

## English Language Arts Intermediate Terms

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### A

**act** : a major section of a play. Acts are divided into varying numbers of shorter **scenes**.

**\*allegory**: a symbolic story having a second, deeper meaning beneath the readily apparent one.

**alliteration**: the repetition of the beginning sounds in groups of *words*, usually at the beginning of a word or stressed syllable: *descending dew drops*; *luscious lemons*.

**allusion**: a reference to a familiar literary or historical person or event, used to make an idea more easily understood.. Allusions may be classified as: *classical* - "*The man was Atlas personified*"; *Biblical* - "*My friend acted like a Judas*"; *Historical* - "*He was a Napoleonic figure*"; *Literary* - "*He was a real Romeo*".

**\*analogy**: a comparison between two things sharing some similar qualities, usually for the purpose of explanation or clarification. (example: *comparing a computer to a human brain*)

**anaphora**: the deliberate repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of several successive verses, clauses, or paragraphs.

**\*anachronism**: is the poetic device which places a person, thing, or event in a time frame where it does not belong. *Eg. The clock has stricken three. (Julius Ceasar)*

**\*antagonist**: the major character in a narrative or drama that works against the hero or protagonist.

**\*apostrophe**: is a poetic device which uses words of address to someone or something absent or silent, as if it were present and alive, or capable of making a reply.

**argumentative essay**: an essay that attempts to persuade the reader to the writer's point of view. The writer can be either serious or funny, but always tries to convince the reader of the validity of his or her opinion.

**\*aside**: in drama, a speech directed to the audience that supposedly is not audible to the other characters on the stage at the time.

**assonance:** the close repetition of the same vowel sounds between different consonants. *Examples: brave-vain; lone-show; feel-sleet*

**atmosphere:** the overall emotional impression we get from the words, images, and setting of a text and the pace set by the story's plot., *e.g., cheerful, anxious, foreboding.*

**audience:** the people for whom a piece of literature is written.

**autobiography:** a personal account of one's own life, especially for publication.

## B

**\*ballad:** a narrative poem or song that tells a popular story, often of physical courage or love.

**balance:** the way shapes are arranged within a visual. When shapes are balanced, they create a feeling of order or harmony.

**beliefs:** concepts and/or ideas that are held to be true by an individual or group (even when evidence supporting this position is lacking or absent)

**bias:** a slanted viewpoint that prevents a fair and open-minded assessment. Bias can occur in a piece of writing when the author leaves out information that is necessary to give an accurate presentation of a person or subject.

**biography:** an account of the life and deeds of an individual, written by someone else.

## C

**caption:** the words beneath a photograph that explain the subject and give background information. Captions help to shape the meaning of the photo, sometimes in misleading ways.

**character:** is a person presented in a dramatic or narrative work. Static characters do not change throughout the work, and the reader's knowledge of the character does not grow, whereas a dynamic character undergoes some kind of change because of the action in the plot. A flat character embodies one or two qualities, ideas, or traits that can be readily described in a brief summary. Round characters are more complex and often display the inconsistencies and internal conflicts found in real people.

**characterization:** the way an author creates characters within a story to make them seem real to the reader. It includes the development of the characters appearance, background, feelings, and thoughts. When the author tells the reader directly about the character, it is called **direct characterization**. When the author shows the character in action and lets readers draw their own conclusions, it is called **indirect characterization**.

**\*character sketch:** a brief description of a character, using whatever evidence is available to you, in order to show that character's attitudes, feelings, thoughts and personality.

**\*chorus:** a group of people who serve mainly as commentators on the characters and events.

**\*cliche:** an idea or expression that has become tired from over use, its clarity having worn off. *Example: the bottom line is...*

**coherence:** the situation in which all parts of an argument, essay, story, etc., fit together well.

**coherence (connectives):** word phrases which show relationships between sentences or paragraphs. It helps to achieve unity and coherence in an essay.

**coherence (transitions):** anything which serves as a means of connecting one sentence to another or one paragraph to another.

**coherence (organization):** the grouping and arranging of parts to form a full document that is easier to understand than scattered information.

**comparison:** describes similarities and differences between two or more items, either feature by feature or subject by subject.

**\*colloquial language:** language characteristic of everyday informal speech. *eg. You're getting on me nerves!*

**composition:** the arrangement of visual elements within a picture

**conflict:** (main, minor, internal, external): a struggle between opposing forces. There are two main types of conflict: internal and external.

**connotations:** the associations a word or image evokes. Connotations go beyond the literal meaning. *E.g., "home" connotes "comfort, love, security, etc"*

**constructed:** the elements of a visual that have been carefully planned to create an intended effect.

**contemporary realistic fiction:** (people stories, animal stories, sports stories, mysteries, survival stories, humorous stories, etc. )

**contrast:** to examine two or more items by looking at only their differences.

**conventions:** customary practices, features, characteristics, or patterns of a text, often arising from the medium.

**\*couplet:** two lines of verse with similar end-rhymes

**creative writing:** original compositions which fall outside of the expressive and transactional forms (ex: poems, short stories, novels) and which tend to be non-fictional in nature

**critical literacy:** (author, author's view/beliefs, intended audience, purpose, topic, message)

## D

**deconstruction:** breaking a text down into its components to see what messages and assumptions it carries.

**denotation:** refers to the specific, exact, and concrete dictionary meaning of a word, independent of any associated or secondary meanings. *E.g., "home" denotes a place where one lives*

**description:** verbal representation of characters, scene, or action, used to make the story more vivid for the reader.

**dialect:** the way a language is spoken in a particular region or place

**dialogue:** the actual words that characters speak. Authors use dialogue skillfully in the short story to portray character and to dramatize conflict.

**diction:** the author's choice of words, the vocabulary level of the story. *Example: slang, colloquial, formal.*

**\*dominant impression or image:** the central thought or object that stands out in a work.

**drama:** (improvisation, role-playing, storytelling, mime, reader's theatre, scripts, interviews, dance, theatre games)

**dramatic irony:** a technique that increases suspense by letting readers know more about the dramatic situation than the characters know.

## E

**elegy:** a type of lyric poem that expresses sadness for someone who has died; traditionally a solemn meditation on a serious subject.

**\*emphasis:** the stress or focus on a part or a whole. In writing, emphasis can help specific elements stand out for the reader.

**\*epic:** a long, narrative poem dealing with the actions of legendary men and women or the history of nations, often presented in a good ceremonious style.

**\*epiphany:** a sudden grasp of reality is achieved in a quick flash or recognition in which something, usually simple and commonplace, is seen in a new light.

**eulogy:** a speech or essay written in praise of a person, usually soon after the subject's death.

**essay:** (narrative, descriptive, expository) an effective **introduction** to a narrative has three important functions: to introduce the subject (the 5W's and the basic background info); to indicate the story's main conflict; to catch the reader's attention. An effective **body** should: present events in a clear order; outline the development of the conflict; develop relationships among the characters. An effective **conclusion** should provide a resolution that is satisfactory to both the reader and the characters.

**expository writing:** writing that is systematically explanatory, and communicates information.

**everyday texts:** includes letters, notices, signs, memos, etc.

**evidence:** information to support an argument or opinion

**expressive (personal) writing:** includes response journals, friendly letters, thank-you notes, etc.

## F

**fantasy/science fiction:** includes time warps, little people, spirits, strange/curious worlds, preposterous characters.

**features of text:** elements used to communicate meaning either generally or specific to a given type of text (use of colour, line, shape, focal point, text size and font, diagrams, punctuation, capitalization, titles, subheadings, glossary, index, etc.)

**fiction:** genres of narration that many be based on events and characters that are not real

**figurative language:** language that uses figures of speech, such as simile, metaphor, personification, and alliteration which are used extensively to create imagery.

**flashback:** a technique for presenting something that happened earlier (often prior to when the reader begins the story) that helps explain something about the current situation.

**focal point:** part of a photograph, drawing, or painting, that is the main area of interest.

**foreshadowing:** a technique for providing clues about events that may happen later in the story

**form:** genres are the larger divisions and forms are the smaller divisions (i.e. poetry is a genre and haiku which is a type of poetry is a form)

**\*free verse:** poems characterized by their nonconformity to established patterns of meter, rhyme, and stanza.



## **G**

**genre:** a type or class of literary texts (e.g., novel) within which there are categories of forms. Examples include poems, narratives, essays, etc.

**group discussion:** includes conversation, brainstorming, group sharing, interviewing

## H

**historical fiction:** a sub-genre of fictional writing which involves the inaccurate, fabricated, or only partially accurate portrayal of historical events or figures

**hyperbole:** an exaggerated statement used not to deceive, but for humorous or dramatic effect. *example: "It rained cats and dogs"*

**imagery:** language that creates pictures in a reader's mind to bring life to the experiences and feelings described in a poem. Often, the word the poet chooses appeals to the reader's senses. Language helps us see, hear, smell, taste, and touch what the writer is describing. Visual imagery - "gleaming steel knives"; olfactory imagery-

**information literacy:** (evaluate information, bias, validity of sources)

**information texts:** (process, people, events, reference material)

**irony:** a particular tone created when the speaker intends a meaning that is opposite to the words he or she says. **Verbal irony** occurs when what a character says and thinks he or she means is actually different from what the audience perceives is meant.

**Dramatic irony** occurs when the audience knows more about a character's situation than the character himself. **Structural irony** occurs when there is a naive or deluded hero (or unreliable narrator) whose view of the world is widely different from the true circumstances recognized by the author or reader.

## L

**layout:** the positioning of articles and photographs in a news publication. Layout also includes the use of borders, colours, and artwork.

**literal meaning/language:** language that means exactly what it says.

**listening:** actively interpreting meaning aurally in a given audio text (music, oral communication, natural collections/compositions, etc)

**logical fallacies:** a falsehood or misunderstanding based on flawed reasoning.

## M

**media texts:** any communication product, including radio and television, movies, billboards, magazine and television advertisements, books, paintings, photographs, collages, posters, comics, and web pages.

**metaphor:** a figure of speech that makes a comparison between two unlike things, without using the word like or as.

**monologue:** a long speech in a play or film spoken by one actor, especially when he or she is alone (*eg. a soliloquy or an aside*)

**mood:** the overall feeling – light and happy or dark and brooding, for example – created by an author's choice of words

**movement:** a sense of energy in a visual, determined by the spaces between shapes and by the shapes themselves.

## N

**narrator:** the speaker who tells the story. If the narrator is also a character who participates in the story, it is important not to confuse the narrator with the author – who may, in fact, hold a very different attitude toward the story.

**non-fiction:** any piece of writing about actual people, places, or events

**note-making:** the use of pen and paper, computer technologies, pictograms / ideograms or some other method to record the gist of a given topic, concept, or idea, etc.

## O

**onomatopoeia:** the sound of a word resemble its meaning, e.g., *buzz, hiss, etc.*

**oral presentation:** includes booktalks, short oral report, persuasive talks, illustrated media

**oral interpretation:** includes coral reading, choral speaking, readers theatre, storytelling

**other ways of representing:** include things like dioramas, drawings and paintings, collages, posters, role-plays, mimes, cartoons, pamphlets/brochures, book jackets, self-published books, etc.

**\*oxymoron:** is a figure of speech in which contradictory words are placed together for the purpose of expressing deep feelings, or to emphasize a point. *examples: cold-fire; feather of lead; honorable villain; silent speech.*

## P

**\*parallelism/parallel structure:** the deliberate repetition of the same or a similar grammatical structure, often used for effect in emotional or dramatic passages, eg. *I came, I saw, I conquered*

**personification:** a literary device in which human qualities or actions are attributed to inanimate objects.

**perspective:** the philosophical position one takes on an issue of controversy; the point from which one views an event; a type of drawing which uses at least one vanishing point to give a three dimensional appearance to a two dimensional image

**persuasive essay:** an essay written to convince an audience to think in a certain way or to take a particular action.

**pictorial, typographical, and organizational devices:** (headings, tables, graphs, and bold print)

**plays:** (silent plays-tableau/pantomime, stage plays, puppet plays, radio plays)

**plot:** the author's arrangement of events that make up the story of a text. **Exposition:** background material about the characters, setting, and dramatic situation with which the author introduces the essentials of the story to the reader. **Complication:** (rising action) any obstacle that increases the tension of the story conflict. **Climax:** the moment when the action comes to its highest point of dramatic conflict. **Falling action:** the part of the story, following the climax and leading to the resolution, in which there is a sharp decline in dramatic tension. **Resolution:** the part of the story, after the climax, which pulls together all the loose threads of the story. The resolution is also referred to as the conclusion or the denouement, a French word meaning "untying" or "unknotting."

**poetry:** (ballad, sonnet, limerick, eulogy, free verse, haiku, lyrics, narrative poems, shape/concrete poems, syllable/word-count poems, formula poems)

**point of view:** the perspective the author establishes to tell the story. **Third person narrator** uses *he, she, or they* to tell the story and does not participate in the action.

**Third person omniscient:** if the author is outside the story and presents the thoughts of more than one of the characters involved. **Third person limited:** when the story is told from the viewpoint of one character who can only see part of the whole story. **First person narrator** uses *I* and is a major or minor participant in the action. In addition, a **second person narrator** using *you* is also possible, but rarely is used.

**prejudice:** the unwarranted attributing of seemingly negative aspects to a person or group based on personal bias



**print texts:** include email, CD ROMs, documentaries, books, newspapers.

**prologue:** the opening speech or dialogue of a play, that usually gives the exposition necessary to follow the subsequent action. Today the term also refers to the introduction to any literary work.

**\*propaganda:** attempts to sway popular opinion and beliefs through distortions of the truth or outright lies.

**prose:** all writing which is not poetic

**\*protagonist:** the main character in a literary work

**\*pun:** the humorous use of words that sound the same or nearly the same but differ in meaning. *example: "to make dandelion biscuits, you need two cups of flower"*

**purpose:** the purpose of a piece of writing is the reason for its existence, the reason why it has been written. It will determine everything about the piece of writing- its tone, diction, style, selection of specific details, audience, attitude, etc. The purpose can be to define, report, persuade, compare, etc.

## R

**\*refrain:** a phrase, line, or lines repeated in a poem. In song lyrics they are often called the chorus.

**repetition:** the deliberate use of the same word, words, or events to create an effect.

**rephrasing:** to restate a previously communicated thought or idea to better relate one's intentions

**representing:** the use of visual, auditory, or kinesthetic elements to communicate thoughts and ideas

**research process:** (planning/pre-research, gathering information, interacting with information, organizing information, creating new information, sharing and presenting information, evaluation and assessment (rubric))

**respond critically:** to actively interrogate and analyze a topic and communicate one's findings formally or informally

**rhyme:** the same sound occurring in different words.

**rhythm:** the pattern of accented and unaccented, stressed and unstressed, syllables in written or spoken language.

## S

**\*satire:** a blend of wit, irony, and humor used to reveal and criticize human characteristics

**scene:** a subdivision of an act

**setting:** the environment or surroundings in which a story takes place. The major elements of setting are the time, the place, and the social environment that frames the characters.

**significant social texts:** (oral and written)-speeches, advertisements, radio and television broadcasts, political documents, editorials, advertisements)

**simile:** a comparison between two unlike things using like or as. *eg. "My love is like a red, red rose"*

**speaking:** effectively communicating one's ideas, beliefs, thoughts, understanding, etc. through speech

**stage directions:** elements of scripts (plays, screenplays, etc.) which inform actors, directors, and technicians of the author's intention and vision regarding part or all of a performance

**stanza:** a stanza to a poem is what a paragraph is to a piece of prose. Like paragraphs, stanzas are separated from one another by the use of spacing.

**stereotype:** a fixed mental picture that one draws upon in making judgments instead of taking a fresh, open-minded look each time. *eg. All Newfoundlanders are stupid.*

**style:** the characteristic ways that an individual author uses language – including word choice, length and complexity of sentences, patterns of sound, and use of imagery and symbols.

**summarizing:**

**suspense:** techniques used by the author to keep readers interested in the story and wondering what will happen next.

**soliloquy:** a type of dramatic monologue wherein the speaker is (or believes himself/herself to be) alone on stage; used to communicate the inner (hidden) thoughts of a character which would not otherwise be known by the audience – sometimes speakers seem to address the audience and "break the fourth wall"

**symbolism:** a symbol is a person, object, image, word, or event that evokes a range of additional meaning beyond and usually more abstract than its literal significance. Symbols are educational devices for evoking complex ideas without having to resort to painstaking symbols have meanings that are widely recognized by a society or culture. Some conventional symbols are the Christian cross, the Star of David, a swastika, or a nation's flag. Writers use conventional symbols to reinforce meanings. .

**symbolic codes:** relate to the way images communicate meaning

## T

**target audience:** an audience made up of the same kind of people, for example, children between the ages of eight and twelve.

**technological texts:** include computer software, computer networks, databases, CDROMs

**texture:** the quality or feel of an object's surface, such as roughness or smoothness. Through the skilled use of lines and dots in visual images, textures can be "felt" with the eyes.

**theme:** the story's main ideas – the "message" that the author intends to communicate by telling the story. Themes are often universal truths that are suggested by the specifics of the story.

**\*thesis:** is the central idea of an essay. The thesis is a complete sentence (although sometimes it may require more than one sentence) that establishes the topic of the essay in clear, unambiguous language.

**\*title:** is the name of a selection.

**tone:** the author's attitude towards the subject that he/she is writing about. Since there are as many tones in literature as there are tones of voice in real relationships. The tone of a literary work may be one of anger or approval, pride or piety—the entire gamut of attitudes toward life's phenomena.

**\*topic sentence:** a sentence stating the main idea or subject of a paragraph, report, essay, or argument.

**traditional literature:** include myths, legends, folktales

**transactional (informational) writing:** include project reports, reviews, letters, directions

## U

**understatement:** the opposite of exaggeration. A figure of speech in which the speaker says less than what he or she actually feels.

**unity:** a quality of oneness, in which the parts hang together. Each part of a work is interdependent and no part is irrelevant.

## V

**verbal irony:** the use of figures of speech such as hyperbole and understatement to create an ironic effect.

**verbal and non-verbal language features** (summaries, eye contact, body language, repetition, volume)

**visuals:** information that is communicated through still or moving images in a variety of forms such as paintings, photographs, cartoons, television, movies, stage plays, illustrations, drawings, videos, and the like in advertising.

**visual-composition:** is the arrangement of visual elements within a picture. It is the way in which the parts of an artistic work is brought together into a visually satisfying whole.

**visual-perspective:** is the illusion of creating three-dimensional views of objects. Through intersecting lines and by careful spacing of objects of different sizes, an illusion of depth can be created in a picture.

**visual-scale:** is the relative size of objects within the composition. Larger objects attract the viewer's attention first.

**visual-contrast:** often refer to dark and light or other differences used to create strong feelings in a work of art. Contrasting textures may be rough and smooth.

**visual-colour:** is made up of hue (or tint), intensity, and value. Hue or tint refers to the name of the colour, such as red or blue. Intensity is the purity and strength of a colour, such as dull red or bright blue. Value means the lightness or darkness of a colour. Colour is used by artists to represent the way things really look and also to create feelings. The effect of colour on the viewer may be stronger than any other element.

**visual-balance:** is the way shapes are arranged. When shapes are balanced, they create a feeling of order or harmony. When shapes are not balanced, they create tension.

**visual-message:** is the general idea or insight about a message that an artist wishes to express.

**visual-focal point:** is part of a photograph, drawing or painting that is the main area of interest.

**visual-proportion or symmetry:** is balance in which the parts are visually equal. It can also be called formal balance.

**visual literacy** (aesthetic, emotive, affective qualities; elements of design and colour)

**visual organizers** (RL pp. 75-88)

**voice:** is the personality of the speaker or creator that is revealed in a work through such elements as style, tone, diction, etc.



## W

**word choice:** see diction

**writing:** the act of using written words (by hand, typing, texting, etc.) to communicate thoughts and ideas