**caricature –** a verbal description, the purpose of which is to exaggerate or distort, for comic effect, a person’s distinctive physical

features or other characteristics.

**clause –** A grammatical unit that contains both a subject and a verb. An *independent*, or *main*, *clause* expresses a complete

thought and can stand alone as a sentence. A *dependent*, or *subordinate clause*, cannot stand alone as a sentence and must

be accompanied by an independent clause. The point that you want to consider is the question of what or why the author

subordinates one element should also become aware of making effective use of subordination in your own writing.

**colloquial/colloquialism –** The use of slang or informalities in speech or writing. Not generally acceptable for formal writing,

colloquialisms give a work a conversational, familiar tone. Colloquial expressions in writing include local or regional

dialects.

**conceit –** A fanciful expression, usually in the form of an extended metaphor or surprising analogy between seemingly dissimilar

objects. A conceit displays intellectual cleverness as a result of the unusual comparison being made.

Adapted from V. Stevenson, Patrick Henry High School, and Abrams’ *Glossary of Literary Terms*

**connotation –** The non-literal, associative meaning of a word; the implied, suggested meaning. Connotations may involve ideas,

emotions, or attitudes.

**denotation –** The strict, literal, dictionary definition of a word, devoid of any emotion, attitude, or color. (Example: the *denotation*

of a knife would be a utensil used to cut; the *connotation* of a knife might be fear, violence, anger, foreboding, etc.)

**diction –** Related to style, diction refers to the writer’s word choices, especially with regard to their correctness, clearness, or

effectiveness. For the AP exam, you should be able to describe an author’s diction (for example, formal or informal,

ornate or plain) and understand the ways in which diction can complement the author’s purpose. Diction, combined with

syntax, figurative language, literary devices, etc., creates an author’s style.

**didactic –** From the Greek, *didactic* literally means “teaching.” Didactic words have the primary aim of teaching or instructing,

especially the teaching of moral or ethical principles.

**euphemism –** From the Greek for “good speech,” euphemisms are a more agreeable or less offensive substitute for a generally unpleasant word or concept. The euphemism may be used to adhere to standards of social or political correctness or to add humor or ironic understatement. Saying “earthly remains” rather than “corpse” is an example of euphemism.

**extended metaphor –** A metaphor developed at great length, occurring frequently in or throughout a work.