

# *Literary Terms*

**B.A. Final  
Semester V  
RTMNU Nagpur**

**By**

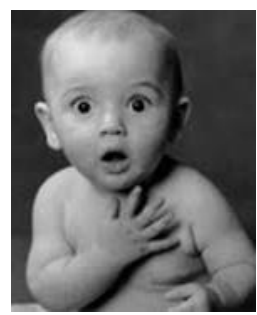
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## Literary Terms for the semester V

- Surprise
- Suspense
- Sub-plot
- Anti-hero
- Intrigue
- Catharsis
- Three Unities
- Hamartia



**Surprise** is a kind of dramatic tool that is about the unexpected or doing exactly what the viewer's doesn't see coming of actions. Most of the people like to find order and expect a certain level of this as a constant. Dramatist or novelist creates surprise or add element of surprise with an unexpected idea or use of the layout to shake thinks up in the minds of viewers.



One of the most significant device in storytelling is known as 'peripeteia.

According to Aristotle it means 'a change by which the actions veers around to its opposite, subject always to our rule of possibility or necessity'.

Means of presenting the reader with a plot device which completely defies a reader's expectations.

1. **Identity:** the character not turn out to be who they appear to be
2. **Motive:** a sudden or gradual shift in motive can also falls under the element of surprise.
3. **Perception:** the idea that the world as we perceive it is not as it initially appears to be
4. **Misfortune:** as opposite to the psychological nature of motive, an act of misfortune is built on a physical occurrence of a surprise event, something which happens totally beyond your characters control, but perhaps as an indirect result of their actions.
5. **Betrayal:** the element of surprise can also take the form of betrayal of some kind. A story which sees a characters achievement denied, a moment of glory stolen or the goal they've been striving towards debased by another's malevolence are the most obvious means of achieving surprise.



## **Suspense**

A state of uncertainty, anticipation and curiosity as to the outcome of a story or play, or any kind of narrative in verse or prose. The suspense in Hamlet, for instance, is sustained throughout by the question of whether or not the Prince will achieve what he has been instructed to do and what he intends to do.

The plan, design, scheme or pattern of events in a play, poem or work of fiction; and, further, the organization of incident and character in such a way as to induce curiosity and suspense (q.v.) in the spectator or reader

## **Sub-plot**

a secondary sequence of actions in a dramatic or narrative work, usually involving characters of lesser importance (and often of lower social status).

A subsidiary action in a play or story which coincides with the main action.

## **Difference**

**Main Plot:** Primary storyline of the Play

**Sub Plot:** Secondary Storyline of the play

The subplot may be related to the main plot as a parallel or contrast, or it may be more or less separate from it. Subplots are especially common in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama.

For example, the comic subplot involving Stefano and Trinculo in *The Tempest*; and the serious one involving Gloucester, Edmund and Edgar in *King Lear*. The subplot became increasingly rare after the 17th c.



**Anti-hero or anti-heroine:**

a central character in a dramatic or narrative work who lacks the qualities of nobility and magnanimity expected of traditional heroes and heroines in \*ROMANCES and \*EPICS.

A 'non-hero', or the antithesis of a hero of the old-fashioned kind who was capable of heroic deeds, who was dashing, strong, brave and resourceful.

The anti-hero - a type who is incompetent, unlucky, tactless, clumsy, cack-handed, stupid, buffoonish - is of ancient lineage and is to be found, for instance, in the Greek New Comedy

Unheroic characters of this kind have been an important feature of the Western \*NOVEL, which has subjected idealistic heroism to \*PARODY since Cervantes's Don Quixote (1605).

Flaubert's Emma Bovary (in Madame Bovary, 1857) and Joyce's Leopold Bloom (in Ulysses, 1922) are outstanding examples of this antiheroic ordinariness and inadequacy.

The anti-hero is also an important figure in modern drama, both in the theatre of the **ABSURD** and in the **TRAGEDIES** of Arthur Miller, notably **Death of a Salesman** (1949). In these plays, as in many modern novels, the **PROTAGONIST** is an ineffectual failure who succumbs to the pressure of circumstances. The anti-hero should not be confused with the **ANTAGONIST** Or the **VILLAIN**.

## **Intrigue**

An older term for the **PLOT** of a play or story, or for its most complicated portion. In another sense closer to modern usage, the term may also refer to the secret scheme ('plot' in the other sense, as conspiracy) that one character or group of characters devises in order to outwit others.

Much European comedy of the 17th century is based on complex plots about plotters, and is sometimes called the comedy of intrigue, especially where intricacy of plot overshadows the development of character or of satiric theme.

## **Catharsis**

According to the Aristotle it is the effect of 'purgation' or 'purification' achieved by tragic drama.

Our subjective, potentially morbid, emotions are extended outward, through pity for the tragic hero, in an enlargement, a leading out, of the soul. So tragedy moves us towards psychic harmony

Therefore, the tragedy having aroused powerful feelings in the spectator, has also a therapeutic effect; after the storm and climax there comes a sense of release from tension, of calm.

## **Three Dramatic Unity:**

The theory of three dramatic unity is based on the theory of Aristotle given in Poetics.

**Unity of times** means that the time over which the plot is spread and that occupied in its representation on stage should be same or approximately same. It may not be beyond one day.

**The unity of action** makes a double provision the plot either be purely tragic or purely comic but not a mixture of two. Also there should no sub-plot or episodes unconnected with main theme to ensure verisimilitude.

**The unity of place** should coordinate with the unity of time. if the play must limit itself to events that cover only a few hours, it must confined to one place. The scene must be manageable with a short span of time allowed to the action of the plot.

## Hamartia

Primarily, it is an error of judgement which may arise from ignorance or some moral shortcoming.

The term has often been translated as 'tragic flaw', but this misleadingly confines the cause of the reversal of fortunes to some personal defect of character, whereas Aristotle's emphasis was rather upon the protagonist's action, which could be brought about by misjudgement, ignorance, or some other cause.

For example: Oedipus kills his father from impulse, and marries his mother out of ignorance.