

agnomination [Latin *agnominatio*. See AGNOMEN. Latin, from *ad* ‘to’ and *nomen* ‘name’.] 2. *Rhetoric* Paronomasia; i.e., a play upon words in which the same word is used in different senses or words similar in sound are set in opposition, so as to give antithetical force; punning; a pun. Also, alliteration.

alliteration [Middle Latin *alliteratio*. See AD-; LETTER.] 1. repetition of the same letter or sound at the beginning of two or more consecutive words or of words near one another; as in: “Fly o’er waste fens and windy fields.” (– Tennyson). 2. Specifically, recurrence of the same consonant sound or of vowel sounds initially in accented syllables of verse (See ALLITERATIVE POETRY); as in: “In a somer season whan soft was the sonne, I shope me in shrouds as I a shepe were.” (– Piers Plowman)

allegory [French or Latin; French *allégorie*, from Latin *allegoria* from Greek *allegoria* ‘description of one thing under the image of another’, from *allos* ‘other’ (See ELSE) and a form akin to Greek *agoreuein* ‘to speak in the assembly’, ‘to harangue’, *agora* ‘place of assembly’. See GREGARIOUS. Cf. AGORAPHOBIA.] 1. The veiled presentation, especially in a figurative story or narrative, of a meaning metaphorically implied, but not expressly stated. An allegory is a prolonged metaphor, in which typically a series of actions are symbolic of other actions, while the characters often are types or personifications. Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*, and Spenser’s *Faerie Queene* are celebrated examples of the long *allegory*; Addison’s *Vision of Mirza* is a celebrated example of the short *allegory*. Synonymy: See FABLE. An *allegory* is the elaborate development of a metaphor, frequently in narrative form, sometimes at considerable length; its figures are commonly types or personifications, its incidents symbolic, its machinery more or less artificial.

allusion [Latin *allusio*, from *alludere* ‘to play with’, ‘to allude’, from *ad* ‘to’ and *ludere* ‘to play’. See ALLUDE, LUDICROUS.] 2. An alluding; an implied indication or indirect reference; a hint; often with *to*; as, a covert *allusion* to his pride. 3. An indirect reference in a discourse, by passing mention or quotation, to something generally familiar; as, Pope’s *allusions* to Horace; also, the use of such references.

anacoluthon *plural* anacolutha [Greek *anakolouthos*, *anakolouthon* ‘not following’, ‘wanting sequence’, from *an* ‘not’ and *akolouthos* ‘following’.] *Grammar* a. A want of grammatical sequence or consistency in a sentence. b. Abandonment in the midst of a sentence of one type of construction in favor of one grammatically inconsistent. c. A sentence or expression in which the latter part does not syntactically carry out the construction begun in the first part (If you don’t reform – *well, what can you expect?*).

anadiplosis [Latin, from Greek *anadiplosis*, from *ana* ‘on’ and *diploin* ‘to double’.] *Rhetoric* Repetition of the last word or any prominent word in a sentence or clause, at the beginning of the next, with an adjunct idea (Rely on his *honor* – *honor* such as his?).

analogy [French *analogie*, from Latin *analogia*, from Greek *analogia*, *analogos* ‘according to a due ratio’, ‘proportionate’, *ana* ‘on’ and *logos* ‘ratio’, ‘proportion’. See ANALOGOUS, LOGIC.] 1. A relation of likeness, *between* two things or *of* one thing *to* another, consisting in the

resemblance not of the things themselves, but of two or more attributes, circumstances, or effects; thus, the *analogy* between sleep and death lies in the attendant cessation of activity and appearance of repose; and learning *enlightens* the mind because it is to the mind what *light* is to the eye, enabling it to discover things before hidden. *Analogy* is very commonly used to denote similarity or essential resemblance; but its specific meaning is a similarity of *relations*, and in this consists the difference between the argument from *example* and that of *analogy*. In the former we argue from the mere similarity of the two things, in the latter, from the similarity of their *relations*.

anaphora [Latin, from Greek *anaphora*, from *ana* ‘up’, ‘back’ and *pherein* ‘to carry’.] 1. *Rhetoric* Repetition of a word or words at the beginning of two or more successive clauses.

anastrophe [Greek *anastrophe*, from *anastrephein* ‘to turn up’, ‘to turn back’, from *ana-* ‘up’ and *strephein* ‘to turn’.] *Rhetoric* Inversion of the usual order of words (“*Blessed are the meek*”).

anecdote [French, from Greek *anekdotos* ‘not published’, from *an-* ‘not’ and *ekdotos* ‘given out’, from *ekdidonai* ‘to give out’, ‘to publish’, from *ek* ‘out’ and *didonai* ‘to give’. See DATE ‘point of time’.] 2. A narrative, usually brief, of a separate incident or event of curious interest, told without malice and usually with intent to amuse or please, often biographical and characteristic of some notable person, especially his likable foibles. Synonymy: See STORY. An *anecdote* is a short account of a single incident, especially in the life of a well-known person; as, an *anecdote* of Lincoln’s boyhood.; an illustrative or pithy *anecdote*.

antiphrasis [Latin, from Greek *antiphrasis*, from *antiphrazein* ‘to express by antithesis’.] *Rhetoric* The use of words in a sense opposite to the proper meaning.

antithesis *plural* antitheses [Latin, from Greek *antithesis*, from *antitithenai* ‘to set against’, ‘to oppose’, from *anti* ‘against’ and *tithenai* ‘to set’. See THESIS.] 1. *Rhetoric* a. An opposition or contrast of ideas, especially one emphasized by the positions of the contrasting words, as when placed at the beginning and end of a single sentence or clause, or in corresponding positions in two or more sentences or clauses (“*Measures, not men*”; “*The prodigal robs his heir; the miser robs himself*”). b. The second of two sentences or clauses in antithesis.

antonomasia [Latin, from Greek *antonomasia*, from *antonomazein* ‘to name instead’, from *anti* ‘against’ and *onomazein* ‘to name’, from *onoma* ‘name’.] *Rhetoric* a. The use of epithet, official title, or the like, instead of the proper name of a person, as when *his majesty* is used for a king. b. The use of a proper name instead of an appellative, as when a wise man is called a *Solomon*.

apologue [French *apologue*, from Latin *apologus*, from Greek *apologos*. See APOLOGY, LEGEND. Greek *apo* ‘from’ and *logos* ‘speech’.] 1. A story or relation of fictitious events, intended to convey a useful lesson or a moral. The characters of apologues, as in those of Aesop and La Fontaine, are often animals. Synonymy: See FABLE.

apophasis [New Latin, from Greek *apophasis* ‘denial’, from *apophanai* ‘to speak out’, ‘to deny’.] 1. *Rhetoric* Mention of something in disclaiming intention to mention it (I will not speak of his

unsavory past). Cf. PARALEPSIS.

aporia [Latin, 'doubt', from Greek *aporia*, from *aporos* 'without passage', 'at a loss', from *a-* 'not' and *poros* 'passage'.] *Rhetoric* A professing, or matter about which one professes, to be at a loss what course to pursue, where to begin, what to say, etc.

aposiopesis [Latin, from Greek *aposiopesis*, from *aposiopan* 'to be quite silent'.] *Rhetoric* A breaking off suddenly, as if unwilling or unable to state what was in one's mind (I declare to you that his conduct – but I cannot speak of that here).

apostrophe [French and Latin; French *apostrophe*, from Latin *apostrophus* 'apostrophe', 'the turning away or omitting of a letter', from Greek *apostrophos*, from *apostrophein* 'to turn away'.] *Rhetoric* 1. A feigned turning from one's audience to address directly a person or thing, now usually a dead or absent person, or an abstract idea or imaginary object; as, Milton's *apostrophe* to Light (*Paradise Lost* III: 1 – 55).

asyndeton [Latin, from Greek *asyndeton*, from *asyndetos* 'unconnected', from *a-* 'not' and *syndetos* 'bound together'. See SYNDETTIC.] *Rhetoric* Omission of conjunctions which ordinarily join coordinate words or clauses (*I came, I saw, I conquered.*); opposed to *polysyndeton*.

catagresis *plural* catagreses [Latin, from Greek *katagresis* 'misuse', from *katagresthai* 'to misuse', from *kata* 'against', 'down' and *chresthai* 'to use'.] Misuse of words or abuse of terms: a. *Rhetoric* Wrong use of one word for another (*mutual* for *common*); also, a wresting of a word from its true signification, as in a forced trope, or a mixed metaphor ("To take arms against a sea of troubles." – William Shakespeare). b. *Philology* The use of a word in an improper form though a mistake as to its origin, as *calcariferous* for *calciferous*.

chiasmus [New Latin, from Greek *chiasmus* 'a placing crosswise', from *chiazein* 'to mark with a *chi* (χ) or a cross'. See CHIASMA.] *Rhetoric* An inversion of the order of words in two corresponding parallel phrases or clauses, or of words when repeated ("Burns with one love, with one resentment glows").

circumlocution [Latin *circumlocutio* from *circumloqui*, *circumlocutus*, 'to make use of circumlocution', from *circum* 'round about', accusative of *circus* 'a circle', and *loqui* 'to speak'. See CIRCUS, LOQUACIOUS.] Use of many words to express an idea that may be expressed by few or one word; indirect or roundabout language or expression. Synonymy: See REDUNDANCY. Redundancy, tautology, pleonasm, verbosity, verbiage, prolixity, diffuseness, circumlocution, periphrasis. *Circumlocution* and PERIPHRAISIS (the latter being the more bookish term) denote a roundabout or indirect way of saying a thing; as, "Somehow I can't relish that word hockey. Can't you supply it by a *circumlocution*?" (– Lamb); "He was one of those anomalous practitioners in lower departments of the law who... on prudential reasons... deny themselves all indulgence of the luxury of too delicate a conscience (a *periphrasis* which might be abridge considerably)" (– De Quincey). Antonyms: conciseness, brevity, terseness, succinctness, pithiness.

climax [Latin, from Greek *klimax* ‘ladder’, ‘staircase’, from *klinein* ‘to bend’, ‘to lean’. See LADDER, LEAN.] 1. *Rhetoric* A figure in which a number of ideas or propositions are so arranged that each succeeding one rises above its predecessor in impressiveness or force. “‘Tribulation worketh patience, patience experience, and experience hope’ – a happy *climax*.” (– J. D. Forbes)

emphasis [Latin, from Greek *emphasis* ‘significance’, ‘force of expression’, from *emphainein* ‘to show’, ‘to show in’, ‘to indicate’, from *en* ‘in’ and *phainein* ‘to make to appear’. See PHASE, PHENOMENON, PHANTOM.] 7. *Rhetoric* a. In reading or speaking, a particular prominence of utterance given to one or more words or syllables by stress, length, or pitch, to attract or hold attention to their special importance, emotional or logical, as when they are to be intensified or contrasted. b. In style, selective stress on particular parts or features to intensify impressiveness.

enallage [Latin, from Greek *enallage* ‘an exchange’, from *enallassein* ‘to exchange’, from *en* ‘in’ and *allassein* ‘to change’.] *Grammar* A substitution, as of one part of speech for another, or of one gender, number, case, person, tense, mode, or voice of the same word for another.

epanadiplosis [Late Latin, from Greek *epanadiplosis*, from *epi* ‘on’, ‘upon’, ‘to’ and *anadiploin* ‘to make double’. See also EPIDIPLOSIS.] *Rhetoric* Use of a word at both the beginning and end of a sentence; encircling; as in, “*Rejoice* in the Lord always: and again I say, *Rejoice*” or in, “*Wait on the Lord*: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: *wait*, I say, *on the Lord*” (Psalms 27: 14).

epanalepsis [New Latin, from Greek *epanalepsis*, from *epi* ‘on’, ‘upon’, ‘to’ and *analambanein* ‘to take up’.] *Rhetoric* Repetition; echo.

epanaphora [Late Latin, from Greek *epanaphora* ‘recurrence’.] *Rhetoric* Anaphora; repetition of a word or words at the beginning of two or more successive clauses. See ANAPHORA.

epanodos [Late Latin, from Greek *epanodos* ‘a rising’, ‘a return’, from *epi* ‘on’, ‘upon’, ‘to’ and *anodos* ‘a way up’, ‘rising’, from *ana* ‘up’ and *hodos* ‘way’.] *Rhetoric* A return after digression; also, a repetition in reverse order.

epanorthosis [Late Latin, from Greek *epanorthosis*, from *epi* ‘on’, ‘upon’, ‘to’ and *anorthoun* ‘to set right again’.] Repetition of a term to call attention to its use.

epibole [Latin, from Greek *epibole* ‘a throwing upon’, from *epiballein* ‘to throw upon’, ‘to add to’, from *epi* ‘on’, ‘upon’, ‘to’ and *ballein* ‘to throw’.] 1. *Rhetoric* Use in successive clauses of initial words which are the same or similar in meaning; as in: “The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the Lord is upon many waters. The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty. The voice of the Lord is breaketh the cedars; yea, the Lord breaketh the cedars of Lebanon.” (Psalms 29: 3 – 5). Cf. Hebraic repetition.

epidiplosis [See EPANADIPILOSIS.] *Rhetoric* Double encircling; repeated epanadiplosis; as in, “*Sing praises* to God, *sing praises*: *sing praises* unto our King, *sing praises* (Psalms 47: 6). (The

preceding definition was found at the Web site below:)
<http://www.therain.org/appendixes/app6.html>

epiphonema [Latin, from Greek *epiphonema*, from *epiphonein* ‘to mention’.] *Rhetoric* An exclamatory sentence, or striking reflection, which concludes a passage.

epistrophe [Late Latin, from Greek *epistrophe* ‘a turning toward’, ‘return’, from *epistrechein* ‘to turn toward’, from *epi* ‘upon’, ‘to’ and *strephein* ‘to turn’.] 1. *Rhetoric* Termination of successive clauses or sentences with the same expression (“Are they Hebrews? *So am I*. Are they Israelites? *So am I*. Are they the seed of Abraham? *So am I*.” – Second Corinthians 11: 22).

erotesis [New Latin, from Greek *erotesis* ‘a questioning’, from *erotan* ‘to ask’.] *Rhetoric* Interrogation for rhetorical effect.

fable [Old French, from Latin *fabula*, from *fari* ‘to speak’, ‘to say’. See FAME.] 1b. A story of supernatural or highly marvelous happenings, as in legend, myth, or folklore; also, such stories collectively; as, founded in *fable*. 1c. A narration intended to enforce some useful truth or precept; especially, one in which animals and even inanimate objects speak and act like human beings. See BEAST FABLE. 1d. Any story told to excite wonder; hence, common talk; the theme of talk. Synonymy: allegory, parable, fable, apologue. A *fable* or *apologue* (the latter being the more bookish term) is a short story in which the actions or qualities of beasts or inanimate objects are made to reflect, often satirically, human traits or foibles; as the *fables* of Aesop. Cf. COMPARISON, STORY.

geminatio [Latin *geminatio*, from *geminare* ‘to double’. See GEMINI.] e. *Rhetoric* Formerly, the immediate repetition of a word or a locution expressing similar meaning.

Hebraic repetition: saying the same thing over and over again in different words; used by King David in his writings. See EPIBOLE.

hendiadys [Late Latin, from Greek *hen dia dyoin* ‘one by two’.] *Grammar* Expression of an idea by two nouns connected by *and*, instead of by a noun and an adjunct (we drink from *cups and gold* for *golden cups*).

hypallage [Latin, from Greek *hypallage*, properly ‘interchange’, ‘exchange’, from *hypallassein* ‘to interchange’, from *hypo* ‘under’ and *allassein* ‘to change’.] *Grammar and Rhetoric* Interchange in syntactic relationship between two terms.

hyperbaton [Latin, from Greek *hyperbaton*, from *hyperbatos* ‘transposed’, from *hyper* ‘over’ and *bainein* ‘to step’.] A transposing or inverting of the idiomatic word order (*echoed the hills* for *the hills echoed*).

hyperbole [Latin, from Greek *hyperbole*, properly, ‘an overshooting’, ‘excess’; from Greek *hyperballein* ‘to throw over or beyond’, from *hyper* ‘over’ and *ballein* ‘to throw’. See also HYPER-; PARABLE. Cf. HYPERBOLA.] *Rhetoric* Extravagant exaggeration by which

something is represented as much greater or less, better or worse, or as involving greater intensity, than in reality, or beyond possibility (“to dart with the speed of an arrow”); a statement exaggerated fancifully through excitement, or for effect (“This my hand will rather The multitudinous seas incarnadine.” – William Shakespeare). “Somebody has said of the boldest figure in rhetoric, the *hyperbole*, that it lies without deceiving.” – Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800 – 1859), Baron Macaulay of Rothley, English historian, essayist, poet, and statesman.

hypozeugma [Latin, from Greek *hypo* ‘under’ and *zeugma*, from *zeugnynai* ‘to yolk’, ‘to join’.] *Grammar* The joining of several subjects with a single verb. *Now rare*.

hypozeuxis [New Latin, from Greek *hypo* ‘under’ and *zeuxis* ‘a joining’.] *Grammar* The use of successive clauses in a parallel construction, each complete with a subject and verb.

inversion [Latin *inversio*.] 15. *Rhetoric* a. Metaphor. *Now obsolete*. b. Anastrophe; inversion of the usual order of words (“*Blessed are the meek*”). c. A turning of the tables in argument.

litotes [New Latin, from Greek *litotes*, from *litos* ‘plain simple’] *Rhetoric* Understatement to avoid censure or to increase the effect (a citizen of no mean city, that is, of an illustrious city).

malapropism [From *Mrs. Malaprop*, a character in Richard Brinsley Sheridan’s (1751-1816) *Rivals*, noted for her blunders in the use of words, from French *mal à propos* ‘inappropriate’.] A grotesque misuse of a word; also, a word so misused. (Sometimes appears as MALAPROP.)

meiosis [New Latin, from Greek *meiosis*, from *meioun* ‘to make smaller’, from *meion*.] 1. *Rhetoric* Literally, belittling: a. Representation of a thing so as to cause it to be taken as less than it really is. b. Litotes; understatement to avoid censure or to increase the effect (a citizen of no mean city, that is, of an illustrious city).

metalepsis *plural* metalepses [Latin, from Greek *metalepsis* ‘participation’, ‘alteration’, from *metalambanein* ‘to partake’, ‘to take in exchange’, from *meta* ‘beyond’ and *lambanein* ‘to take’.] *Rhetoric* Substitution by metonymy of one figurative sense for another. See METONYMY.

metaphor [French *métaphore*, from Latin *metaphora*, from Greek *metaphora*, from *metapherein* ‘to carry over’, ‘to transfer’, from *meta* ‘beyond’, ‘over’ and *pherein* ‘to bring’, ‘to bear’. See META-; BEAR ‘to carry’.] *Rhetoric* Use of a word or phrase literally denoting one kind of object or idea in place of another by way of suggesting a likeness or analogy between them (the ship *plows* the sea; a *valley* of oaths). See TROPE. A metaphor may be regarded as a compressed simile, the comparison implied in the former (a *marble* brow) being explicit in the latter (a brow white *like marble*). Synonymy: comparison, simile, metaphor. A metaphor imaginatively identifies one object with another, and ascribes to the first the qualities of the second; where the *simile* declares that A is *like* B, the *metaphor* assumes that A *is* B; as, “The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord.” (Proverbs 20:27) – “Was it the proud full sail of his great verse, bound for the prize?” (William Shakespeare) A *metaphor* may usually be expanded into a *simile*, and a *simile* condensed into a *metaphor*. Cf. FABLE, METONYMY.

metonymy [Latin *metonymia*, from Greek *metonymia*, from *meta* ‘indicating change’ and *onymia*, *onoma* ‘name’. See NAME.] *Rhetoric* use of one word for another that it suggests, as the effect for the cause, the cause for the effect, the sign for the thing signified, the container for the thing contained, etc. (darkness was the *saving* of us, for the *cause of saving*; a man keeps a good *table*, instead of good *food*; we read *Vergil*, that is, his poems; a man has a warm *heart*, that is, warm *affections*). See TROPE. Synonymy: metonymy, synecdoche alike involve the substitution for one idea of another closely allied to it. The technical distinction between the two, which may be seen in the definitions, is now little noted, and the tendency now is to allow *metonymy* to do duty for both. Cf. COMPARISON.

onomatopoeia [Late Latin, from Greek *onomatopoiia*, from *onoma*, *onomatos* ‘a name’ and *poiein* ‘to make’.] 1. *Philology* a. Formation of words in imitation of natural sounds; the naming of a thing or action by a more or less exact reproduction of the sound associated with it (*buzz*; *hiss*; *bobwhite*); the imitative or echoic principle in language. Cf. BOWWOW THEORY. b. A word so formed; an onomatope. 2. *Rhetoric* The use of words whose sound suggests the sense. “When Ajax strives some rock’s vast weight to throw,
The line too labors, and the words move slow;
Not so, when swift Camilla scours the plain,
Flies o’er th’ unbending corn and skims along the main.”
– Alexander Pope (1688-1744), English poet.

oxymoron *plural* oxymora [New Latin, from Greek *oxymoron*, from *oxymoros* ‘pointedly foolish’, from *oxys* ‘sharp’ and *moros* ‘foolish’.] *Rhetoric* A combination for epigrammatic effect of contradictory or incongruous words (*cruel kindness*; *laborious idleness*).

parable [Middle English, also *parabole*, from Old French *parabole*, from Latin *parabola*, from Greek *parabole* ‘a placing beside or together’, ‘a comparing’, ‘a comparison’, ‘a parable’, from *paraballein* ‘to throw beside’, ‘compare’, from *para* ‘beside’ and *ballein* ‘to throw’. See also PARA-; DEVIL. Cf. BALLISTIC, EMBLEM, HYPERBOLE, PALAVER, PARABOLA, PARLANCE, PARLEY, PAROLE, PROBLEM, SYMBOL.] A comparison; similitude; specifically, a short fictitious narrative of a possible event in life or nature, from which a moral or spiritual truth is drawn; as, the *parables* of Christ. Synonymy: See FABLE.

paradiastole [Latin, from Greek *paradiastole* ‘a putting together of dissimilar things’.] *Rhetoric* Contrast of similar things as for euphemism, as in styling “prodigality”, “liberality”.

paraleipsis, *also* paralepsis *or* paralipsis *plural* -ses [Greek *paraleipsis*, from *paraleipein* ‘to leave on one side’, ‘to omit’, from *para* ‘beside’ and *leipein* ‘to leave’.] *Rhetoric* A passing over with brief mention so as to emphasize the suggestiveness of what is omitted (I confine to this page the volume of his treacheries and debaucheries). Cf. APOPHASIS.

paregmenon *Rhetoric* derivation; the repetition of words derived from the same root; as in: “And I say also unto thee, That thou art *Peter*, and upon this *rock* I will build my church...” (Matthew 16:18).

paromology, also, paromologia [Greek *paramologia*, from *para* ‘beside’ and *homologia* ‘agreement’, from *homo* ‘the same’ and *logos* ‘speech’, ‘discourse’, ‘proportion’.] *Rhetoric* A concession to an adversary in order to strengthen one’s own argument.

paronomasia [Latin, from Greek *paronomasia*, from *paronomazein* ‘to form a word by a slight change’, from *para* ‘beside’ and *onomazein* ‘to name’, from *onoma* ‘a name’.] *Rhetoric* A play upon words in which the same word is used in different senses or words similar in sound are set in opposition, so as to give antithetical force; punning; a pun. Synonymy: See PUN.

periphrasis *plural* periphrases [Latin, from Greek *periphrasis*, from *peri* ‘around’, ‘about’, ‘round’ and *phrazein* ‘to speak’. See PHRASE.] 1. *Rhetoric* Use of a longer phrasing in place of a possible shorter and plainer form of expression, as use of a negative, passive, or inverted construction, naming by descriptive epithet, introduction of abstract general terms, etc.; a roundabout or indirect way of speaking; circumlocution. b. An instance of such use; a circumlocution. Synonymy: Redundancy, tautology, pleonasm, verbosity, verbiage, prolixity, diffuseness, circumlocution, periphrasis. CIRCUMLOCUTION and *periphrasis* (the latter being the more bookish term) denote a roundabout or indirect way of saying a thing; as, “Somehow I can’t relish that word hockey. Can’t you supply it by a *circumlocution*?” (– Lamb); “He was one of those anomalous practitioners in lower departments of the law who... on prudential reasons... deny themselves all indulgence of the luxury of too delicate a conscience (a *periphrasis* which might be abridge considerably)” (– De Quincey).

personification Act of personifying, or that which personifies; specifically: a. Attribution of personal form, character, etc.; representation of a thing or abstraction as a person or by the human form; especially, *Rhetoric* representation of an inanimate object or abstract idea as a personality or as endowed with personal attributes; prosopopoeia (See PROSOPOPOEDIA); also, an instance of this (the floods clap their hands; “confusion heard his voice.” (– John Milton)). b. A divinity or imaginary being thought of as representing a thing or abstraction; as, Aeolus is the *personification* of wind. c. Embodiment; incarnation; as, to be the *personification* of pride. d. A dramatic or literary representation of a character.

pleonasm [Late Latin *pleonasmus*, from Greek *pleonasmos*, from *pleonazein* ‘to be more than enough’, ‘to abound’, from *pleon*, neuter of *pleon*, *pleion* ‘more’, comparative of *polys* ‘much’. See FULL; cf. POLY-, PLUS.] 1. *Grammar and Rhetoric* Redundancy or fullness of language in speaking or writing; the use of more words than are necessary to express the bare idea (I saw it *with my own eyes*; the eye, too, *it* looks out); also, a case of this, or the redundant or unnecessary word or expression. 2. Redundancy; a redundant thing. Synonymy: Redundancy, tautology, pleonasm, verbosity, verbiage, prolixity, diffuseness, circumlocution, periphrasis. *Pleonasm* (which may sometimes be a means of proper emphasis) denotes the use of words whose omission would leave one’s meaning intact; as: “It is a *pleonasm*, a figure usual in Scripture, by a multiplicity of expressions to signify one notable thing” (– Robert South (1634-1716)).

ploce [Latin, from Greek *ploke* ‘complication’.] *Rhetoric* Emphatic repetition of a word, with pregnant reference to its special significance (“His *wife’s* a *wife* indeed”).

polyptoton *plural* polyptota [Late Latin, from Greek *polyptotos* ‘having many cases’, ‘being in many cases, from *poly* ‘many’, ‘much’, ‘multiple’ and *ptotos* ‘falling’, akin to Greek *ptosis* ‘case’ and *piptein* ‘to fall’. Cf. DIPTOTE, SYMPTOM.] *Rhetoric* Repetition of a word in different cases and inflections (“My own heart’s heart, and ownest own, farewell.” – Tennyson).

polysyndeton [New Latin, from Greek *poly* ‘many’, ‘much’, ‘multiple’ and *syndetos* ‘bound together’.] *Rhetoric* Repetition of conjunctions in close succession, as of *one* connecting coordinates (we have ships *and* men *and* money *and* stores); opposed to *asyndeton*. See ASYNDETON, SYNETIC.

preterition [Late Latin *praeteritio*; cf. French *prétérition*.] 3. *Rhetoric* Paraleipsis; a passing over with brief mention so as to emphasize the suggestiveness of what is omitted (I confine to this page the volume of his treacheries and debaucheries). See PARALEIPSIS.

prolepsis *plural* prolepses [Latin, from Greek *prolepsis*, from *prolambanein* ‘to take beforehand’, from *pro* ‘before’ and *lambanein* ‘to take’.] Anticipation; specifically: a. *Rhetoric* A figure by which objections are anticipated in order to weaken their force. b. *Grammar* The applying of an adjective to a noun in anticipation, or to denote the result, of the action of the verb (Ere humane statute purged the *gentle* weal”).

prolixity [French *prolixité*, from Latin *prolaxitas*, akin to Latin *prolixus* ‘extended’.] 1. Quality or state of being prolix, or unduly protracted in duration; specifically, a stylistic quality resulting from verbosity, diffuseness, and confusing or tedious copiousness of detail. Synonymy: Redundancy, tautology, pleonasm, verbosity, verbiage, prolixity, diffuseness, circumlocution, periphrasis. *Prolixity* implies excessive and wearisome attention to trivial particulars.

prosopopoeia [Latin, from Greek *prosopopoiia* from *prosopon* ‘a face’, ‘a person’ and *poiein* ‘to make’.] *Rhetoric* Originally, representation of an absent person as speaking, or of a deceased person as alive and present; later, personification.

repetition [French *répétition*, from Latin *repetitio*, akin to Latin *repetere*, from *re-* ‘again’ and *petere* ‘to fall upon’, ‘to attack’, ‘to seek’. Cf. PETITION.] 8. *Rhetoric* Reiteration; also, repeating of the same word.

rhetoric [Middle English *retorike*, *rethorike*, from Old French *rhetorique*, from Latin *rhetorica*, from Greek *rhetorike* (understood *techne*), from *rhetorikos* ‘rhetorical’, ‘oratorical’, from *rhetor* ‘orator’. See WORD.] 1. The art of expressive speech or of discourse, especially of literary composition. Specifically: a. Originally, as cultivated by the Greeks, the study of the principles and technical resources of oratory, including both composition and delivery. Its development by the sophists and other political and professional orators made it regarded chiefly as the art of persuasion. b. In schools and colleges, the study of principles and rules of composition formulated by ancient critics, as Aristotle, Quintilian, and interpreted by classical scholars, for the application to discourse in the vernacular. c. Now, especially, the art of writing well in prose, as distinguished from versification and elocution. 2. Hence: a. Skillful or artistic use of speech; skill in the effective use of speech. b. Artificial elegance of language, or declamation without

conviction or earnest feeling. 3. Persuasive or moving power; that which allures. 4. A treatise or work on rhetoric.

rhetorical question: A question not intended to elicit an answer, but inserted for rhetorical effect. (Who does not love his country?)

simile [Latin, neuter of *similis* ‘like’, ‘similar’.] *Rhetoric* A figure of speech by which one thing, action, or relation is likened or explicitly compared in one or more aspects, often with *as* or *like*, to something of different kind or quality; an imaginative comparison (Errors, like straws, upon the surface flow”; “Reason is to faith what the eye to the telescope”). See TROPE. Synonymy: See COMPARISON. A *simile* is an imaginative comparison between objects which are essentially unlike, except in certain aspects; as, “I have compared one with the other, though very unlike, like all *similes*” (– Byron); “As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country” (– Proverbs 25:25); “ponderous syllables, like sullen waves in the half-glutted hollows of reef rocks” (– Keats); “The feeling of unhappiness... covered him as a water covers a log” (– Kipling).

similitude [Old French, from Latin *similitudo*, from *similis* ‘similar’.] 2. That which likens one thing to another; fanciful or imaginative comparison. Specifically: a. A simile. b. A parable. c. An allegory.

spoonerism [After Reverend William A. *Spooner* (1844-1930), warden of New College, Oxford, England.] An accidental transposition of sounds, usually the initial sounds, of two or more words; as in “a *blushing crow*” for “a *crushing blow*”.

strange and twisted: The juxtaposition of two declarations that, while isolated, make sense as either truth or error, but when combined are absurd; e.g., “Are you Becky’s mother?” – “Yes, I am.” – “Have you been all her life?”

syllipsis *plural* syllepses [Latin, from Greek *syllipsis* ‘a taking together’, from *syllambainein* ‘to take together’, from *syn* ‘with’ and *lambainein* ‘to take’. Cf. LEMMA.] 1. *Grammar* The use of a word (as an adjective or verb) to modify or govern syntactically two (sometimes more) words, with only one of which it formally agrees in gender, number, etc. (e.g., Latin *rex et regina beati*.) Cf. ZEUGMA. 2. *Rhetoric* Use of a word in the same grammatical relation to two adjacent words in the context, one metaphorical and the other literal in sense (their taunts, more cutting than knives).

symploce [Late Latin, from Greek *symploke* ‘an interweaving’, from *symplekein* ‘to twine together’, from *syn* ‘with’ and *plekein* ‘to twine’.] *Rhetoric* The repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning and another at the end of successive clauses, a figure combining anaphora (repetition of a word or words at the beginning of two or more successive clauses) and epistrophe (termination of successive clauses or sentences with the same expression); as in, *Justice* came down from heaven to view *the earth*; *justice* returned to heaven and left *the earth*.

syndetic *adjective* [Greek *syndetikos*, from *syndein* ‘to bind together’, from *syn* ‘with’ and *dein* ‘to bind’. Cf. ASYNDETIK.] Connecting; connective; interconnected; also, indicated by a

conjunctive; as, *syndetic* words or connection.

synecdoche [Latin *synecdoche*, from Greek *synekdoche*, from *synekdechesthai* ‘to receive jointly’, from *syn* ‘with’ and *ekdechesthai* ‘to receive’, from *ek* ‘out’ and *dechesthai* ‘to receive’.]

Rhetoric A figure of speech which a part is put for the whole (fifty *sail* for fifty *ships*), the whole for a part (the smiling *year* for *spring*), the species for the genus (*cutthroat* for *assassin*), the genus for the species (a *creature* for a *man*), the name of the material for the thing made, etc. See TROPE.

tautology [Late Latin *tautologia*, from Greek *tautologia*.] 1. *Rhetoric* Repetition of the same words or use of synonymous words in close succession; also, an instance of this. 2. Repetition of a statement, of acts, experiences, etc., especially when superfluous. Synonymy: Redundancy, tautology, pleonasm, verbosity, verbiage, prolixity, diffuseness, circumlocution, periphrasis. *Tautology* is needless or useless repetition of the same idea in different words.

trope [French or Latin; French *trope*, from Latin *tropus*, from Greek *tropos* ‘a turning’, ‘turn’; akin to Greek *trope* ‘a turn’, *trepein* ‘to turn’, Sanskrit *trapate* ‘he is ashamed’, ‘he turns away’, and probably to Latin *turpis* ‘foul’, ‘base’. Cf. TROPHY, TROPIC, TURPITUDE.] 5. *Rhetoric* The use of a word or expression in a different sense from that which properly belongs to it, for giving life or emphasis to an idea; also, an instance of such use; a figure of speech. Tropes are chiefly four kinds: *metaphor*, *metonymy*, *synecdoche*, and *irony*.

Wellerism [from Sam *Weller*, the witty servant of Mr. Pickwick in the story *Pickwick Papers* (1836-1837) by Charles Dickens (1812-1870), English novelist.] An expression of comparison comprising a usually well-known quotation followed by a facetious sequel (as “Every one to his own taste,’ said the old woman as she kissed the cow”).

(The preceding definition was found at the Web site below:)

<http://www.m-w.com/cgi-bin/dictionary?va=Wellerism>

zeugma [Latin, from Greek *zeugma*, from *zeugnynai* ‘to yolk’, ‘to join’. See YOLK.] *Grammar and Rhetoric* The use of a word (as an adjective or verb) to modify or govern two (sometimes more) words, with only one of which it appropriately makes sense (e.g., ‘terrified *by threats* or corrupted *by flattery*’, from Latin *minus* aut *blandimentis* corrupta). Cf. SYLLEPSIS.

Unless otherwise indicated, all definitions are from *Webster’s New International Dictionary of the English Language* Second Edition, Unabridged, with Reference History, by William Allan Neilson, Ph.D., LL.D., L.H.D., Litt.D., et al., Springfield, Massachusetts: G. & C. Merriam Company, Publishers, 1934, 1935. 3,210 pages.