**Key Literary Terms**

***Directions***: Following is a list of literary terms that will help you to analyze the books you read and to write quality essay responses. When we discuss these in class be sure to write down your own definition and at least one example for each.

1. **Character**
   1. Protagonist & Antagonist: *Pro=For; Anti=Against*
   2. Indirect Characterization: *The author hinting at what a character is like through:*
      1. That Character’s Actions
      2. Reaction of Others
      3. Appearance
      4. Dialogue
      5. Attitude & Thoughts
   3. Static vs. Dynamic: *Static=Clings/Doesn’t change; Dymanic=Dynamite/Changes*
   4. Round vs. Flat: *Round=Fleshed out/We know a lot; Flat=1dimentional/We don’t know much*
   5. Archetype (Stock Character): *A type of character that arches/repeats throughout literature such as the rebel, the femme fatal, or the wise old man.*
   6. Parallel/Foil: Characters that highlight qualities of the protagonist by being similar (parallel) or very different (foil).
2. **Plot** 
   1. Conflict: *Struggle between opposing forces*
      1. INTERNAL: character vs. self: *What a character struggles with inside their mind*
      2. EXTERNAL:
         1. character vs. character *(e.g. Batman vs. the Joker)*
         2. character vs. society: *(e.g. Braveheart vs. social system/tradition )*
         3. character vs. nature: *(e.g. in 127 Hours he is stuck in a cavern)*
   2. Plot Line:
      1. *Sequence of events in a story (like dominoes in a row)*
      2. *exposition /conflict/ rising action / climax / resolution or denouement*
   3. Foreshadowing & Flashback: *Fore=before; Back=back*
   4. Subplot: *A secondary plot that is sub/below the main plot*
3. **Point of View**
   1. First person (and first person unreliable): “*I”; unreliable=can’t trust them*
   2. Third person: *He, She, It, They*
      1. Objective: *surveillance camera*
      2. Omniscient: *all-knowing*
      3. Limited Omniscient: *in 1 head*
4. **Setting**
   1. Mood/Atmosphere: *The feeling that a work evokes like the atmosphere of a restaurant.*
   2. Tone: *Word choice and sentence arrangement that suggests an attitude like tone of voice.*
5. **Theme**
   1. Symbols: *A concrete thing that represents an abstract concept/idea like the American flag.*
   2. *Motif: A recurring symbol such as the snow in Powder.*
   3. Archetype: *A type of character, situation, or symbol that arches/repeats throughout literature.*
6. **Figurative Language**
   1. Simile/Metaphor: *A comparison that takes an abstract idea and makes it concrete.*
   2. Allusion: *Like an inside joke, it is an intellectual shortcut, a reference to something famous from history, literature, popular culture, etc.*
   3. Juxtaposition: *Placing two things next to each other to show the contrast between them.*
   4. Cliché: *A phrase, expression, or idea that is boring because it is overused such as “fail.”*
   5. Hyperbole & Understatement: *Hyper=Excessive; Under=Less than*
   6. Paradox: *Literally opposite, but metaphorically true such as “a hate-filled love.”*
7. **Irony**
   1. Verbal: *Sarcasm*
   2. Situational: *When the opposite of the expected result occurs. Usually is darkly humorous or has some type of poetic justice. (e.g. A fire house burning down.)*
   3. Dramatic: *Where the audience knows something that one of the characters does not. (e.g. Oedipus Rex)*
   4. Cosmic: *When the universe/fate/God seems to be messing with you. (e.g. Gift of the Magi)*
   5. Satire: *Attacking a problem with humor (e.g. Ficus for Congress)*
   6. Parody: *A humorous imitation without trying to solve a problem (e.g. The Onion)*
8. **Literary Theory**
   1. New Criticism: *Focus on theme. What you have been taught so far.*
   2. Reader Response: *Focus on how the reader creates meaning.*
   3. Social Criticism: *Focus on money and power.*
   4. Feminist Criticism: *Focus on how men and women interact.*
   5. Archetypal Criticism: *Focus on patterns of characters, situations, and symbols.*
   6. Psychoanalytical Criticism: *Focus on psychology (motives, desires, etc)*
   7. Historical Criticism: *Focus on how history influenced the work.*
   8. Biographical Criticism: *Focus on how the author’s life influenced the work.*