

SECTION

1

GENERAL  
KNOWLEDGE IN  
LITERATURE



# EXPLORING LITERATURE

## General Knowledge in Literature

### INTRODUCTION

In the Junior High School, you learnt some basic information about literature. In this section, you will learn about the concept of literature, the types of literature, their importance, and some literary tools that will help you analyse literary works for pleasure. This section will also help you to create meaningful relationships between literature texts and life and develop your imagination and appreciation of literary works.

The second part of this section provides a foundational understanding of literature, emphasising the broader realm of knowledge within the field. It also explores oral and written literature and its differences, shedding light on the critical role that literature plays in shaping our society, understanding texts and enriching our lives. Knowing the differences will help you to group, analyse and apply texts based on their characteristics as oral or written.

The third part of the section will help you learn about the relationship (similarities and differences) between genres of both oral and written literature. This will help you to appreciate the genres of both oral and written literature.

Additionally, the section will equip you with the necessary tools for literary analysis, to enable you derive pleasure from reading and creating meaningful connections between literature, text and life.

#### At the end of this section, you should be able to:

- Explain the concepts, types and importance of literature.
- Differentiate between oral and written literature.
- Compare and contrast the relationship between genres in oral and written literature.
- Use the tools of literary analysis in analysing varied level-appropriate texts.

#### Key Ideas

- Literature represents real life and mirrors society. It comes in two forms: oral and written. It is important in shaping society's behaviour. Genres in both oral and written literature differ in poetry, drama and prose.
- Songs, jokes and dirges are genres of oral literature, whereas novels and biographies are genres of written literature.
- Literary analysis tools help to arrive at the meaning of a piece of writing. Examples of these tools include setting, character and plot and literary devices like simile, metaphor and personification.

## The Concept of Literature

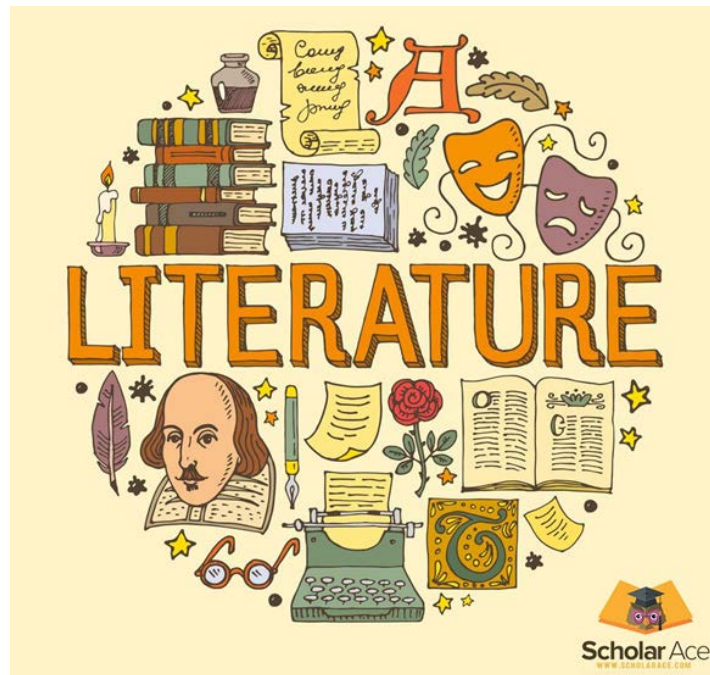


Fig. 1.1: An image of the concept of literature

In your view, what is literature? Write your response and discuss it with a friend.

How does your response compare with the meaning of literature provided below?

## The Meaning of Literature

Most often, books, poems or plays are what come to mind when we hear the word “literature”, but these are only an aspect of literature. Literature is one of the strongest instruments used to communicate thoughts, narratives and feelings which define a person or group of people.

Literature opens our eyes to variety of viewpoints, different histories, cultures, eras and even the world of fiction. It challenges our ideas, provides voice to the voiceless and encourages us to think critically about the world. Through a novel, a poem, a performance, a painting or work of art, literature encourages us to think, feel imagine and create.

The concept of literature can be explained in many different ways. This includes:

- Literature can be seen as any work that is borne out of one’s creativity and imagination, which is meant to engage one’s feelings, thinking, cultural beliefs and values. It can also reflect man’s relationship with his or her environment.
- Literature is a collection of works, written or unwritten on a subject.
- Literature could also be seen as the mirror of life. That is, literature reflects the world’s experiences back to us.
- Literature is a magical treasure box full of stories, poems and other works of art that help us learn, imagine and feel all sorts of wonderful things.

- Literature is life, and life is literature. Several things constitute literature, which makes it multidimensional (that is, it is not limited to one thing or one group of people).

Looking at the definitions above, works such as poems, storybooks, carvings, films, pictures are all works of literature.

### Activity 1.1

Scan the QR codes below to gain access to examples of literature. Your teacher may also provide other options to include too. Read the extracts in groups and discuss what they are about, who they might be for and why they were written / performed.

Next, invite two of your friends to join you discuss what connects the extracts and what makes them different:

1. Discuss how you could sort these extracts into categories and how many categories you would have. Justify why you would categorise them this way and share your ideas with the class.
2. Together in your group, complete the table below to show the links between the extracts. Use the prompt questions on the left to help aid your discussion and completion of the task.
3. Share your group’s responses with the class and discuss the variety of responses.

*Note: make sure to use specific examples from the extracts to make your points.*

How is the subject matter of the extracts similar or different?	
How is the language used in the extracts similar or different?	
Do they seem like they have different purposes or audiences? Why?	
How are they structured?	



Zikora by

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichi



Science textbook



Leaflet

**ACT 3 SCENE 1**

**NARRATOR:** The capitol.  
*(CAESAR, BRUTUS, LUCIUS, CASSIUS, DECIUS, CINNA, CASCA, and SOOTHSAYER enter)*

**CAESAR:** *(To Soothsayer)* The Ides of March are come.  
*(mocking Soothsayer and dancing around)* And look at me, I'm still here! Neener, neener, neener!!!

**SOOTHSAYER:** Ay, Caesar, but not gone. In other words, continue watching your back, buddy!

**CAESAR:** Whatever, I will be crowned today!

**SOOTHSAYER:** You should listen to my warning.  
*(Conspirators are slowly circling Caesar)*

**NARRATOR:** *(To Caesar)* Would you listen to the soothsayer?

**CAESAR:** Be quiet narrator, you are not even part of the story.

**NARRATOR:** Sorry.

**CAESAR:** Why are you guys all around me with those funny looks on your faces? And all of those sharp knives pointed at.....me.

**SOOTHSAYER:** I'm outta here! Tried to warn you!  
*(ALL start stabbing CAESAR)*

**Fig. 1.2:** An image showing Act 3 Scene 1 of Julius Caesar by William Shakespeare, 1599

### A Poem

Slowly the muddy pool becomes a river  
 Slowly my mother's illness becomes her death  
 When wood breaks, it can be mended but ivory breaks forever  
 An egg falls to reveal a messy secret  
 My mother went and carried her secret along  
 She has gone far, we looked for her in vain.  
 But when you see the cob antelope on the way to the farm  
 When you see the cob antelope on the way to the river  
 Leave your arrows in the quiver and let the dead depart in peace

Author: Anonymous

A PDF of a newspaper



Daily Graphic.pdf

## Types of Literature

Having looked at what “literature” is, let us now turn our attention to the types. Literature is a powerful way of telling stories, expressing ideas and sharing experiences. It has been part of human culture for centuries, helping us to understand the world and ourselves better. There are two main types of Literature: Oral and Written. Understanding these two types can give us better idea of how people access different times and how cultures have shared their stories and knowledge.

### What is Oral Literature?

Oral Literature is the oldest form of storytelling. Long before people could write, they shared stories, songs and poems by word of mouth. These stories were passed down from generation to generation often changing slightly with each telling. Because it was spoken and not written down, oral literature only relied on memory and repetition to help people remember the stories.

Oral Literature has three main genres: Oral Prose, Oral Poetry and Oral Drama.

Oral Prose: These include folktales, myths and legends told to explain the world or teach lessons.

An example of a myth is seen below

Myths are specific accounts of gods or superhuman beings involved in extraordinary events or circumstances in a time that is unspecified but which is understood as existing apart from ordinary human experiences. They usually explain natural phenomena, religious beliefs, or the origins of a culture. A good example of Ghanaian myth is Sika Dwa Kofi, The Golden Stool below which oral tradition says was commanded by Okomfo Anokye before Nana Osei Tutu the first king of the Ashanti kingdom. Since then, it has become a symbol of the Ashanti Kingdom.



Fig. 1.3 The golden stool, an example of Ghanaian myth

**Oral Poetry:** This includes incantations, chants and songs often performed during special or specific occasions.

**Oral Drama:** This is when stories are acted out usually as part of storytelling at community or household gatherings

### What is Written Literature?

Written literature came later, after humans invented writing. Once people could write, they began recording their stories, thoughts and ideas in written forms, which allowed these works to be passed down more accurately and preserved for a long time.

Written literature includes imaginative and artistic works such as novels, short stories, biography, memoirs, essays and poetry. Unlike oral literature which depends on memory, written literature is fixed and can be read at any time.

Both oral and written give us a window into the way people think, feel and communicate across different times and places. They are an essential part of human culture.

### Activity 1.2

Play the circle time game below with your friends.

1. Sit in circle of three.
2. Take turns to share stories you have read or heard recently.
3. From the stories shared, discuss the different meanings of literature and write them in your notebooks.

### Activity 1.3



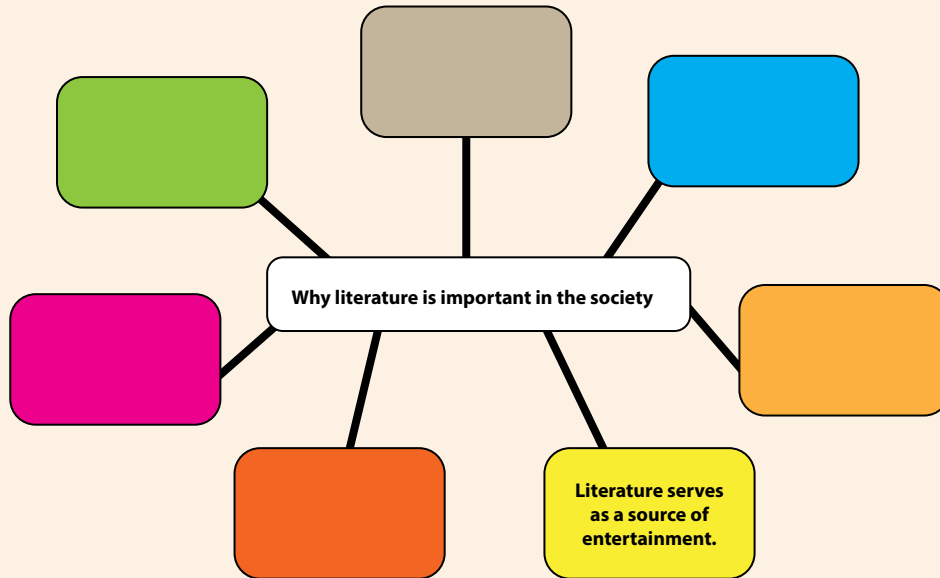
Scan the QR code above to watch a sketch. As you watch the sketch, pay attention to the following.

1. The characters, the roles they play, places mentioned in the sketch.
2. After watching the sketch, write down the names of the characters.
3. Tell your elbow partner two roles of one character in the sketch.
4. Based on your responses to the questions above, what is your understanding of oral literature.
5. From the sketch identify things that are considered as oral literature.

6. Discuss with your friend how you will distinguish oral literature from written literature.

### Activity 1.4

Consider all the songs, artworks, books, plays, and poems you have seen or listened to in your society. Based on your observation of these things, think critically and write down why literature is needed in the society in the mind map below.



Now compare your response to the guidepost below.

#### Importance of Literature

1. It portrays our traditions and values.
2. It preserves our cultural heritage.
3. It reflects community identity.
4. It increases our appreciation of life.
5. It encourages critical thinking.
6. Literature can provide skills necessary for the world of work.

## Differences Between Oral and Written Literature

Understanding the difference between oral and written literature helps us appreciate the unique qualities of each and how they have shaped human expression through the ages. Let



us explore these differences to see how each form contributes to the world of literature in its own special way. Read through the following to note some of the differences.

## Oral literature

- a. Oral literature is presented via word of mouth. It relies on voice, gesture and facial expressions to communicate meaning.
- b. People who cannot read can perform it as easily as those who are able to read can.
- c. It belongs to the entire society.
- d. It must take place between a speaker and a hearer.
- e. It predates written literature.
- f. It has a flexible nature, and can be rendered easily.
- g. It is culturally-based. This means oral artworks are in most cases specific to a particular culture. For example, the story of Asebu Amanfi.
- h. Oral literature involves interactive settings where storytellers engage directly with listeners.

## Written Literature

- a. Written literature is presented in written documents.
- b. Only literates can appreciate it on a personal level.
- c. It is usually read by individuals but can be recited or performed to an audience.
- d. It is not as old as its oral form.
- e. Printed works cannot be so easily adapted to suit a particular audience.
- f. It belongs to an author or a group of authors.
- g. Written literature goes beyond a particular culture. It is global. That is, a story written in Ghana about corruption may be relevant to all nations. An example is Ayi Kwei Armah's *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*.
- h. Usually, written literature involves a reader engaging a written work with him or herself.

### Activity 1.5

1. Use your phone, tablet or laptop to search and download the documents below.
  - a. *African Kills Her Sun* by Ken Saro Wiwa PDF (Read all pages of the short story)
  - b. Utah State University's *Student Cook Book* PDF (Read pages 1-10)
  - c. *Fashion Essential* by Jay Calderin PDF (Read pages 7-15)
2. Examine the given pages of the materials above in your group.

3. Talk about them with your friends. Be guided by the following questions.
  - a. What makes a cookbook different from a short story?
  - b. Why will you classify these given materials as written literature?

### Activity 1.6

1. In your group, fill in the table below with meaning and examples of oral literature from your culture, using your phone or tablet.

Type of oral literature	Meaning	Example in your culture
Myth		
Folklore		
Oral Drama		
Cantata		
Concert Party		
Religious Rituals		
Dirges		

2. Exchange your completed tables with your friends from another culture to learn about different types of oral literature in their culture.

### Activity 1.7

1. Use the data below which shows a list of titles of books, songs, proverbs, riddles. Use your phones or tablets to search for information on these.
2. Read them carefully and classify them as oral and written literature.
3. Compare your answer with a peer and take feedback.

No Longer at Ease,	Marriage of Anansewa	A Woman in her Prime
Kwaku Ananse	Children of the Future	Rome wasn't built in a day
No Sweetness Here	Oh No	Under the Canopy
Weep Not, Child	The Healers	Joys of Motherhood
Strike while the Iron is Hot	Anowa	First things First
Once Bitten Twice Shy	Beggars' Strike	Honesty is the Best policy

- Write a two-paragraph essay showing the differences and similarities between oral and written literature.

### Activity 1.8

With your group, identify the similarities and differences between oral and written literature. If you encounter any difficulty, you may use the prompts and sentence starters below to identify the differences between oral and written literature.

- Oral literature is transmitted through the \_\_\_\_\_ while written literature is \_\_\_\_\_
- Both oral and written literature are \_\_\_\_\_
- Oral literature has no specific \_\_\_\_\_ whereas written literature has a specific \_\_\_\_\_.

### Activity 1.9

Now that you can tell how different oral literature is from written literature, make a five-minute video of yourself, explaining the similarities and differences between oral and written literature (your teacher may ask you to help others who may need your assistance). You can upload this video on social media or show it to your friends and colleagues

### Activity 1.10



**Fig. 1.4:** An image of a religious leader pouring libation



**Fig. 1.5:** An image showing storytelling session

Observe the pictures above. Form groups of three and perform any of the following.

1. Pouring of libation
2. Recitation of a poem
3. Singing a lullaby

## Relationship Between Oral and Written Literature Genres

Oral and written literature may seem like two distinct types of literature but they are connected. Both forms of literature have played a role in shaping human culture and communication over time. While oral literature relies on spoken word, and written literature on text, they share many common features that make them both important in preserving and promoting traditions, teaching and entertainment. Here are some key points that illustrate this relationship:

1. Both genres, oral and written literature, ensure the preservation and promotion of culture and traditions. For example: Both oral Ananse Stories and Yaw Asare's *Ananse in the Land of Idiots* preserve the Ghanaian culture of language and dressing. They also promote unity and togetherness.
2. Genres of oral and written literature are both concerned with the goal such as entertaining and educating. For Example: Oral poems like *The Hunter* and Soyinka's *Telephone Conversation* educate and entertain listeners or readers about respect.
3. Both genres of oral and written literature employ literary tools like setting, characters and literary devices such as simile and personification in conveying their message. For example: In Ghanaian folktales, characters like Ananse or The Wise Tortoise use metaphors and personification to convey deeper message and Efua T. Sutherland's

play *The Marriage of Anansewa* features metaphors, irony and symbolism to explore family, culture and social expectations.

- Both aim to teach moral lessons. For example: both oral and written folktales like *The Girl who Married Sasabonsam* and Ama Ata Aidoo's *Anowa* teach moral lessons like obedience, humility and contentment.

In all, both oral and written literature work hand in hand. Oral literature is a source of information for many written literatures while many written literature are adapted for oral performance.

Example genres:

There are many different forms and genres in oral and written literature. Genre simply describes the style and characteristics of literature, whilst form is the structure literature takes. Different genres can share similar features and characteristics, or be quite distinct.

Some examples of forms – or types – of literature are listed below. Many genres will exist within these forms of literature.

Forms	Features
Biography	It is a non-fiction account of one's life written by another person. It can be written whether the person is alive or dead; usually it includes details such as childhood, education, career, and relationships
Dirge	A dirge is a song of lamentation and grief used as a means of praising, honouring, and mourning the dead (usually performed at a funeral).  Originally, dirges were performed as a solo accompanied by speeches, tears, and bodily movements. However, in current times, dirges can be performed by more than one person, or in groups. In many countries, the formal term 'eulogy' is used to describe the words of praise for the dead.
Short story	A short narrative that has some of the features of a novel. It often has one setting and plotline with fewer characters because it is more focused in scope. There are many possibly genres of short stories depending on the plot, character, setting and theme. E.g. romance genre.
Folktale	It is an oral narrative that generally has moral lessons passed on from generation to generation. This is traditionally told by the fireside, usually interspersed with folk songs.
Novel	A long creative story that describes human experiences in a narrative form with features such as plot, character, setting. Like short stories, there are many possibly genres of novels depending on the plot, character, setting and themes. E.g. crime novels where there is a mystery to solve.
Poetry	A literary form that uses interplay of words and rhythm. It usually employs rhyme and metre. It can be performed orally in the form of lamentations, chants, and prayer.

## Activity 1.11

1. Pair with a friend and carefully study these genres of written literature.

### The cows and the lions



Five cows lived in a little forest. They ate fresh grass in a large green meadow. They were kind friends. They decided to do everything together, so the lions couldn't attack them for food. One day, the five cows fought and each one started to eat grass in a different place. The lions decided to seize the opportunity and killed them one by one.

Example 1

### Poem By Robert Frost

Nature's first green is gold,  
Her hardest hue to hold.  
Her early leaf's a flower;  
But only so an hour.  
Then leaf subsides to leaf.  
So Eden sank to grief,  
So dawn goes down to day.  
Nothing gold can stay.

Example 2

### Maybe There's Beauty in Self-Sacrifice by Joseph Arnone

REGGIE: Maybe there's beauty in self-sacrifice.

DON: Hmm. Never heard that one before.

REGGIE: Maybe all any of us are supposed to do is suck it up. Live out our average lives and hold our breath for as long as we can...

DON: ...Before we fall...

REGGIE: Exactly.

DON: ...Before my dad died he told me he loved me...believe that?

REGGIE: He did?

DON: First time, last time. Must have been while he was in a fever dream, maybe...but, he died right after, like minutes right after that.

REGGIE: And he said he loved you?

DON: I was sitting down. The only one in the room. My brothers, they're from out of state and were traveling in...I was just sitting there...he was supposedly in a vegetative state, so he was on his way out and I heard him speak, clear as day the words, Donnie I love you...and that was it, he checked out...

DON wipes his eyes with his bar towel.

Sorry...don't mean to get upset in front of a beautiful lady.

REGGIE: That's alright.

DON: You have your own problems.

REGGIE: No, really, it's okay.

DON: If you were to ask me if it was worth it, all the years of abuse and carnage, just to hear my old man say them words once to me, well, if I was being totally honest with ya, I'd have to say YES, hearing him say them words meant everything to me, though when he said them I hated his guts. It was like a spear of love was slammed through my chest and I haven't been able to take it out ever since. And it's a good thing. I only think about my two brothers and the fact that they didn't get to have that with him.

REGGIE: You ever tell them?

DON: Tell them what?

REGGIE: What your dad told you in the end?

DON: Nah...I can't...they been through enough pain and oh, I don't know, I don't wanna hurt them more by saying it but...

REGGIE: Maybe it would give them some relief to know he said that to you.

DON: Relief? Perhaps you're right. I ain't never thought about it that way before.

REGGIE: They would know he had a good spot left in him.

DON: ... Yeah...

**Example 3**

1. Identify the genres and forms provided above with reasons and examples (you can use your tablets or phones to search for more). Write your responses in the table below. Swap with a friend for feedback.

Example	Genre / form	Reason	Other examples of texts
1.			1. 2. 3.
2.			1. 2. 3.
3.			1. 2. 3.

### Activity 1.12

1. Select any three of the oral art forms provided below
  - a. myth
  - b. folktale
  - c. lullaby
  - d. dirge
  - e. proverb
2. Use your phone or tablet to watch YouTube video of them.
3. Compare with your friends the characteristics of the art forms you have just watched.
4. List the characteristics of the genres of literature and compare them by bringing out their similarities and differences in the table below.

Drama	Prose	Poetry
<u>Characteristics</u>	<u>Characteristics</u>	<u>Characteristics</u>
Similarities between Drama, Prose and Poetry		
Differences between Drama, Prose and Poetry		

5. Post your findings in the class gallery.

### Activity 1.13

1. Select a short poem with your friends.
2. Discuss the meaning of the poem with your friend,
3. Add your own creative lines to make the poem more interesting
4. Read over and commit the poem to memory.
5. Recite your beautiful poem to the hearing of everyone in your classroom.



### Activity 1.14

Use your phone to search what a parody is and how to create a parody of a given poem.

1. What did you find about the meaning of parody?
2. What do you think is the intended goal of a parody?
3. With guidance from your teacher, read the poem by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, written in the 1850s. This poem tells the fictional story of an indigenous American tribesman. Here is a short extract from the real “Song of Hiawatha”

He had mittens, Minjekahwun,  
 Magic mittens made of deer-skin;  
 When upon his hands he wore them,  
 He could smite the rocks asunder,  
 He could grind them into powder.  
 He had moccasins enchanted,  
 Magic moccasins of deer-skin;  
 When upon his feet he tied them,  
 At each stride a mile he measured!

Now read the parody below which mocks the language of Longfellow:

The Modern Hiawatha  
 He killed the noble Mudjokivis.  
 Of the skin he made him mittens,  
 Made them with the fur side inside,  
 Made them with the skin side outside.  
 He, to get the warm side inside,  
 Put the inside skin side outside;  
 He, to get the cold side outside,  
 Put the warm side fur side inside.  
 That’s why he put the fur side inside,  
 Why he put the skin side outside,  
 Why he turned them inside outside.

Based upon your research and understanding of parody, discuss what makes this response to the poem a parody. Share your ideas with the class.

4. Read the poem below, **The Cathedral** by Kofi Awoonor and create a parody of it.

On this dirty patch  
 a tree once stood  
 shedding incense on the infant corn:  
 its boughs stretched across a heaven  
 brightened by the last fires of a tribe.

They sent surveyors and builders  
 who cut that tree  
 planting in its place

A huge senseless cathedral of doom.

4. Do you consider your work on Awoonor’s *The Cathedral* as achieving the purpose of a parody?
5. If not, what do you think can be done to improve your work? Effect the changes in the parody.

## Tools of Literary Analysis

When we read a story, poem or drama, there is often more than we see. Writers use special tools called literary analysis tools to hide meanings to make their stories interesting. These tools help us understand what the writer really means, to help us enjoy reading more and learn new things. Here are some examples of the tools.

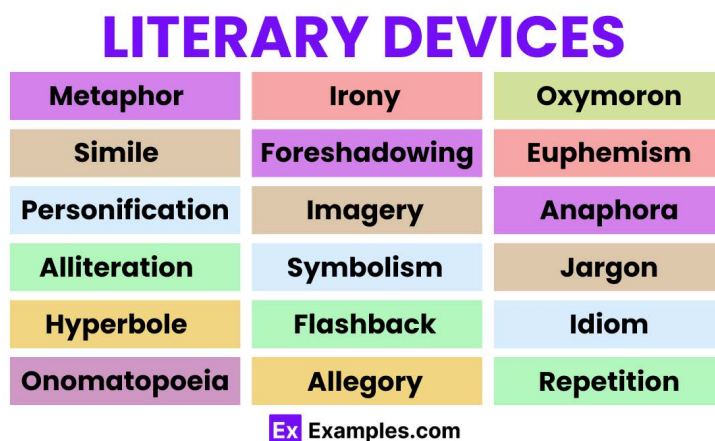


Fig. 1.6. An image showing example of literary analysis tools

### Characterisation

Characterisation is the technique a writer uses to create and develop characters in a literary work. We have direct characterisation when the author vividly describes characters character traits. Indirect characterisation deals with the traits shown by characters through actions, dialogues, expression of feelings and thoughts and through interactions. For instance, Ama Ata Aidoo highlights the struggles of women as a way of shaping her characters.”

### Plot

A plot is the arrangement of events and their consequences within a story. For example, in Ama Ata Aidoo’s *The Dilemma of a Ghost*, the plot begins with Ato and Eulalie meeting at a university in America, followed by their arrival in Oguvaa, where the family disapproves of their marriage, ultimately resulting in a cultural conflict.

## Setting

The setting of a literary piece provides time, place, culture, historical, geographical and occupational background of the story. For instance, in Elma Shaw's *Redemption Road*, the place setting is Liberia and the historical setting is the era of the Liberian Civil war.

## Point of View

The point of view of a literary piece is the different angles from which the story or content is presented or told. It is also known as Point of Narration. Point of view includes first person point of view and third person point of view.

## Character

The character in a literary piece is an individual, animal, idea or an object that plays a role in a literary work. For instance, Fina is a major character in Pedo Hollist's *So the Path Does Not die*.

## Mood

Mood refers to the feeling that a literary work evokes in the reader. It is created through various elements such as setting, tone, and imagery. Mood could be joyful, sorrowful or indifferent. For instance, the mood of Kobena Eyi Acquah's *A Wreath of Tears* evokes a feeling of sorrow.

## Theme

The theme is the central or main idea in a literary work. It explores issues in texts such as love, patriotism, tradition, corruption and so on. For example, in George Orwell's novel "1984," one of the central themes is the dangers of dictatorship.

### Activity 1.15

Fill the table below with the meaning of the literary tools provided and give examples from any story or poem you have read. Use any appropriate ICT tool in your search for the meanings and examples. Display your completed table for gallery walk in the classroom.

LITERARY TOOL	MEANING	EXAMPLE
Plot		
Theme		
Imagery		
Oxymoron		

### Activity 1.16

1. In your group of not more than three learners, take turns to study the list of literary tools below.

LITERARY TOOL	MEANING	EXAMPLE
Alliteration	Repeated initial consonant sound for emphasis or rhythm	Six Sleek Ships Sealed Silently
Assonance	Repeated vowel sound in succession to create harmony and rhythm	Try to light the night

LITERARY TOOL	MEANING	EXAMPLE
Onomatopoeia	Imitate sounds to evoke sensory experience.	The fireworks exploded with a loud boom
Repetition	Repeat words or phrases for emphasis or rhythm	We shall fight on the beaches. We shall fight on the landing ground
Rhyme	Repeat similar sounds for musicality.	The rain in Spain, stays mainly in the plain

2. From your reading of the meaning and examples of the literary analysis tools above. Use your phones to search for other meanings and examples of other literary analysis tools.
3. Provide examples of literary analysis tools from stories you have read.
4. Share your findings with the class.

### Activity 1.17

Pair with a friend and select any of the following texts that spark your interest. Read the text together and identify any literary analysis tools in them. Present your identified tools to your friends and take feedback.

#### Things Fall Apart

*Things Fall Apart* is Chinua Achebe's first novel written in 1958. It tells the story of Okonkwo and the Igbo culture of the people of Umuofia. It was written to oppose the British cultural superiority imposed on Africans during the colonial period.

Okonkwo was well known throughout the nine villages and even beyond. His fame rested on solid personal achievements. As a young man of eighteen he had

brought honor to his village by throwing Amalinze the Cat, a wrestler who for seven years was unbeaten. Okonkwo was tall and powerful, with a gleaming physique that rippled beneath his skin like the muscles of a lion. He was a man of action, and when he spoke, his words carried weight.

Okonkwo's village, Umuofia, was one of the largest and most powerful in the land. It was a village of sturdy men and women, renowned for their bravery, strength, and wisdom. The villagers were farmers, and their lives revolved around the cycles of nature.

But Okonkwo's own life was not without its struggles. His father, Unoka, had been a lazy and improvident man, who left his family in debt and shame. Okonkwo had vowed to overcome his father's weaknesses and make a name for himself.

As the rain began to fall, Okonkwo sat in his obi, listening to the beat of the drum and the voices of the villagers.

*Dulce et Decorum Est by Wilfred Owen is a war poem written by Wilfred Owen which portrays the horrors of World War I on the frontline, depicting the agony of a soldier after a gas attack.*

**DULCE ET DECORUM EST**  
**WILFRED OWEN (1917)**

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,  
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,  
Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs,  
And towards our distant rest began to trudge.  
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots,  
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame, all blind;  
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots  
Of gas-shells dropping softly behind.

Gas! GAS! Quick, boys!--An ecstasy of fumbling  
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time,  
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling  
And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime.--  
Dim through the misty panes and thick green light,  
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.

In all my dreams before my helpless sight  
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.

If in some smothering dreams, you too could pace  
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,  
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,  
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin,  
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood  
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs  
Bitter as the cud

Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,--  
 My friend, you would not tell with such high zest  
 To children ardent for some desperate glory,  
 The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est  
 Pro patria mori.

**Fig. 1.7:** An image of the poem Dulce et Decorum est

### Activity 1.18



Scan the QR code above to read the first three pages of the *Marriage of Anansewa* by Afua T. Sutherland. Based on what you have read, identify in a group of four, the following literary analysis tools: Setting, point of view, theme and mood. The following questions will guide you in your discussion.

#### 1. **Setting**

- What is the setting of the drama text you just read?
- Why is that the best answer and choice?
- Does the presence of Anansewa and her typewriter help justify your choice of setting?

#### 2. **Mood**

- What is Ananse's mood at the beginning of the play?
- In what mood will you be if you were in Ananse's shoes and why? (Remember his complaint about the rain and life's difficulties)

#### 3. **Theme**

- What is the extract you read about? For example: Is it about friendship, love, difficulty or something else?
- Could you explain your reason for your choice of theme?

#### 4. **Point of view**

- Identify the dominant pronouns used in the text.

- b. Are they first, second or third person?

**Hint:** The pronoun type (first, second or third person) determines the point of view (first, second or third person). You may decide to go out of your way or be called upon to help your friend who finds difficulty in understanding this exercise. Remember to be nice as you do so.

Now present your findings to the class for discussion.

### Activity 1.19

1. Play the literary Tool Snowball Game with four friends by doing the following.
  - a. Each player writes a literary tool (e.g., metaphor, simile, personification) on their piece of paper.

#### Metaphor

- b. Fold and crumple each paper, one around the other until all the papers become one large snowball.



**Fig. 1.9** An image of crumpled papers around each other

- c. Pass the snowball around while music plays. When music stops, the player in whose hands the music stops unwrap the outer layer, reads the literary analysis tool on that sheet aloud and explains it. Continue until all layers are unwrapped.
- d. If a participant struggles to explain the literary analysis tool they have drawn, they should not be discouraged. They should return the sheet and await their next turn to pick again.
- e. Share your experience about playing the snowball game with your friends.

## Extended Reading

1. *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe
2. *The Marriage of Anansewa* by Efua Sutherland
3. *Redemption Road* by Elma Shaw
4. *So the Path Does not Die* by Pede Hollist
5. *Zikora* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie



# Review Questions

## Exercise 1

1. Group the following into oral and written literature and justify your reason for the groupings.

Folktale, jokes, biographies, riddle, memoir, novels, dirges, fables, legends, short stories

Oral Literature	Written Literature

2. One of your friends keep saying that what is important today is science and technology and not literature. Write a page essay expressing your opinion either for or against this view.
3. Group the following as literary and non-literary materials

**Folktale, law book, movie, Aki-Ola Mathematics textbook, play, short story, jokes, statue of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, Science Book, storybook.**

Literary materials	Non-Literary materials

4. Read the two poems below carefully and apply your knowledge of genres of literature to examine the difference between oral and written literature.

**Owusu**

Valiant Owusu

The stranger on whom the citizen of the town depends

Father allow my children and me to depend on you

So that we may all of us get something to eat

Father on whom I wholly depend

When father sees me now,

He will hardly recognize me

He will meet me carrying an old torn mat and a horde of flies

Father on whom I wholly depend

Killer of hunger

My savior

Father the slender arm

full of kindness

Father the rover whose

footprints are on all paths

**The Cathedral** by Kofi Awoonor

In this dirty patch

A tree one stood

Shedding incense on the infant corn:

It boughs stretch across a heaven

brightened by the last fire of a tribe

They send surveyors and builders

who went and cut this tree

planting in its place,

A huge senseless cathedral of doom.

*From the anthology, Rediscovery in 1964*

5. In your view, explain which of the poems will be easier to perform and collaborate with your friends to perform either of them.
6. Read Ama Ata Aidoo's *Anowa* using the QR code provided below and perform a section with your friends.



7. Read the poem below carefully and comment on five examples of any five tools of literary analysis used by the poet. Now create your own poem with the identified tools

**Not My Business**

They picked Akanni up one morning

Beat him soft like clay

And stuffed him down the belly  
Of a waiting jeep.  
What business of mine is it  
So long they don't take the yam  
From my savouring mouth?  
They came one night  
Booted the whole house awake  
And dragged Danladi out,  
Then off to a lengthy absence.  
What business of mine is it  
So long they don't take the yam  
From my savouring mouth?  
Chinwe went to work one day  
Only to find her job was gone:  
No query, no warning, no probe -  
Just one neat sack for a stainless record.  
What business of mine is it  
So long they don't take the yam  
From my savouring mouth?  
And then one evening  
As I sat down to eat my yam  
A knock on the door froze my hungry hand.  
The jeep was waiting on my bewildered lawn  
Waiting, waiting in its usual silence.

*Niyi Osundare*

# Answers to Review Questions

## Exercise 1.1

1.

Oral Literature	Written Literature
Folktales	Biographies
Riddles	Memoir
Songs	Novels
Jokes	Short stories
Fables	
Legends	

2. **Folktale, law book, movie, Aki-Ola Mathematics textbook, play, short story, jokes, statue of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, Science Book, storybook.**

Literary materials	Non-Literary materials
Folktales	Law book
Movie	Aki-Ola Mathematics textbook
Play	Science book
Short story	Statue of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah
Jokes	
Storybook	

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