Annotated Glossary of Literary Terms

As well as personally responding to literature, your comprehension and enjoyment of the literature we encounter this year will improve with a solid grasp of the literary terms critics frequently apply to literary works. Furthermore, remembering terms and their definitions becomes much easier when you have “experienced” the term and can claim “ownership” to its meaning.

Assignment: Throughout the year, you will create an annotated glossary of literary terms from your glossary of literary terms list. The glossary should be typed and be very thorough, organized and neat—something you will keep forever. Please use Times New Roman font in 12 pt. Your annotations should come from your course readings this semester. You will receive due dates throughout the semester.

Note: I highly recommend that you work on these each week. Do not wait until the night before to complete these assignments; you will find yourself in a very difficult situation. If you need any help on these, please come see me during tutorials.

GUIDE FOR ANNOTATED GLOSSARY:

Term: definition

Example: usually a quote from a work we have previously read during our course; very rarely (but occasionally) not a direct quote, but a title of a work or other specific summary. Whenever possible—use a direct quote!!! Title of work, and location in the work

Explanation: 1) If necessary explain the quote. How is the quote an example of the term? 2) How does the element serve (function) in the work? In other words—so what!? Why and how does the author use this element in the work? What is the purpose of this element in this story? Why should I even care that the author used this element? (This must be more than “to make the story interesting” or any variation of that idea.)

SAMPLE STUDENT ANNOTATIONS:

Allusion: a reference to something literary, mythological, or historical that the author assumes the reader will recognize

Example: “Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell.”

_macbeth_, IV, iii, 22

Explanation: Malcolm’s line alludes to Lucifer, the “brightest angle,” who rebelled against God in the Biblical account. Even the name “Lucifer” suggests light or brightness. Malcolm’s allusion to Lucifer serves here to explain the nature of grace to Macduff, and it helps define the character of Macbeth, the “brightest” of Duncan’s nobles at the outset of the play, who has succumbed to “the common enemy of mankind” in killing his king/guest/cousin.
Aside: in a play, a character’s comments meant to be heard by the audience but understood to be unheard by other characters on stage

Example: “[Aside.] A little more than kin, and less than kind.”

Hamlet, 1. ii. 65

Explanation: Hamlet is responding to his uncle now mother’s husband’s comment about Hamlet being his cousin and now his son. He personally is disgusted and grieved by his mother’s marriage to his uncle so quickly after his father’s death. So to himself only he speaks of how he is only connected to his uncle-father through more kin (nephew) than a natural affection. He says this to only himself and subsequently the audience, but not to the other characters on stage. To them he is supposed to give the appearance of all joy although he is quite upset. So this comment is made only to himself for the audience and no one else to hear.

First Set: Due: ________
1. static character
2. dynamic character
3. indirect characterization
4. direct characterization
5. diction
6. archetype
7. imagery
8. point of view
9. setting
10. conflict

Fifth Set: Due: ________
1. dramatic monologue
2. assonance
3. onomatopoeia
4. allegory
5. soliloquy
6. hyperbole
7. motif
8. aside
9. comic relief
10. epithet

Second Set: Due: ________
1. details
2. foreshadowing
3. mood
4. syntax
5. theme
6. tone
7. metaphor
8. simile
9. personification
10. epithet

Sixth Set: Due: ________
1. understatement
2. antithesis
3. motivation
4. narration
5. repetition
6. denotation
7. connotation
8. symbol
9. rhetorical shift
10. foil

Third Set: Due: ________
1. pun
2. oxymoron
3. paradox
4. apostrophe
5. dramatic irony
6. verbal irony
7. situational irony
8. alliteration
9. allusion
10. colloquialism