

GLOSSARY

The key is to find terms that learners can use effectively to describe the linguistic and literary features they are exploring. The following glossary is therefore provided as a guide to support teachers and learners. It defines terms that will be useful in tackling Units 1-5, but it is not definitive and it is not a checklist.

Learners may find it helpful to create their own glossaries, defining terms in a way that suits them and creating their own examples. They could organise terminology under topic headings to make shorter, more focused lists of key words e.g. words, phrases, discourse, spoken language, dramatic techniques etc.

Abstract noun	A name to describe things that have no physical qualities
Accent	A set of distinctive pronunciations that mark regional or social identity
Active voice	A grammatical structure in which the subject is the actor of the sentence e.g. the dog eats the bone
Adjective	A word that modifies a noun or pronoun
Adverb	A word that modifies verbs, adverbs, adjectives, conjunctions and prepositions
Alliteration	The repetition of the same sound in the initial position in a sequence of words
Allusion	To refer to something indirectly or metaphorically
Alternate rhyme	Lines of poetry where the rhyme is on every other line (abab)
Anapest	A unit of poetic meter containing two unstressed syllables followed by a stressed syllable --/
Archaisms	A word or phrase no longer in current use
Aspirants	Sounds that denote audible breath e.g. h
Assonance	A repetition of the same or similar vowel sounds
Asyndetic listing	The omission of co-ordinating conjunctions as a feature of rhetorical style
Attitudes	The opinions expressed in the text
Auxiliary / Modal verbs	A verb that precedes another verb e.g. I <i>can</i> go
Bilabials	Term used to denote sounds made with both lips e.g. m, b
Caesura	A mid-line pause
Clause	A group of words usually with a finite verb which is structurally larger than a phrase
Collective noun	A name that refers to a group of people, animals or things
Comment clause	A commonly occurring phrase in speech e.g. you know
Common/concrete noun	A name for every day objects
Complex sentence	A sentence made up of one main and one or more subordinate or dependent clauses
Compound adjective	An adjective made up of two words joined by a hyphen
Compound sentence	A sentence made up of at least two main clauses joined together by a co-ordinating conjunction
Conceit	A deliberately elaborate metaphor
Connotations	The associations attached to a word in addition to its dictionary definition
Content	What the text is about
Context	Things outside the text which may shape its meaning e.g. when it was written, and who wrote it
Co-ordinating conjunction	A word that joins elements of equal rank (and, or, but)
Couplet	A two line verse (often rhyming)
Dactyl	A unit of poetic meter containing one stressed syllable followed by two unstressed syllable /--
Declarative mood	A mood used to express a statement

Definite article	'The'
Deictic	Terms used to denote words that rely on the context to be understood e.g. pass me that, there.
Dependent or subordinate clause	A group of words which add extra information to the independent main clause
Dialogue	Language interaction with two or more participants
Discourse	The study of spoken language
Double negative	A structure in which more than one negative is used
Dynamic verbs	A verb that expresses an action rather than a state
Elision	The omission of sounds in connected speech
Ellipsis	The omission of part of a sentence
End-focus	A change in the structure of the sentence to place emphasis on a closing sentence element.
Enjambment	Run-on lines
Euphemism	A word that replaces a term seen by society as taboo or unpleasant
Exclamatory mood	A mood that expresses strong emotions
Eye rhyme	Where the rhyme looks like it should rhyme but the sound is not exactly the same.
Fillers	Words used when hesitating in speech, um, er
foregrounding	A change in the structure of the sentence to place emphasis on an opening sentence element
Form	The structure and shape of the text
Fricatives	Sounds where air escapes through a small passage e.g. f, v
Hyperbole	Exaggeration used to heighten feeling and intensity
Iambic	A unit of poetic meter containing one unstressed syllable followed by one stressed syllable -/
Imagery	A descriptive or metaphorical use of language to create a vivid picture
Imperative mood	A mood that expresses a command
Indefinite article	'A'
Independent main clause	The group of words which carries the core meaning of the sentence
Internal rhyme	Where the rhyming sound occurs within a line of verse
Interrogative mood	A mood expressing a question
Intonation	The quality or tone of the voice in speech
IPA	The International Phonetic Alphabet used to classify the sounds of language
Juxtaposition	To place two or more things side by side
Lexical set	A group of words joined by similarities
Lexis	The term used to describe the vocabulary of a language
Litotes	A deliberate understatement
Metaphor	A description which does not compare one thing with another but actually becomes the other e.g. the trees danced in the wind
Mode of address	The point of view of the text i.e. first, second or third person
Nasals	A term used to describe consonants produced with an open nasal passage e.g. m,n
Non-standard Lexis	Any variety that does not conform to the standard form as used by society
Noun	A naming word
Octet	An eight line verse
Onomatopoeia	The term used to denote words that imitate sounds
Orthography	A study of spelling and the ways letters are used in language
Oxymoron	The use of apparently contradictory words in a phrase
Paralinguistics	Non-verbal communication using gestures, posture and facial expressions
Parallelism	The patterning of pairs of sounds, words or structures to create a sense of balance

Passive voice	A grammatical structure in which the subject and object can change places in order to alter the focus of a sentence e.g. the bone was eaten by the dog
Pathetic fallacy	When the environment mirrors emotions
Pentameter	A unit of poetic meter containing five feet (10 syllables in total)
Personification	A device in which the non-human is given personal and human qualities e.g. the trees danced in the wind
Petrarchan or Italian sonnet	A poem of 14 lines, divided into an octet and a sestet, written in iambic pentameter, rhyming abbaabbba cdecde (sestet may vary)
Phonology	The study of sound
Phrase	A group of words that has no finite verb (except for a verb phrase) e.g. noun phrase 'the green tree'
Plosives	Sounds which release a sudden burst of air e.g. p,b,t
Preposition	A word that shows relationships between nouns or pronouns e.g. on
Pronoun	A word that replaces a noun
Proper nouns	A name of a distinctive person, place or other unique reference
Prosodic features	The use of pitch, volume, pace and rhythm to draw attention to key elements of spoken language
Purpose	The reason the text has been produced e.g. to entertain, inform, persuade etc.
Quatrain	A four-line verse
Received Pronunciation (RP)	An English accent which has a high social status and is not connected to a specific region
Repair	The correction of a mistake or misunderstanding in conversation
Repetition	Saying the same thing more than once
Rhythm	The pattern of syllables and stresses within poetry
Rondo	A poem with a circular structure which begins and ends similarly
Sentence mood	The mood of the sentence (often clarified by punctuation)
Sestet	A six-line verse
Shakespearean or English sonnet	A poem of 14 lines, divided into three quatrains and a couplet, written in iambic pentameter, rhyming abab cdcd efef gg
Sibilants	Consonant sounds articulated with a hissing sound e.g. s,z
Simile	A device which directly compares two things using like or as e.g. the tress swayed in the wind like dancers
Simple sentence	A independent main clause
Spondee	A unit of poetic meter containing two stressed syllables //
Stanza	The division of lines in a poem, also called a verse
Stative verbs	Verbs that express states of being or processes
Stress	The exaggerated phoneme in any particular word
Subordinating conjunction	A conjunction used to introduce a subordinate clause (because, while, until)
Superlatives	A word that emphasizes the extremes e.g. best, worst
Syllable	The beats or rhythm in a line of verse
Symbolism	A device in which a word or phrase represents something else
Syndetic listing	Using conjunctions to join clauses
Syntax	The study of the relationship between words in a sentences
Syntax inversion	The deliberate alteration of the structure of words in a sentence
Tag question	An interrogative structure attached to the end of a sentence which expects a reply e.g. isn't it
Tetrameter	A unit of poetic meter containing four feet (68syllables in total)
Themes	The recurring ideas and images in a text
Tone	The style or voice the text is written in e.g. excites, emotional
Transcription	A written record of spoken language, which can use symbols and markings to illustrate the distinctive nature of speech
Trimeter	A unit of poetic meter containing three feet (6 syllables in total)

Tripling	Listing of three items
Trochee	A unit of poetic meter containing one stressed syllable followed by one unstressed syllable /-
Turn-taking	The organization of speakers' contributions to a conversation
Utterance	A stretch of spoken language used in stead of 'sentence' when discussing spoken language
Verbs	Words that express states, actions or processes
Verse Type	The type of poem e.g. sonnet, lyric, ballad, ode, narrative poem etc.
Vocatives	The words used to name or refer to people when talking to them
Volta	The turning point in a sonnet