school exchange	Schüleraustausch
social commitment	soziales Engagement
social skills	soziale Kompetenz
study abroad	Auslandsstudium
to apply for (a job)	sich (für eine Stelle) bewerben
to broaden one's horizon	seinen Horizont erweitern
to climb the social ladder	Karriere machen
to donate/give sth. to charity	etw. an eine Wohltätigkeitsorganisation spenden/weiterleiten
to gain experience	Erfahrungen sammeln
to get an insight into foreign cultures	einen Einblick in fremde Kulturen erhalten
to speak from one's own experience	aus eigener Erfahrung sprechen
volunteer	Freiwillige(r)

Methoden der Textarbeit

Literarische Texte

Narration

> **Keyword:**
> **narrative texts:** narrative texts can have many forms, among them short story, novel, fairytale, satire, parable, legend, etc.
> Most relevant for your final exam are the short story and the novel.

When asked to analyze a narrative text, you will have to focus on particular elements that are characteristic of short stories or novels.

Elements of narration

Structure
Plot

> **INFO** Elements of a complete plot
>
> exposition → rising action → climax/turning point → falling action → ending

A **plot** need not necessarily be complete (e. g. open ending).

The **sequence** need not necessarily be in chronological order.
There may be foreshadowing or flashbacks or there may be reverse narration (umgestelltes Erzählen).
In particular, an excerpt from a longer text, which is the most common sort of text in the final exam, may not contain all the elements of plot.
Certain **key events** within the action of a story will raise the tension; they will create suspense, rising to a climax or turning point. After that there will be falling tension or relief.

> **INFO** Tension curve
>
> rising tension → climax or turning point → falling tension or relief

Theme

The **theme** of a story is always abstract. Themes are *e. g.* love, poverty, racism, childhood, *etc.*
The **subject matter** of a story is the concrete realization of the theme.

Example
Two stories may have the same theme: racism. The subject matter of the one may be the murder of an African-American, of the other the bullying of a black schoolgirl.

Character

When asked to characterize a figure from a narrative text, you will have to be aware of different aspects. There are key questions that can guide you.

Direct characterization
– What does the narrator say about the character?
– What do other characters say about the character?
– What does the character say about himself/herself?
– How objective is what they say? Be aware of words with negative or positive connotations.

Indirect characterization
– How does the character act?
– What does the character say?
– What kind of language does he/she use?

It might help to fill in a table with the following headings:

Character's outward appearance	Character's language	Character's actions	What the character says	Other characters' statements (or actions)
…	…	…	…	…

Narrator/point of view

INFO Narrator

The narrator is either a first-person or a third-person narrator.
The first-person narrator is NOT the author!

limited point of view	unlimited/omniscient point of view
first-person narrator	third-person narrator (neutral omniscience, God-like knowledge about all facts)
third-person narrator (one character's point of view, "selective omniscience")	third-person narrator (several characters' points of view)

The narrator always works like a camera, taking a point-of-view shot through a character's eyes or looking at the characters from the outside.

Example:
In Alan Sillitoe's novel *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (1975), the reader is presented with an episode in a pub (p. 10). When the narrator says, "Brenda and two other women sitting at Arthur's table saw him push back his chair and stand up with a clatter, […]", he takes Brenda's and the women's point of view: Arthur is clearly seen from outside, not by a neutral narrator but through the women's eyes: The women sitting at Arthur's table saw him push back his chair, NOT Arthur pushed back his chair.
→ limited point of view

A few lines later the point of view changes: "He felt electric light bulbs shining and burning into the back of his head."
The narrator takes Arthur's point of view, knows what Arthur feels.
→ limited point of view

Mode of presentation
Panoramic presentation (telling) vs. scenic presentation (showing)
There are two modes of presentation to be found in narratives: the **panoramic** and the **scenic** mode:

The **panoramic** mode is employed when the narrator summarizes several events, whereas **scenic** mode is used when the narrator describes scenes in great detail.

Interior monologue is a particular kind of scenic presentation, in which the thoughts and feelings passing through a character's mind are depicted. In **reported thought** the thoughts are presented as reported speech.

This is closely connected with the concepts of *narrated time and narrating* (or *acting*) *time*:

narrated time longer than narrating time	usually summary of events
narrated time identical with narrating time	e.g. direct speech
narrated time shorter than narrating time	e.g. stream of consciousness, interior monologue, detailed description of a scene, comparable to slow motion in film

INFO Function of mode of presentation and point of view

A neutral, omniscient narrator, who observes the action and the characters from above and who uses a panoramic mode of presentation, is more detached and thus creates a distance between the reader and the action. On the other hand, a narrator who takes a character's point of view creates immediacy, directly involves the reader in what happens.

Setting

The place and time where the action is set is called the setting. It is especially important for *atmosphere* and *symbolism*.

Atmosphere

Atmosphere is created by means of setting, objects, colours, light and darkness, but also by reference to a character's mood or the use of language.

Example:
In Kate Chopin's short story "Desirée's Baby" a "yellow stuccoed house" is described with a roof that comes down "steep and black like a cowl." (Mönchskutte). It is surrounded by "big, solemn oaks", the "thick-leaved, far-reaching branches" shadowing "it like a pall" (Leichentuch).

colour	black, dirty yellow
light/darkness	shadow of the oaks
language: similes, "like a pall", "like a cowl"	→ connotations of death, darkness, mystery.

The atmosphere created here is gloomy, sombre, sinister, threatening, eerie.

Symbolism

Symbols are part of the setting of the narrative.

INFO Established symbols

These are conventional symbols which have long been used and have a certain, traditional significance which everybody knows. Examples of established symbols: rose, cross, the colour white.

INFO Created symbols

Something becomes symbolic within a certain context, because it is closely connected to an event, a situation or a character.

Example:
In the novel *Angela's Ashes* (1996), Angela, the family's mother, vomits over the side of the ship when they leave New York harbour for Ireland and the wind from the Atlantic blows it all over the family. (p. 53)
In the course of the novel the reader will learn how unfortunate the family's decision to leave America will turn out to be and how disastrous the wind from the Atlantic will be for the family. Thus this passage from the first chapter of the book is symbolic.

INFO Symbols and metaphors

Symbols are NOT metaphors!
Symbols are really there, are part of the story. Metaphors or similes are figures of speech.

Examples:
She was a rose, so beautiful. → metaphor
She was like a rose, so beautiful. → simile/comparison
They fell in love when they first met in her father's rose garden. → symbol

Language and style

In order to determine the style of a text it is necessary to examine aspects such as register, diction (choice of words), tone, and also sentence structure.

Register is the level of language used in a particular situation. It may be formal, neutral, informal, or vulgar. There may be a lot of slang words, even taboo words, or technical terms, or jargon.

The **tone** may be ironic, sarcastic, sad, humorous, serious, playful, angry, etc., depending on the emotional attitude it expresses. This depends on the choice of words, level of speech, rhythm, sentence length, etc.

Stylistic devices will be considered at length in the chapters on poetry and non-fictional texts (pp. 88, 94)

Poetry

Poetry focuses on the **aesthetic function** of language.
Poetry appeals to the senses. It is to be enjoyed for its beauty, its cleverness, its wit, its impact. This is achieved by
- the sound of words
- the rhythm of the words and phrases
- the choice of words
- the structure of the sentences
- the composition of the poem
- the visual arrangement of words and lines
- and, above all, by means of imagery.

In your final exams, however, you will be asked not so much to enjoy the poem but to examine its meaning and the effect of the language the speaker uses.

How to proceed
Questions to be asked

- Who is the speaker of the poem?
- Where is the speaker?
- Does the speaker address somebody?
- Does the speaker contemplate something?
- Does the speaker describe something or somebody?
- Does the speaker tell a story?
- Does the speaker explain something?
- Does the speaker argue against or in favour of something?
- What is the speaker's attitude? What is he/she saying?
- How is the poem composed? Is it structured by rhyme scheme, or by division into stanzas, or by some other device?
- Is there a correspondence between the structure of the poem and the structure of the speaker's thoughts?
- What is the significance of the title?
- What words does the speaker use? What do they mean?
- What is the structure of the sentences? Simple? Complex?
- What poetic devices does the speaker use?
- And what is the effect of all this? What is the experience of reading?

In order to understand and describe poetry you need to be familiar with its most important elements.

Elements of poetry

> **INFO** Speaker and author
>
> The speaker of the poem is NOT the author. Poems may be autobiographical, but you must still refer to the "speaker of the poem".

Poems are composed of **stanzas** and **lines**.
Stanzas may have a certain **rhyme scheme.**

Rhyme
Rhyme schemes

rhyme pair	a a b b
alternate rhyme	a b a b
embracing rhyme	a b b a

Types of rhymes

masculine rhyme (on one syllable)	kiss/this
feminine rhyme (on two syllables)	dreary/weary
true rhyme	kiss/this, dreary/weary
slant rhyme assonance (same vowel) consonance (same consonant)	comb/coat hope/heap

Lines may be marked by a certain rhythm. The smallest unit that determines rhythm is the foot, consisting of at least one stressed and one or two unstressed syllables. The pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables is called **metre.**

A sequence of stressed and unstressed syllables is nothing artificial. It is the natural rhythm of the English language. It is the poet's skill to choose words in a way that this pattern will constitute a regular metre.

Types of foot

foot	stresses	example
iamb/iambic	– / (da-**dum**)	compare
trochee/trochaic	/ – (**dum**-da)	lovely
spondee/spondaic	/ / (**dum dum**)	drop dead
anapest/anapestic	– – / (da-da-**dum**)	lemonade
dactyl/dactylic	/ – – (**dum**-da-da)	whispering

The number of feet or stressed syllables in a line determines its metre. The most common types are shown here:

number of feet	metre	example
1	monometer	"And find / What wind …" (John Donne, "Song", ll. 7 – 8)
2	dimeter	"Why dost thou thus …" (John Donne, "The Sun Rising", l. 2)
3	trimeter	"Go, Soul, the body's guest Upon a thankless errant;" (Sir Walter Raleigh, "The Lie")
4	tetrameter	"Busy old fool, unruly sun …" (John Donne, "The Sun Rising", l. 1)
5	pentameter	"Love, all alike, no season knows, nor clime …" (John Donne, "The Sun Rising", l. 9)
6	hexameter	"A needless alexandrine ends the song That, like a wounded snake, drags its slow length along" (Alexander Pope, "An Essay on Criticism", ll. 356 – 357)

INFO Most important metre in English poetry

Iambic pentameter:
"But thy eternal summer shall not fade" (Shakespeare, Sonnet 18).

Lines

end-stop lines	natural pause for the end of a thought at the end of a line	"Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?" (Shakespeare, Sonnet 18)
run-on lines (enjambement)	The meaning requires no pause between the lines.	"When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang Upon those boughs which shake against the cold …" (Shakespeare, Sonnet 73)
caesura	The meaning requires a pause in mid-line.	"Let me not to the marriage of true minds Admit impediments; love is not love …" (Shakespeare, Sonnet 116)

Imagery

A writer or speaker using language beyond its dictionary meaning makes use of **imagery.** All figurative use of language is imagery. Imagery appeals to all the senses, it is meant to stimulate the reader's or listener's imagination.

TIPP Watch out!

The word *imagery* is an abstract noun. There is no plural. You can only talk about single *images*.

Types of imagery

metaphor	A metaphor compares two basically dissimilar things without using the words 'like' or 'as'. Some characteristics of the one are thus transferred to the other in order to illustrate its qualities. Example: Eve Merriam's poem at the head of this chapter.
simile/ comparison	Like a metaphor, a simile draws a comparison, but it explicitly uses the words 'like' or 'as' to do so. "My love is like a red red rose" (Robert Burns)
personification	It is a kind of metaphor in which animals, plants, inanimate objects or abstract ideas are represented as if they were human beings and possessed human qualities: "Busy old fool, unruly sun, / Why dost thou thus, / Through windows, and through curtains call on us?" (John Donne, "The Sun Rising")
symbol	see examples in previous chapter, p. 83

Other poetic devices

stylistic device	definition	example
alliteration	repetition of a sound (usually a consonant) at the beginning of adjacent words	"From forth the fatal loins of these two foes A pair of star-crossed lovers take their life." *(Romeo and Juliet,* Prologue)
onomatopoeia adj. onomatopoeic	the use of words which imitate the sound they refer to	"the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle" (Wilfred Owen, "Anthem for doomed youth")
anaphora (use: "example of anaphora/ examples of anaphora")	One or more words are repeated at the beginning of adjacent sentences or lines.	"In every cry of every man In every infant's cry of fear In every voice, in every ban" (W. Blake, "London")
chiasm	reversal of order of the words in the two parts of a sentence	"Fair is foul, and foul is fair" (Shakespeare, *Macbeth*)
oxymoron	a combination of contradictory words and meanings.	"O heavy lightness, serious vanity, Misshapen chaos of well-seeming forms," (Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*)

Drama

When asked to analyze a dramatic text, you will have to focus on particular elements that are characteristic of plays or film scripts.

Elements of drama

Structure

Plot

The audience is confronted with the action on stage or on the screen directly. There is no narrator. Yet one can identify the same elements of plot as are found in narration.

INFO Elements of a dramatic plot

In tragedy, the opponents of the hero gain the upper hand in the falling action, which ends in the catastrophe.

Comedy has a happy ending, in which conflicts are resolved (dénouement).

Stage directions

The dramatic text consist of **two kinds of text:** the more important kind of text is the dialogue spoken by the characters (i.e. dialogue, monologue, and asides).

The stage directions are the second kind of text. They give the instructions concerning the stage design, about sounds to be heard, visual effects, the characters and also the way some of the dialogue has to be spoken.

The following visual and acoustic elements will have to be considered in your analysis of stage directions. They will help to characterize a character, create atmosphere or function as symbols. (cf. p. 83)

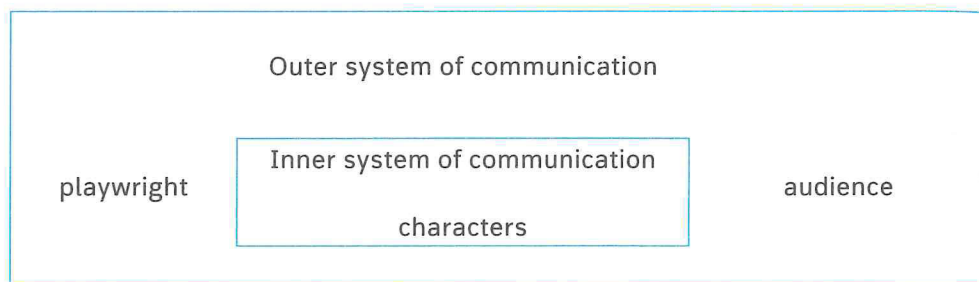| concerning the actors		concerning the stage	
visual	acoustic	visual	acoustic
size	voice	scenery	music
facial expression	intonation	stage design	noise
gestures	language of the play	lighting	sound
costumes	non-verbal noises	properties *(Requisiten)*	

Characters

The audience is confronted with the characters on stage directly, there is no narrator. A character is presented through action, interaction and dialogue and, of course, his outward appearance on stage (see above).

There are **flat** characters, types that act in a predictable way, and **round**, lifelike characters that are fully developed.

Language/Dialogue/Communication

When analysing the language of a play you have to keep in mind that it works on two levels:

1. The inner system of communication, i.e. the communication among the characters.
2. The outer system of communication between the playwright and the audience.

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                 Outer system of communication                │
│            ┌──────────────────────────────┐                  │
│            │  Inner system of communication│                 │
│  playwright│                               │    audience      │
│            │          characters           │                 │
│            └──────────────────────────────┘                  │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

Dramatic irony
Dramatic irony is an important effect that is created by these two levels of communi-cation. If the audience knows more than a character, an utterance will be perceived as ironic when it sharply contrasts with reality.

Example
In Shakespeare's Macbeth, King Duncan praises the peaceful atmosphere at Macbeth's castle, whereas the audience knows that Duncan will be murdered.

Comedy
On the level of communication between playwright and audience, dramatic irony, the audience's awareness of facts the characters do not know, may serve a comic effect, too.

Aside
In an aside an actor speaks to the audience in order to provide information on his thoughts and feelings or intentions. The other characters on stage supposedly do not hear what he says.

TIPP

As many of Shakespeare's plays are written in verse, you may approach their language the same way as poetry.

Glossary – Vocabulary for analysing literary texts

the narrator tells of/shows/relates/reveals
the narrator takes xy's point of view
the narrator is omniscient
the story is told in the first person/third person
the story is told from the first-person-singular point of view
the narrator uses/employs/makes use of metaphors, similes, comparisons
a metaphor shows/stands for/suggests
the narrator speaks in an ironic/satirical/detached/matter-of-fact/serious tone
the story deals with/treats of/concentrates on/focuses on …
atmosphere is created
tension/ suspense is created/built up
a poem is written/composed
a poem is read, spoken, recited
a recital of a poem
the poem is by Shakespeare
it is a song by Genesis
the speaker of the poem/the poetic I/the poetic persona
the poem consists of/is composed of/is arranged in stanzas
the comedy ridicules/mocks/satirizes
the exposition sets the action in motion
the action moves towards and culminates in a turning-point
the play/film has a simple/complex/tight plot
it has a happy/unhappy ending
there are main/major/minor characters
the protagonist is in conflict with an opponent
the antagonist fights the protagonist
the spectator/audience follows the play
the play is performed/produced/staged
scenery is shifted
actors perform/play/enact