

British Literature Notes—Unit 1

1. Hero— in the face of danger, one who combats adversity through impressive feats of ingenuity, bravery or strength, often sacrificing his or her own personal concerns for some greater good.
2. Villain—A villain is the bad guy, the one who comes up with diabolical plots to somehow cause harm or ruin
3. Epic—long, stylized narrative poem that celebrates the deeds of a national hero
4. Didactic—concerned with teaching
5. Kennings—use a twist of words, figure of speech or magic poetic phrase or a newly created compound sentence or phrase to refer to a person, object, place, action or idea.

Examples

Battle sweat = blood
Whale road = ocean
Sleep story = dream

6. Litotes—figures of speech that use an understated statement of an affirmative by using a negative description.

Examples

“not the brightest bulb” = a bit dim
“not a beauty” = plain looking

Jeremiah 30:19:

“I will multiply them, and they shall not be few; I will make them honored, and they shall not be small.”

Correctly interpreted, he is saying “there will be many and they will be great or large.”

7. Alliteration—repetition of similar sounds in writing; can be assonance or consonance
8. Foreshadowing—hint at what is to come in a literary piece
9. Allusion—reference to another literary piece, historical figure, or important historical event; Bible and Greek/Roman mythology are two most alluded to things