**AP English Language and Composition**

**Literary Device Glossary Assignment**

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A capable AP student has a command of the vocabulary necessary to discuss an author’s craft in both fiction and non-fiction. To assist you in developing and employing an appropriate literary criticism, you will be completing an ongoing personal literary terms glossary. You may submit as many as six entries each week (and no less than four), and will have the list completed in its entirety by the week of December 9 (the week before finals week).

As we read text selections for class, you will recognize examples of the terms eligible for your glossary assignment. You will also encounter examples in outside reading as well. When you note an example, use it for your glossary. Submitted entries will be graded and returned to you. Keep this glossary, as you will need to remain familiar with these terms for the exam in Spring.

*Guidelines:*

* You must submit 4-6 glossary terms per week.
* All entries must follow the proper format to be graded, and it is recommended that this assignment be **typed**.
* Plagiarism will result in an irreversible zero to the glossary assignment for the semester, and will have serious consequences towards your final grade.

*Format:*

* Your glossary entries will look as follows:
  + **Term:** definition of the literary device (the official definition has already been provided for you) AND the term defined in your own words
  + **Example:** quotation, followed by the source (follow MLA formatting guidelines for quotations)
  + **Function:** author’s purpose in employing this language resource at this point in the work. How does this particular device enhance what the write is attempting to convey? You may wish to provide commentary on how the literary device functions in your example, and in the larger work as a whole.

*To consider:*

* You are most likely to receive full credit for your entries if you include the following in your function discussion
  + CONTEXT – provide context for your quote. This does ont mean an extended summary or history lesson, but instead the general circumstances introducing the quote. Assume your reader has a basic familiarity of your text.
  + CONCEPT – specifically address the device you are examining and what it is doing in the quote. Use present tense and active voice when referring to the term.
  + CONNECTION – provide commentary explaining how the term works in the larger text as a whole. Consider why the author/speaker elected to use this device and how it advances the artistic/rhetorical purpose of the work. Beware of using general specifics. Effective discussion will begin with what is going on, but then quickly move on to how and why it matters.

**Student Example**

**Aside:** 1) Words spoken by an actor directly to the audience, which are not "heard" by the other characters on stage during a play. (official)

2) An actor’s speech, directed to the audience, which is not supposed to be ­­heard by other characters on stage. An aside is usually used to let the audience know what a character is about to do or what he or she is thinking. (student)

**Example:** “A little more than kin, and less than kind” (1.2.145)

**Function**: In the first act of Hamlet, Claudius, the new king, is speaking to his subjects. The content of his speech – affairs of state, recognition of his recent marriage – suggest that this is one of his first official speeches. After he tends to affairs of state, and with smaller matters such as allowing his advisor’s son to return to college, he finally addresses Hamlet, referring to him as both “cousin” and “son”. The example is Hamlet’s reaction to this statement.

In his reply, Hamlet touches upon two important aspects in terms of how he views the king. When Hamlet says “a little more than kin”, he refers to the hasty marriage between Claudius and Hamlet’s mother. Hamlet disapproves of the marriage, and hates the idea of Claudius as a father figure. He makes fun of the fact that Claudius is “more than kin”, because he feels that Claudius only gained that position by taking advantage of Gertrude in her time of mourning. Hamlet hates Claudius’ opportunism, and the fact that he has the audacity to call him “son” in public. Hamlet is also mocking the fact that Claudius is, essentially, doubly related to Hamlet and Gertrude now—first as an uncle/brother-in-law, and now as a father/husband. He is “more than kin” because of the incestuous nature of his relationship to his family.

When Hamlet goes on to say “less than kind”, he is emphasizing his dislike for Claudius in two ways. Hamlet suggests that Claudius is cold-hearted, i.e. unkind. The second meaning to “kind” in Elizabethan England was “natural”. By calling Claudius “less than kind”, Hamlet is suggesting that his new father is unnatural. The two meanings together reveal Hamlet’s immense dislike for his step-father.

This aside allows Hamlet to reveal his dislike in Claudius without saying anything to Claudius directly. The utterance is meant to only be heard by the audience. This gives the audience insight into Hamlet’s true feelings and motivations, while still hiding them from the other characters of the play. His hatred is revealed to the audience, but hidden from the man who could have him executed at any moment. By speaking these thoughts as an aside, it also reveals that Hamlet is not ready to tip his hand to the king, and//or the king in Hamlet’s mind is not worthy of the truth. Finally, in speaking his feelings to the audience alone, a relationship is built between the onlookers and Hamlet, whereby they become complicit in the complexity of Hamlet’s character throughout the rest of the play.