow smoothly or to add a sense of energy to the poem.
Foot	<p>A combination of stressed and unstressed syllables. The repeated arrangement of several feet to produce a regular rhythm and pattern is known as meter. Meter is more often seen in older, more traditional texts.</p> <p>The main foot units are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - iamb: unstressed / <u>stressed</u> (e.g. destroy) - trochee: <u>stressed</u> / unstressed (e.g. baseball) - anapaest: unstressed / unstressed / <u>stressed</u> (e.g. understand) - dactyl: <u>stressed</u> / unstress / unstress (e.g. camera)
Free Verse	Poetry that is free from a fixed rhyme scheme, without any consistent metre or rhythm.
Lyric/Lyrical	A poem concerned with the subjective feelings of a first-person speaker. Lyric poems differ from narrative poems in their focus on the speaker's state of mind/perspective, rather than depicting actions taking place.
Meter	<p>Refers to the pattern of feet (see above) that is repeated at regular intervals in lines of verse or poetry. Traditional poetry and some forms of drama are written in various metrical forms. For example, Shakespeare writes in a metrical form called iambic pentameter – i.e. the rhythm is in iambs, and there are five ("penta-") sets of iambs in each line of poetry.</p> <p>Sometimes, poets may deliberately break or disrupt the meter in a poem in order to draw attention to a specific word or idea.</p>

	<p>The 7 basic meter lengths are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monometer (1 foot) - Dimeter (2 feet) - Trimeter (3 feet) - Tetrameter (4 feet) - Pentameter (5 feet) - Hexameter (6 feet) - Heptameter (7 feet)
Refrain	A phrase, line or lines repeated at intervals during a poem and especially at the end of a stanza .
Rhyme	<p>The juxtaposition of words with matching end sounds, usually (but not always) at the end of a line in poetry. It can be used to help create rhythm and flow in a poem, to draw attention to key lines, or simply for aesthetic effect.</p> <p>Rhyme is dependent on the sound of words, rather than the spelling of the words. Words that are spelled similarly but which are pronounced differently are known as eye rhyme (e.g. rough / plough).</p> <p>Words that have matching end consonants but different vowel sounds are called half-rhyme or slant rhyme (e.g. bridge / grudge).</p>
Rhythm	Refers to a recognisable pattern in poetry or prose that is created through the arrangement of stressed and unstressed syllables. Rhythm is affected by various factors such as repetition, syllable length and length.
Stanza	A division of a poem consisting of two or more lines arranged together as a unit. Functions similarly to paragraphs in prose.
Stress	The emphasis on certain syllables in pronunciation.
Verse	<p>Two or more lines of writing – usually in poetry – in which rhyme and meter are present.</p> <p>There are two types of verse: blank verse (see above) and free verse (see above).</p>

Common Poetic Forms

Ballad	A poem that tells a self-contained story, typically composed of four-line stanzas in an ABCB rhyme scheme. Ballads were traditionally set to music.
Elegy	A lyric song or poem lamenting the death of a beloved. Distinct from eulogy , which refers to a speech that pays tribute to someone who has recently died.
Epic	A long narrative poem written in an elevated style that recounts the adventures and deeds of a legendary or historical hero.
Ode	A lyric poem that elevates and glorifies a certain subject.
Sonnet	<p>A lyric poem of 14 lines, usually written in iambic pentameter. Traditional sonnets tend to focus on themes of love.</p> <p>The two main types of sonnet are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Italian / Petrarchan: consists of an octave (8 lines) and a sestet (6 lines). The octave usually presents an argument or situation, which is then subsequently resolved or concluded in the sestet. The division between octave to sestet is called the volta or turn; it is often accompanied by a shift in the sonnet's tone or mood.- English / Shakespearean: consists of three quatrains (4 line stanzas) and a concluding couplet. The couplet serves as a summary of the subject matter laid out in the sonnet.
Villanelle	A lyric poem of 19 lines, consisting of five tercets (3-line stanzas) followed by a quatrain. Villanelles generally contain two repeating rhymes and two refrains, which are often used to show a degree of obsession or dislocation on the part of the speaker.

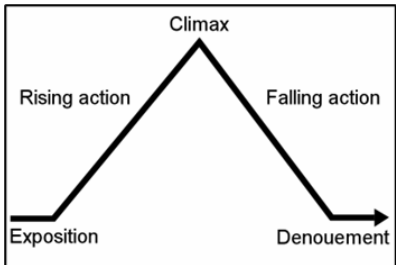
Appendix: Tone Vocabulary *(not exhaustive)*:

Positive Tone		Neutral Tone	Negative Tone	
Adoring	Laudatory	Commanding	Abhorring	Hostile
Admiring	Lively	Direct	Acerbic	Impatient
Affectionate	Light-hearted	Impartial	Ambivalent	Incredulous
Appreciative	Lively	Indirect	Angry	Indifferent
Bemused	Mirthful	Meditative	Annoyed	Indignant
Benevolent	Modest	Modest	Antagonistic	Inflammatory
Bitter	Nostalgic	Objective	Anxious	Insecure
Calm	Optimistic	Speculative	Apathetic	Insolent
Casual	Passionate	Unambiguous	Apprehensive	Irreverent
Celebratory	Placid	Unconcerned	Belligerent	Lethargic
Cheerful	Playful	Understated	Bewildered	Melancholy
Comforting	Poignant		Biting	Mischievous
Comic	Proud		Bitter	Miserable
Compassionate	Reassuring		Blunt	Mocking
Concerned	Reflective		Bossy	Mournful
Conciliatory	Relaxed		Cold	Nervous
Confident	Respectful		Conceited	Ominous
Contented	Reverent		Condescending	Outraged
Delightful	Romantic		Confused	Paranoid
Earnest	Sanguine		Contemptuous	Pathetic
Ebullient	Scholarly		Curt	Patronizing
Ecstatic	Self-Assured		Cynical	Pedantic
Effusive	Sentimental		Demanding	Pensive
Elated	Serene		Depressed	Pessimistic
Empathetic	Silly		Derisive	Pretentious
Encouraging	Sprightly		Derogatory	Psychotic
Euphonic	Straightforward		Desolate	Resigned
Excited	Sympathetic		Despairing	Reticent
Exhilarated	Tender		Desperate	Sarcastic
Expectant	Tranquil		Detached	Sardonic
Facetious	Whimsical		Diabolic	Scornful
Fervent	Wistful		Disappointed	Self-deprecating
Flippant	Worshipful		Disrespectful	Selfish
Forthright	Zealous		Doubtful	Severe
Friendly			Embarrassed	Sinister
Funny			Enraged	Skeptical
Gleeful			Evasive	Sly
Gushy			Fatalistic	Solemn
Happy			Fearful	Stern
Hilarious			Foreboding	Stolid
Hopeful			Frantic	Stressful
Humorous			Frustrated	Strident
Interested			Furious	Suspicious
Introspective			Gloomy	Tense
Jovial			Grave	Threatening
Joyful			Grim	Tragic
				Uncertain

Terms specific to Drama

Act	The major organisational unit in a play. An act can be subdivided into scenes.
Antagonist	A character or force against which another character (usually the protagonist) struggles.
Antilabe	<p>A rhetorical technique in verse drama, in which a single verse line of dialogue is distributed between two or more characters, voices or entities. It is often used to suggest the speed and tension of the dialogue taking place by disrupting the rhythmic flow of the verse line.</p> <p>In the example below from Shakespeare's <i>Othello</i>, a line of iambic pentameter is split between three different characters – suggesting the urgency with which their discussion is taking place (and thus the tension of the moment).</p> <p>e.g. DESDEMONA: Tonight, my lord? DUKE: This night. OTHELLO: With all my heart.</p>
Aside	<p>Words spoken by an actor directly to the audience, which the other characters on stage cannot hear. <u>It is often used by playwrights to reveal a character's inner thoughts to the audience. According to convention, an aside always reveals a character's authentic self – i.e. characters do not lie in an aside, though they may be mistaken in their perceptions.</u></p> <p>An aside differs from breaking the fourth wall in that the aside is akin to the character voicing their thoughts aloud, whereas breaking the fourth wall involves the character acknowledging the existence of the audience.</p>
Blocking	<p>The choreographed movement and positioning of actors on the stage.</p> <p>Playwrights often use blocking to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reflect the personality of the characters - Reflect the relationships between the characters - Direct the audience's attention to specific actions / characters - Suggest mood and atmosphere

Climax	The turning point of the action in the plot of a play and the point of greatest tension in the work. (see Freytag's Pyramid)
Chorus	Refers to a group of characters who comment on the action of a play <u>without</u> participating in it. A modern chorus may consist of a character/ narrator coming on stage and giving a prologue or explicit background information or themes.
Comedy	<p>A dramatic work in which the central motif is the triumph over adverse circumstances, resulting in a successful or happy conclusion.</p> <p>Comedy can be divided into visual comedy (e.g. farce, slapstick) and verbal comedy (e.g. satire, comedy of manners).</p> <p>A Shakespearean comedy tends to differ from conventional comedy on account of its blend of humour and tragic elements. A Shakespearean comedy tends to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A greater emphasis on situations rather than characters (this numbs the audience's connection to the characters, so that when characters experience misfortune, the audience still finds it laughable) - A struggle of young lovers to overcome difficulty, often presented by elders - Separation and reunification - Deception of characters (especially mistaken identity)
Comic Relief	The deliberate inclusion of a light-hearted or humorous moment after a succession of intensely tragic dramatic moments in a play. The inclusion of such comic scenes, characters, or speeches can have various and complex effects, ranging from relaxation after moments of high tension to sinister ironic brooding.
Costume	A character's outfit, intended to convey key aspects of their characters. Many playwrights provide detailed descriptions of a character's costume in the stage directions that are meant to suggest specific traits – e.g. social status, occupation, morality, etc.
Dialogue	<p>The conversation of characters in the play. While early playwrights wrote the dialogues of their plays in verse, most modern playwrights do not compose in verse.</p> <p><i>Note: When analysing dialogue, students should pay attention to not just to <u>what</u> is being said, but also to <u>how</u> it is being said – i.e. the way the character selects and articulates their words.</i></p>

Dramatic Irony	A plot device in a drama / play, whereby the audience knows more about the situation than the characters do. This allows for the speech of the characters to function at multiple levels of meaning, creating suspense and humour.
Epilogue	A scene or piece of writing at the end of a work of literature, <u>usually</u> used to bring closure to the work.
Exposition	The first stage of a dramatic plot, in which necessary background information is conveyed to the audience through the characters' interactions. (see Freytag's Pyramid)
Falling Action	This is when the events and complications begin to resolve themselves and tension is released. The audience thus learns whether the conflict has been resolved or not. (See Freytag's Pyramid)
Fourth Wall	The imaginary wall that separates the spectator/audience from the action taking place on stage. If the audience is addressed directly, this is referred to as breaking the fourth wall.
Foil	A secondary character whose situation often parallels that of the main character. The foil's behaviour or personality usually serves as a direct contrast with that of the main character, in order to better highlight their specific temperament.
Freytag's Pyramid	<p>Gustav Freytag's analysis of ancient Greek and Shakespearean drama enabled him to come up with a pyramid illustration to show the different elements in a dramatic plot structure.</p> 
Hubris	The trait of arrogance or excessive self-confidence, leading a character to overstep limits, thus causing their downfall.

In Media Res	Refers to the opening of the plot in the middle of the action, and then filling in past details by means of exposition or flashbacks. Translates to “in the midst of things” in Latin.
Lighting	Refers to all lighting effects onstage (and not just the spotlight). Light is usually used to establish time / location of the setting. It can also be used to enhance mood and atmosphere.
Mise en scene	Refers to the combination of stage set pieces, furniture, decorative objects, and characters in their costumes. Modern playwrights often describe their sets in specific detail to achieve certain effects, leaving little room for creative input from the director or production designer.
Monologue	<p>An extended speech by a single character.</p> <p><u>The monologue is distinct from a soliloquy</u>, which is a type of monologue where the character is either directly addressing the audience or speaking their thoughts aloud while alone. A monologue, on the other hand, is usually being addressed to another character or a group on stage.</p>
Peripeteia	Refers to the dramatic reversal of circumstances or turning point within a narrative, usually that of the protagonist’s descent towards inevitable tragedy.
Prologue	Explicit exposition to introduce background events before the first scene begins.
Props	Articles, furniture or objects that appear on stage during a play. Props can also take on a significant or even symbolic meaning.
Protagonist / Principal	The main character / lead role in a play.
Rising Action	The event, conflict or crisis that leads up to the climax. (see Freytag’s Pyramid)

Scene	<p>A traditional segment in a play. Traditionally, plays are composed of acts broken down into scenes.</p> <p>Scenes can be used to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Indicate a change in time / location - Provide a jump from one subplot to another - Introduce new characters - Rearranges the actors on the stage
Scenery	<p>The physical representation of a play's setting (i.e. location / time period).</p>
Stage Direction	<p>A playwright's commentary that provides information about the dialogue, setting and action of a play. Modern playwrights tend to include substantial stage directions, while earlier playwrights typically use them more sparsely, implicitly or not at all.</p>
Tragedy	<p>A genre of drama in which the hero experiences suffering and a downfall due to <u>his / her own flaws</u>. These flaws are usually by ordinary human shortcomings or defective personality traits – e.g. greed, ambition. Hubris or excessive pride is a very common tragic flaw or hamartia.</p> <p>The traditional tragedy usually starts with the tragic hero in their prime. The plot then follows their fall from greatness to destruction, having become the victim of their own flaw. By contrast, modern tragedies may end with the destruction of a character as a result of their challenge to the status quo of society – where the tragic flaw lies with society rather than with the individual.</p> <p>In traditional tragedies, playwrights often sought to have their audiences experience catharsis. That is, by vicariously feeling pity and terror, audiences were meant to identify with the tragic hero, thus “purifying” themselves by directing their emotions onto the action taking place on stage, while also gaining moral / intellectual insights.</p>

COMMON SYMBOLS IN LITERATURE

Original article can be found at <http://www.scribd.com/doc/6472314/Symbolism-in-Literature#download>

This document has been modified for the purposes of Literature class.

A symbol is the use of a concrete object to represent an abstract idea. The word symbol is derived from the Greek verb "symbollein", which means "to put together", and the related noun "symbolon", which means "mark", "taken" or "sign".

The term, symbol, when used in literature is often a figure of speech in which a person, object, or situation represents something in addition to its literal meaning. Conventional or traditional literary symbols work in much the same way, and because they have a previously agreed upon meaning, they can be used to suggest ideas more universal than the physical aspect itself.

A symbol may appear in a work of literature in a number of different ways to suggest a number of different things. Most commonly, a symbol will present itself in the form of 1) a word, 2) a figure of speech, 3) an event, 4) the total action, or 5) a character.

Some conventional symbols are as follows: (THIS LIST IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE!!!)

COLOURS

- A. Red: immorality, the colour of the life, blood, passion, emotion, danger, or daring; often associated with fire
- C. Black: seen as a cold and negative aspect suggesting passivity, death, ignorance, or evil; black hens are used in witchcraft, as are black cats
- D. White: innocence, life, light, purity, or enlightenment
- E. Green: inexperience, hope; new life, immaturity; a combination of blue and yellow, it mediates between heat and cold and high and low; it is a comforting, refreshing human colour; it is the colour of plant life
- F. Yellow: sickness, rotting, heat, decay, violence, decrepitude, old age, and the approach of death
- G. Blue: cool, calm, peaceful; an insubstantial colour in the real world except as translucency, the void of heavens
- H. Pink: innocence, femininity
- I. Purple: royalty; bruising or pain
- J. Brown: a colour somewhere between russet and black; it is the colour of earth and ploughed land and soil, it represents humility and poverty
- K. Orange: symbolises the point of balance between the spirit and the libido; it may be the emblem of divine love or extreme lust
- L. Violet: composed of red and blue, it is the colour of temperance, clarity of mind

NATURE

A. Seasons

1. Spring: birth, new beginning
2. Summer: maturity, knowledge

3. Autumn: decline, nearing death, growing old
4. Winter: death, sleep, hibernation, or stagnation
5. Christmas season: birth, change for the better
6. Easter season: rebirth, enlightenment
7. Light: truth, safety, warmth, knowledge
8. Darkness: evil, ignorance, danger

B. Trees

1. Apple: temptation, loss of innocence
2. Chestnut: foresight
3. Oak: strength, wisdom
4. Pear: blossoming, fleeting nature of life
5. Poplar: linked to the underworld, to pain, sacrifice, and grief, a funeral tree, symbolises the regressive powers of nature
6. Sycamore: a sign of vanity and to climb it is to trust in vain things
7. Pine: symbol of immortality because of its evergreen foliage

C. Weeds: evil (hemlock, pigweed, etc), wildness/outcasts of society, stubbornness

D. Flowers: beauty, youth, strength, gentleness

1. Anemone: transience
2. Chrysanthemums: solar symbol; represents perfection, an autumn flower
3. Rose: budding youth, romance, potential, fragility, passion ← only if the rose is red!
4. Sunflower: Sturdiness, cheer
5. Violet: shyness, something petite
6. Lily: chastity and virtue, white lilies at funerals represent the return of the dead to a state of innocence

E. Water: washes away guilt, origin of life, regeneration, vehicle of cleansing, baptism

F. River: fluidity of life, stream of life and death

G. Moon: changing and returning shape, cycle of time, feminine symbol

H. Sun: source of light, heat and life; a masculine symbol

I. Cavern: the maternal womb

J. Mountain: where heaven and earth meet; stability, safety, often symbolic of human pride

K. Precious gems / metals:

1. Rubies: represents good fortune; it was believed that they banished sorrow and warded off evil spirit
2. Sapphires: contemplation, purity
3. Silver: relates to the moon, to water and the female principle; it may also symbolise the object of all desires and the harm they cause
4. Gold: the perfect metal; a reflection of heavenly light; it suggest the sun-fertility, wealth, dominion; it is a male principle
5. Pearl: associated with water, they may be regarded as symbols of knowledge and wealth

CARDINAL DIRECTIONS

- A. East: land of birth or rebirth; of the Sun and Venus; it is associated with renewal, youth, feasting, song and love
- B. North: is the side which lies on the sun's right hand and lies on either side of life; it symbolises night sky and night wind and is the home of the Moon and the Milky Way. North represents coldness, alienation, and hostility; it is the abode of death
- C. South: is the side which lies on the Sun's left hand and is the hand of fire; represents warmth and comfort
- D. West: is the land of evening, old age, and the descending passage of the sun

WEATHER, SEASON, TIME

- A. Snow: blanket which obscures, covers or even smothers; possibly purity or death
- B. Fog/Mist: prevents clear vision or thinking; represents isolation; mist is often the symbol of the indeterminate phase in development when shapes have yet to be defined; they are preludes to important revelations or prologues to manifestations
- C. Rain: sadness or despair or new life; a symbol of celestial influences the Earth receives
- D. Wind and Storms: violent human emotions
- E. Lightning: indicates the spark of life and the powers of fertilisation; it can be either life-giving or death dealing, so it is a sign of power and strength
- F. Morning: the time of God's blessings; the beginning of when all is still uncorrupted; a symbol of purity and promise
- G. Rainbows: also intermediaries and pathways between Heaven and Earth; generally herald good and are linked with cycles of rebirth; they may also serve as prologues to disturbance
- H. Thunder: the voice of God or gods

ANIMALS

- A. Dove: peace, purity, simplicity
- B. Fox: slyness, cleverness
- C. Raven: death, destruction; they often play prophetic roles or function as a conductor of the soul
- D. Lion: a solar symbol, power, pride
- E. Peacock: pride, vanity
- F. Serpent/Snake: temptation, evil
- G. Mouse: shyness, meekness
- H. Hawk: sharp, keen eyesight
- I. Owl: wisdom, rational knowledge; messenger of death
- J. Salmon: instinct; sacred wisdom
- K. Cats: are often viewed as servants of the underworld; they also symbolise cunning, forethought, and ingenuity
- L. Lamb: serves as a manifestation of the power of Spring and renewal, sacrificial element, the children of God
- M. Cuckoo: jealousy and parasitism, it lays eggs in the nests of other birds; laziness

WALLS: barriers between people, both physical and mental; a barrier that shuts out the world

DOORS/ GATES: same as **WALLS**; entrances or exits; may represent communication (or lack thereof, depending on whether the door is open or closed) between two parties

BRIDGES/ STAIRS: entry and pathways to new realms; may represent new possibilities, hope, or escape (especially if they are ascending or cross chasms or pits); crossing boundaries and barriers,

HUMAN BODY PARTS

- A. Blood: symbolises all the integral qualities of fire and the heat and vitality inherent in the sun; it also corresponds to vital and bodily heat
- B. Bones: framework of the human body, representing mortality; could suggest the inmost or unvarnished self; can also represent permanence rather than transience, since bones are what remains after death
- C. Hands: strength or weakness; intimacy if hands are linked or open; clenched hands signal aggression or determination
- D. Eyes: windows to the soul; barometer of emotions
- E. Mouth: indicator of character traits
- F. Neck: long slender neck is associated with sexuality
- G. Knee: main source of bodily strength according to ancient traditions
- H. Right and Left: to look to one's right hand is to look to the protector; this is the place of the elect at the Last Judgement in the Bible, the damned will go to the left

CLOTHING

- A. Cape: or any circular garment or vestment with a hole in the middle suggests a celestial and ascendant symbolism. When monks or nuns withdraw from the world, they cover themselves in a cape or cloak, which symbolises a withdrawal into oneself or into God.
- B. Cloak: is a symbol of human trickery, and the different personalities humans can assume
- C. A.Mask: externalise demonic tendencies; the false self / persona and deception; alternatively, can represent shamanistic empowerment

OBJECTS

- A. Chain: symbolizes the bond which connect Heaven and Earth or ties together two extremes or beings; can also represent bondage or slavery
- B. Key: a key has the power and authority of letting in and shutting out; to hold a key means to have been initiated. It not only shows the power to enter a place, town, or house, but to accede to a spiritual state or abode or to a level of initiation
- C. Ladder: ladders are symbols of ascension and realisation of potential; they are also symbols of intercommunication and the comings and goings between Heaven and Earth
- D. Mirror: often a solar symbol; an unbroken mirror can be a sign of a happy marriage: a broken mirror would indicate a separation or destruction of the union; a mirror can also represent self-reflection or be a true manifestation of a person's inner being
- E. Tower of Babel: confusion, human pride, resulted in multiple languages

JOURNEY: may be a quest for truth, peace or immortality; a journey often serves as a metaphor for life

References

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