**Shakespearean Literary Terms**

**Drama-**a story written to be acted for an audience

**Tragedy-**a play, novel, or other narrative that depicts serious and important events in which the main character comes to an unhappy end

**Prologue-**a short introduction at the beginning of a play that gives a brief overview of the plot

**Chorus-**a group who says things at the same time

**Verbal irony-**a writer or speaker says one thing, but really means something completely different

**Dramatic irony-**the audience or reader knows something important that a character in a play or story does not know

**Monologue-**a speech by one character in a play

**Soliloquy**-an unusually long speech in which a character who is on stage alone expresses his or her thoughts aloud

**Foil-**character who is used as a contrast to another character; writer sets off/intensifies the qualities of 2 characters this way

**Oxymoron-**a combination of contradictory terms (EX: jumbo shrimp)

**Aside-**words that are spoken by a character in a play to the audience or to another character but that are not supposed to be overheard by the others onstage

**Pun-**a play on the multiple meanings of a word, or on two words that sound alike but have different meanings

**Comic relief-**humor added that lessens the seriousness of a plot  
  
**Couplet-**two consecutive lines of poetry that rhyme; couplets often signal the EXIT of a character or end of a scene

**Allusion-**a reference to a well-know person, place, event, literary work, etc.

**Hyperbole-**a deliberate exaggeration or overstatement (often used for comic effect)

**Lit Terms Reminders:**

**Sonnet-**fourteen-line lyric poem that is usually written in iambic pentameter and that has one of several rhyme schemes (Shakespearean-3 four-line quatrains, followed by a concluding two-line unit, or couplet; abab cdcd efef gg)

**Iambic pentameter** (“pent”=5;“meter”=measure); each line of poetry contains 5 iambs, or metrical feet, that consist of an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable.

Ex. bum BUM bum BUM bum BUM bum BUM bum BUM

**Static character-**character who does not change much in the course of a story

**Dynamic character**-character who changes as a result of the story’s events

**Foreshadowing**- The presentation of details, characters, or incidents in a [narrative](http://grammar.about.com/od/mo/g/narrative2term.htm) in such a way that later events are prepared for (or "shadowed forth").

**Blank (“unrhymed”-no rhyme at the end of lines) Verse-**poetry written in unrhymed iambic pentameter