

The Necklace (Short Story)

Guy de Maupassant

After completing this lesson, students will be able to:

- speak confidently and fluently in a wide range of contexts, For example, (conflict resolution, panel discussion, role-play, dialogue, etc.) to fulfil different purposes (exposition, argumentation etc.)
- perform a drama/ role play/ play script showing different roles and scenarios through deliberate choice of dialogues/ speech
- read with accurate pronunciation, appropriate pitch and voice variation suitable for fictional and nonfictional texts
- ask and answer higher-order questions to guide/ assess reading
- evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language, considering the impact on the reader
- use pre-reading and while-reading strategies to analyse and explore different layers of meaning within texts including biases and opinions
- apply skimming and scanning strategies for relevant information and main points in texts to identify the writer's purpose, and intended audience. Infer the theme/main idea of the text, distinguishing between fact and opinion where necessary
- evaluate the particular elements of a story or drama (e.g., how the setting shapes the characters or plot). Evaluate stages of plot development in a fictional text. (exposition, setting, climax, character development, resolution)
- evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language, considering the impact on the reader
- identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g. synonyms and antonyms)
- use future tense correctly in speech and writing
- demonstrate knowledge and application of parts of speech in oral and written communication in varying degrees of complexity
- apply knowledge of parts of speech, tenses, sentence structure and other features of grammar and vocabulary to understand how language functions in different contexts, make effective choices for meaning or style while reading, listening and writing
- produce legible work that shows the correct spelling of the conventions of punctuation and capitalization
- produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience
- write multiple paragraphs essays/stories; multi-stanza poems or playscript using mechanics of correct writing
- engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events

Pre-Reading

- What do you understand by the title?
- Read the first paragraph of the story, then guess what the story will be about.

Reading

She was one of those pretty and charming girls born, as if by an error of fate, into a family of clerks. She had no dowry, no expectations, no means of becoming known, understood, loved or wedded by a man of wealth and distinction; and so, she let herself be married to a minor official at the Ministry of Education.

She dressed plainly because she had never been able to afford anything better, but she was as unhappy as if she had once been wealthy. Women don't belong to a caste or class; their beauty, grace, and natural charm take the place of birth and family. Natural delicacy, instinctive elegance and a quick wit determine their place in society and make the daughters of commoners the equals of the very finest ladies.

She suffered endlessly, feeling she was entitled to all the delicacies and luxuries of life. She suffered because of the poorness of her house as she looked at the dirty walls, the worn-out chairs and the ugly curtains. All these things that another woman of her class would not even have noticed, tormented her and made her resentful. The sight of the little Brenton girl who did her housework filled her with terrible regrets and hopeless fantasies. She dreamed of silent antechambers hung with Oriental tapestries, lit from above by torches in bronze holders, while two tall footmen in knee-length breeches napped in huge armchairs, sleepy from the stove's oppressive warmth. She dreamed of vast living rooms furnished in rare old silks, elegant furniture loaded with priceless ornaments, and inviting smaller rooms, perfumed, made for afternoon chats with close friends - famous, sought after men, who all women envy and desire.

When she sat down to dinner at a round table covered with a three-day-old cloth opposite her husband who, lifting the lid off the soup, shouted excitedly, "Ah! Beef stew! What could be better," she dreamed of fine dinners, of shining silverware, of tapestries which peopled the walls with figures from another time and strange birds in fairy forests; she dreamed of delicious dishes served on wonderful plates, of whispered gallantries listened to with an inscrutable smile as one ate the pink flesh of a trout or the wings of a quail.

She had no dresses, no jewels, nothing; and these were the only things she loved. She felt she was made for them alone. She wanted so much to charm, to be envied, to be desired and sought after.

While-reading

Ask the students to locate the specific information such as names, dates, times, and numbers mentioned in the story.

She had a rich friend, a former schoolmate at the convent, whom she no longer wanted to visit because she suffered so much when she came home. For whole days afterwards she would weep with sorrow, regret, despair and misery.

One evening her husband came home with an air of triumph, holding a large envelope in his hand.

"Look," he said, "here's something for you."

She tore open the paper and drew out a card, on which was printed the words:

"The Minister of Education and Mme. Georges Rampouneau request the pleasure of M. and Mme. Loisel's company at the Ministry, on the evening of Monday January 18th."

While-reading

Make students consider other perspectives of the text. After students have read the text one time, ask them to read it again and pretend they are reading it from someone else's point of view.

Instead of being delighted, as her husband had hoped, she threw the invitation on the table resentfully, and muttered:

"What do you want me to do with that?"

"But, my dear, I thought you would be pleased. You never go out, and it will be such a lovely occasion! I had awful trouble getting it. Everyone wants to go; it is very exclusive, and they're not giving many invitations to clerks. The whole ministry will be there."

She stared at him angrily, and said, impatiently:

"And what do you expect me to wear if I go?"

He hadn't thought of that. He stammered:

"Why, the dress you go to the theatre in. It seems very nice to me . . ."

He stopped, stunned, distressed to see his wife crying. Two large tears ran slowly from the corners of her eyes towards the corners of her mouth. He stuttered:

"What's the matter? What's the matter?"

With great effort she overcame her grief and replied in a calm voice, as she wiped her wet cheeks:

"Nothing. Only I have no dress and so I can't go to this party. Give your invitation to a friend whose wife has better clothes than I do."

He was distraught, but tried again:

"Let's see, Mathilde. How much would a suitable dress cost, one which you could use again on other occasions, something very simple?"

She thought for a moment, computing the cost, and also wondering what amount she could ask for without an immediate refusal and an alarmed exclamation from the thrifty clerk.

At last she answered hesitantly:

"I don't know exactly, but I think I could do it with four hundred *francs*. "

He turned a little pale, because he had been saving that exact amount to buy a gun and treat himself to a hunting trip the following summer, in the country near Nanterre, with a few friends who went lark-shooting there on Sundays.

However, he said:

"Very well, I can give you four hundred *francs*. But try and get a really beautiful dress. "

The day of the party drew near, and Madame Loisel seemed sad, restless, anxious. Her dress was ready, however. One evening her husband said to her:

"What's the matter? You've been acting strange these last three days. "

She replied: "I'm upset that I have no jewels, not a single stone to wear. I will look cheap. I would almost rather not go to the party. "

"You could wear flowers, " he said, "They are very fashionable at this time of year. For ten *francs* you could get two or three magnificent roses. "

She was not convinced.

"No; there is nothing more humiliating than looking poor in the middle of a lot of rich women. "

"How stupid you are!" her husband cried. "Go and see your friend Madame Forestier and ask her to lend you some jewels. You know her well enough for that. "

She uttered a cry of joy.

"Of course. I had not thought of that. "

The next day she went to her friend's house and told her of her distress.

Madame Forestier went to her mirrored wardrobe, took out a large box, brought it back, opened it, and said to Madame Loisel:

"Choose, my dear. "

First, she saw some bracelets, then a pearl necklace, then a gold Venetian cross set with precious stones, of exquisite craftsmanship. She tried on the jewelry in the mirror, hesitated, could not bear to part with them, to give them back. She kept asking:

"You have nothing else?"

"Why, yes. But I don't know what you like. "

Suddenly she discovered, in a black satin box, a superb diamond necklace, and her heart began to beat with uncontrolled desire. Her hands trembled as she took it. She fastened it around her neck, over her high-necked dress, and stood lost in ecstasy as

she looked at herself.

Then she asked anxiously, hesitating:

"Would you lend me this, just this?"

"Why, yes, of course. "

She threw her arms around her friend's neck, embraced her rapturously, then fled with her treasure.

The day of the party arrived. Madame Loisel was a success. She was prettier than all the other women, elegant, gracious, smiling, and full of joy. All the men stared at her, asked her name, tried to be introduced. All the cabinet officials wanted to waltz with her. The minister noticed her.

She danced wildly, with passion, drunk on pleasure, forgetting everything in the triumph of her beauty, in the glory of her success, in a sort of cloud of happiness, made up of all this respect, all this admiration, all these awakened desires, of that sense of triumph that is so sweet to a woman's heart.

She left at about four o'clock in the morning. Her husband had been dozing since midnight in a little deserted anteroom with three other gentlemen whose wives were having a good time.

He threw over her shoulders the clothes he had brought for her to go outside in, the modest clothes of an ordinary life, whose poverty contrasted sharply with the elegance of the ball dress. She felt this and wanted to run away, so she wouldn't be noticed by the other women who were wrapping themselves in expensive furs.

Loisel held her back.

"Wait a moment, you'll catch a cold outside. I'll go and find a cab. "

But she would not listen to him and ran down the stairs. When they were finally in the street, they could not find a cab, and began to look for one, shouting at the cabmen they saw passing in the distance.

They walked down toward the Seine in despair, shivering with cold. At last they found on the quay one of those old night cabs that one sees in Paris only after dark, as if they were ashamed to show their shabbiness during the day.

They were dropped off at their door in the Rue des Martyrs, and sadly walked up the steps to their apartment. It was all over, for her. And he was remembering that he had to be back at his office at ten o'clock.

In front of the mirror, she took off the clothes around her shoulders, taking a final look at herself in all her glory. But suddenly she uttered a cry. She no longer had the necklace round her neck!

"What is the matter?" asked her husband, already half undressed.

She turned towards him, panic-stricken.

"I have . . . I have . . . I no longer have Madame Forestier's necklace."

He stood up, distraught.

"What! . . . how! . . . That's impossible!"

They looked in the folds of her dress, in the folds of her cloak, in her pockets, everywhere. But they could not find it.

"Are you sure you still had it on when you left the ball?" he asked.

"Yes. I touched it in the hall at the Ministry."

"But if you had lost it in the street, we would have heard it fall. It must be in the cab."

"Yes. That's probably it. Did you take his number?"

"No. And you, didn't you notice it?"

"No. "

They stared at each other, stunned. At last, Loisel put his clothes on again.

"I'm going back," he said, "over the whole route we walked, see if I can find it."

He left. She remained in her ball dress all evening, without the strength to go to bed, sitting on a chair, with no fire, her mind blank.

Her husband returned at about seven o'clock. He had found nothing.

He went to the police, to the newspapers to offer a reward, to the cab companies, everywhere the tiniest glimmer of hope led him.

She waited all day, in the same state of blank despair from before this frightful disaster.

Loisel returned in the evening, a hollow, pale figure; he had found nothing.

"You must write to your friend," he said, "tell her you have broken the clasp of her necklace and that you are having it mended. It will give us time to look some more."

She wrote as he dictated.

At the end of one week, they had lost all hope.

And Loisel, who had aged five years, declared:

"We must consider how to replace the jewel."

The next day they took the box which had held it, and went to the jeweler whose name they found inside. He consulted his books.

"It was not I, madame, who sold the necklace; I must simply have supplied the case."

And so, they went from jeweler to jeweler, looking for an necklace like the other one, consulting their memories, both sick with grief and anguish.

In a shop at the Palais Royal, they found a string of diamonds which seemed to be exactly

what they were looking for. It was worth forty thousand *francs*. They could have it for thirty-six thousand.

So they begged the jeweler not to sell it for three days. And they made an arrangement that he would take it back for thirty-four thousand *francs* if the other necklace was found before the end of February.

Loisel had eighteen thousand *francs* which his father had left him. He would borrow the rest.

And he did borrow, asking for a thousand *francs* from one man, five hundred from another, five louis here, three louis there. He gave notes, made ruinous agreements, dealt with usurers, with every type of money-lender. He compromised the rest of his life, risked signing notes without knowing if he could ever honor them, and, terrified by the anguish still to come, by the black misery about to fall on him, by the prospect of every physical privation and every moral torture he was about to suffer, he went to get the new necklace, and laid down on the jeweler's counter thirty-six thousand *francs*.

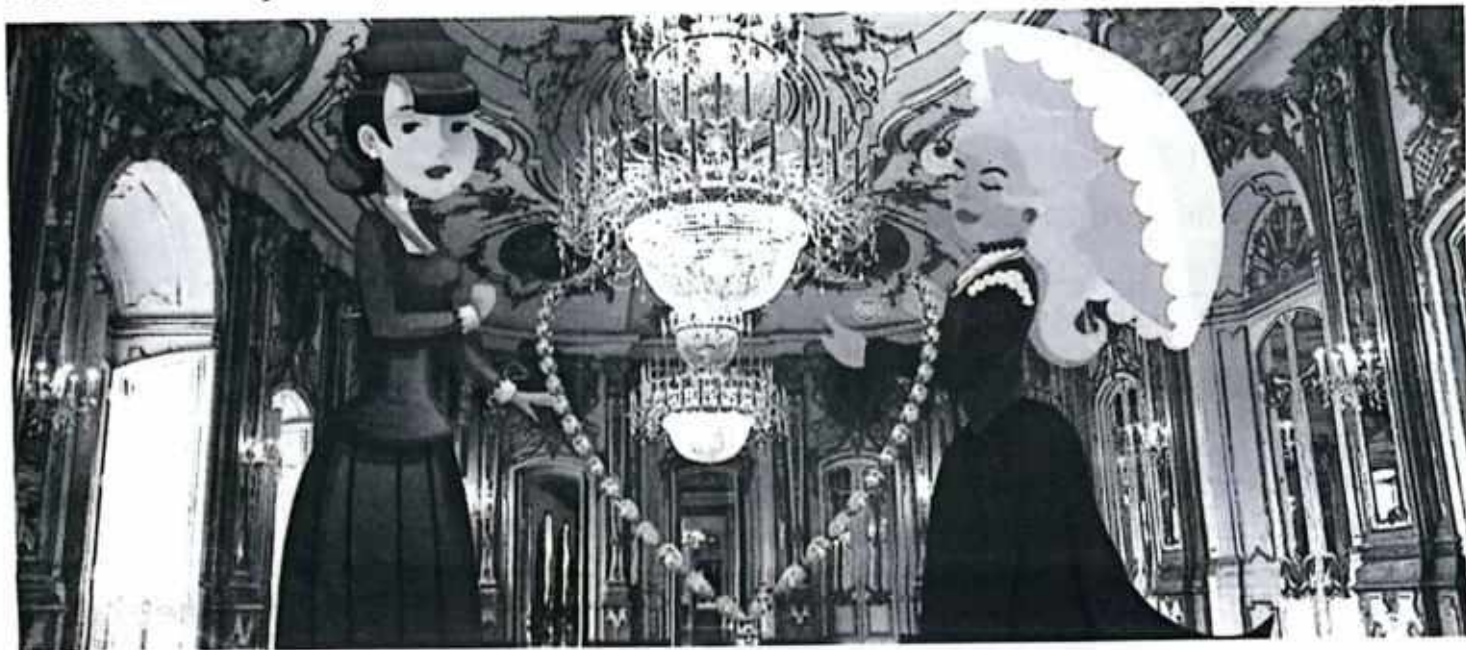
When Madame Loisel took the necklace back, Madame Forestier said coldly:

"You should have returned it sooner; I might have needed it."

To the relief of her friend, she did not open the case. If she had detected the substitution, what would she have thought? What would she have said? Would she have taken her friend for a thief?

From then on, Madame Loisel knew the horrible life of the very poor. But she played her part heroically. The dreadful debt must be paid. She would pay it. They dismissed their maid; they changed their lodgings; they rented a garret under the roof.

She came to know the drudgery of housework, the odious labors of the kitchen. She washed the dishes, staining her rosy nails on greasy pots and the bottoms of pans. She washed the dirty linen, the shirts and the dishcloths, which she hung to dry on a line; she



carried the garbage down to the street every morning, and carried up the water, stopping at each landing to catch her breath. And, dressed like a commoner, she went to the fruiterer's, the grocer's, the butcher's, her basket on her arm, bargaining, insulted, fighting over every miserable *sou*.

Each month they had to pay some notes, renew others, get more time.

Her husband worked every evening, doing accounts for a tradesman, and often, late into the night, he sat copying a manuscript at five *sous* a page.

And this life lasted ten years.

At the end of ten years they had paid off everything, everything, at usurer's rates and with the accumulations of compound interest.

Madame Loisel looked old now. She had become strong, hard and rough like all women of impoverished households. With hair half combed, with skirts awry, and reddened hands, she talked loudly as she washed the floor with great swishes of water. But sometimes, when her husband was at the office, she sat down near the window and thought of that evening at the ball so long ago, when she had been so beautiful and so admired.

What would have happened if she had not lost that necklace? Who knows, who knows? How strange life is, how fickle! How little is needed for one to be ruined or saved!

One Sunday, as she was walking in the Champs Élysées to refresh herself after the week's work, suddenly she saw a woman walking with a child. It was Madame Forestier, still young, still beautiful, still charming.

Madame Loisel felt emotional. Should she speak to her? Yes, of course. And now that she had paid, she would tell her all. Why not?

She went up to her.

"Good morning, Jeanne."

The other, astonished to be addressed so familiarly by this common woman, did not recognize her. She stammered:

"But - madame - I don't know. You must have made a mistake."

"No, I am Mathilde Loisel."

Her friend uttered a cry.

"Oh! . . . my poor Mathilde, how you've changed! . . ."

"Yes, I have had some hard times since I last saw you, and many miseries . . . and all because of you! . . ."



"Me? How can that be?"

"You remember that diamond necklace that you lent me to wear to the Ministry party?"

"Yes. Well?"

"Well, I lost it."

"What do you mean? You brought it back."

"I brought you back another exactly like it. And it has taken us ten years to pay for it. It wasn't easy for us, we had very little. But at last it is over, and I am very glad."

Madame Forestier was stunned.

"You say that you bought a diamond necklace to replace mine?"

"Yes; you didn't notice then? They were very similar."

And she smiled with proud and innocent pleasure.

Madame Forestier, deeply moved, took both her hands.

"Oh, my poor Mathilde! Mine was an imitation! It was worth five hundred *francs* at most! . . ."



Post-reading

- How long did it take to pay for the necklace?

Henri René Albert Guy de Maupassant (5 August 1850 - 6 July 1893) was a 19th-century French author, remembered as a master of the short story form, and as a representative of the Naturalist school, who depicted human lives and destinies and social forces in disillusioned and often pessimistic terms.

Maupassant was a protégé of Gustave Flaubert and his stories are characterized by economy of style and efficient, seemingly effortless *dénouements* (outcomes). Many are set during the Franco-Prussian War of the 1870s, describing the futility of war and the innocent civilians who, caught up in events beyond their control, are permanently changed by their experiences. He wrote 300 short stories, six novels, three travel books, and one volume of verse. His first published story, "Boule de Suif" ("The Dumpling", 1880), is often considered his masterpiece.

Theme

"The Necklace" or "The Diamond Necklace" (French: *La Parure*) is an 1884 short story by French writer Guy de Maupassant. It is known for its twist ending (Ironical ending), which was a hallmark of de Maupassant's style. The story was first published on 17 February 1884 in the French newspaper *Le Gaulois*. "**The Necklace**" is, at its heart, a story about Mathilde's social ambition, which takes the form of a desire to acquire luxurious objects **that** she cannot afford. Through her ruin, Maupassant warns against the dangers of greed and criticizes those who ascribe too much value to wealth and material possessions.



Glossary

Given below are the difficult words from the unit. Look at their meanings and give synonyms of each in the given column. The first one is done for you. Also use these words in your own sentences.

words	Meanings	Synonyms
antechamber	small room next to main bedrooms in a house or apartments	waiting room
ante-room	small room before a main room	
boudoirs	bedrooms	
breton	the place, or someone who comes from	
chagrin	feeling of embarrassment and annoyance	
candelabra	branched candle holder for more than one candle	
coupe's	four wheeled horse-drawn carriage with two seats inside and two seats outside	
disdain	dislike	
finesse	elegant skill	
frowsy	untidy in appearance	
gallantries	polite words or actions	
garret	a room at the top of a house just under the roof	
homage	to show respect	
incessantly	constantly	



Reading and Critical Thinking

a. Answer the following questions:

1. Why was Mathilde unhappy with her life at the beginning of "The Necklace" by Guy de Maupassant??
2. Why Mathilde did not to like to visit her rich friend?
3. How did Mathilde and her husband get money to pay for the new necklace?
4. What was it for the couple after they had returned the necklace to Madame Forestier?
5. How does Mathilde change as a result of her experience in "The Necklace"?

6. Do you think Madame Loisel got what she deserved?
7. What is the theme of "The Necklace"?
8. Write a character sketch of Madame and Mister Loisel.
9. Would you agree that Mathilde feels the end to borrow a necklace?

b. Choose the best answer:

- i. Mathilde did not like to visit her rich friend because she was unhappy with her _____.
a) husband b) looks c) poverty
- ii. Her husband worked every evening, doing accounts for a tradesman, and often, late into the night, he sat copying a manuscript at _____ sous a page.
a) four b) five c) six
- iii. _____ was still young, still beautiful, still charming after ten years.
a) Madame Forestier b) Mathilde c) Madame Loisel



Oral Communication

Activity

- Represent one or two of the major points of action of the story: when Madame Loisel borrows the necklace from her friend, the affair... through a scene.
- Get into pairs and represent the last part of the story where Madame Forestier and Mathilde Loisel found each other after 10 years. Try to represent Mathilde's reaction when Madame Forestier tells her that the necklace, she lent her was an imitation indeed.



Vocabulary and Grammar

Future tense:

It shows that the timeline of the action hasn't actually occurred yet, but will later.

For example:

I will write a book.

He will be writing a book.

Types of Future Tenses

a. Simple Future

You can use the simple future to talk about something (like an action or event) that will happen any time in the future, and also to talk about something that will happen one time. In the simple future, we use the base form of the verb with a modal auxiliary, like *will*. So, the simple future follows the form **Subject + modal + Base Verb**.

I will eat a cheeseburger for dinner.

Jane might buy a new car tomorrow.

b. Future Continuous

The future continuous tense talk about things will be happening continuously in the future. To show this, we use a modal, the verb to be, and a verb ending in *ing*. Sentences in the future continuous tense follow the **Subject + modal + Verb to be + ing Verb model**:

Zara will be driving to work.

I will be running the race at 6pm.

The dogs will be barking loudly when you arrive.

c. Future Perfect

The future perfect tense shows that an event will have happened before another thing in the future. It often expresses that by the time one action or event happens, another will have happened. To use the future perfect, we need to place the modal *will* and the auxiliary *have* before the *past* form of the main verb (this shows that we “will have done” an action). Using a past verb in the future tense may seem confusing, but remember, it's to show that something will have happened before another thing, so we need it!

So, a sentence written in the future perfect should follow the **Subject + will + have + Past form of main verb pattern**:

Faiza will have traveled the world by the time she turns 30.

They will have lived in 10 states once they move to New York.

He will have taken the exam already, so he won't need to study more.

d- Future Perfect Continuous

The future perfect continuous describes events and/or actions that have been going on continuously until a certain time in the future. Often, it's used to show cause and effect; in other words, because one thing will have been happening, another will happen. To use it, we need to combine *have* and *been* with the continuous form of the verb (ending in *ing*), this shows that the action or event “will have been” happening.

A sentence in the future perfect continuous follows **Subject + modal + have been + ing Verb**:

Mother will have been working for 12 hours, so I don't think she will want to cook.

I should have been watering the plants every day; I hope they won't die.

They will have been living in that house for 10 years this March.

He will have been driving since noon, so he will need a rest.

a) Rewrite the underlined forms with the future simple or continuous.

i) Don't call me at 10 o'clock. I am going to fly to Spain.

ii) I suppose we 're going to stay at a hotel next summer.

iii) Do you think it is snowing at the weekend?

iv) Is the coat OK.? - Yes, I am taking it.

v) This time on Sunday we are going to ski in France.

vi) Every student is using a computer in the near future.

b) Complete the sentences with the future perfect or the future continuous.

disappear, arrive, cook, watch, replace, move, finish, fly, teach, listen

i. When we reach Portsmouth, we _____ our voyage.

ii. When I drive my car I _____ to the new CD.

iii. In a twenty years' time thousands of species _____ from this planet.

iv. In a few hours' time we _____ on the plane.

v. I'll meet you at four o'clock. - At four? I'm afraid I _____ English.

vi. We _____ the wheels before you come back from the shop.

vii. Shall I buy a pizza? - There's no need. I _____ as usual.

viii. I'm sorry, we can't come tonight. We _____ the new documentary on TV.

ix. My new PC _____ by the end of this week.

- x. The Johnsons _____ in their new house by Christmas.

c) Punctuate the given lines.

but madame I dont know you must have made a mistake
No I am Mathilde Loisel

d) Give antonyms of the following.

natural _____ silent _____ strange _____
longer _____ slowly _____ discover _____

e) Use the given phrasal verbs in sentences.

switch on _____
take apart _____
take back _____
take off _____
take out _____
tear up _____



Writing

Literary Devices :

Irony

Irony is about how your perception is different from how something really is. Irony has disappointed many readers when they thought something would happen, but it didn't. It comes in different forms like dramatic, verbal, or situational irony. For example:

My old English mastiff dog is named "Tiny". (situational irony)

My son is as innocent as the devil. (verbal irony)

Flashback

You have flashbacks in life. For example, the smell of baking cookies takes you back to

a time you spend with your grandmother. Flashbacks in literature are the same. These are story elements giving you insight to a previous moment or experience.

Standing on the edge of the cliff, she was suddenly transported back to the time when she was two. She remembered the feeling of her heart pounding as she looked down at the ground, seconds before falling.

Tone

Has anyone ever reprimanded you for your tone? Tone tells us a lot about what a character is thinking, or the feeling the poem is trying to portray. It can be a happy, energetic, or even melancholy tone.

The exhilarated girl danced along the sidewalk making her way to her friend's house.
(upbeat, happy tone)

Alliteration

A type of repetition, alliteration is when a letter is used repeatedly to add emphasis and interest to a work. For example:

Sleepy sheep were shorn on Sunday.

The big black bear banged blandly on the bark.

Symbolism

Symbolism is a fun literary technique. Writers use this to add meaning to an object or person within a story. Depending on the writer's creativity, the level of symbolism can be basic or unique. For example:

In Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone, the scar on his forehead symbolizes not only his past but his future.

Plot Twist

Plot twist is a literary technique that introduces a radical change in the direction or expected outcome of the **plot** in a work of fiction. When it happens near the end of a story, it is known as a **twist** or surprise ending.

- Exploit the text of the story "The Necklace" to find examples of symbolism and irony.
- Find examples of alliteration in "The Necklace".
- What moments have been revealed to the readers through the flashback technique in "The Necklace"?
- Do you find twist in the plot of the above read story? Explain.

Teacher's Point



- Discuss with students about the evils of today's world. Ask them to perform an evil role in the form of role-play. Each character will reveal his bad quality and its impacts. Help your students in making a positive citizen of society.