**Theatrical Terms for ENG 2DI**

**Allusion**: A **cultural reference** to a well-known work, figure, or character

**Archetype**: A **character type** which theatrical characters are based upon

**Dramatic Irony**: When the **audience** knows something a specific character does not

**Comic Relief**: Humor used to break the **tension** of a dramatic scene

**Protagonist**: The **central** character of a play

**Antagonist**: The **rival** character in the play

**Motivation**: **Reasons** behind a character’s actions

**Genre**: A type of play

**Comedy**: A play that focuses on **humorous situations** and the prevalence of **love**

**Tragedy**: A play in which the **hero is destroyed** because of an **imbalance** in his character

**Tragic Flaw**: The **defect** of the tragic hero’s character

**Crisis**: An important **turning point** in a story

**Catastrophe**: The **final event** in a tragedy in which the hero is **overthrown** and meets his death

**Catharsis**: The release from **fear and pity** as a purpose of tragedy

**Soliloquy**: A speech revealing a **character’s thoughts** to the audience while the character is **alone on stage**

**Blank Verse / Prose**: Speech that does not **rhyme** or have any **restrictions of meter**. Often used by **uneducated** characters

**Poetry**: **Structured speech**, following a rhyme scheme and specific meter

**Iambic Pentameter**: Shakespeare’s predominant form of **poetry** used in his plays

 **Iam** = **Unstressed syllable** followed by a stressed syllable

 **Penta** = **five**

 **Meter** = **feet** in a line of poetry

 **Foot** = **two syllables**

**Couplet**: Two consecutive lines that **rhyme**

**Sonnet**: A **14 line** poem, traditionally about **love**. It includes **shifts** to analyze a topic from multiple perspectives

**Prologue**: An **opening speech,** which introduces the play

**Pathos**: An attempt by the author to build **pity or sympathy** for a character

**Paradox**: A statement which seems **contradictory** but is actually true

**Pun**: A **play** on words

**Supernatural**: A **divine power** extending beyond the mortal realm

**Suspense**: The building of **anticipation**

**Motif:** A recurring **image or phrase**

**Symbolism**: An **object** used to represent a **complex idea**

**Theme**: A **message** the author sends to audiences through their work

**Universal Theme**: A thematic statement that **transcends a specific work**, and can apply to all **peoples, cultures, and eras** (ie. family, fate, tragedy, love, justice, etc.)



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