**AP Language Rhetorical Terms: List 4**

1. **Absolute** — a word free from limitations or qualifications (“best,”“all ,““unique,”“perfect”)
2. **Antecedent**—the word, phrase, or clause referred to by a pronoun. The AP language exam occasionally asks for the antecedent of a given pronoun in a long, complex sentence or in a group of sentences. *Example*: “If I could command the wealth of all the world by lifting my finger, I would not pay such a price for it.” An AP question might read: "What is the antecedent for "it"?
3. **Antithesis**-- when the writer employs two sentences of contrasting meanings in close proximity to one another. Whether they are words or phrases of the same sentence, an antithesis is used to create a stark contrast using two divergent elements that come together to create one uniform whole. An antithesis plays on the complementary property of opposites to create one vivid picture. The purpose of using an antithesis in literature is to create a balance between opposite qualities and lend a greater insight into the subject. *Example*: When Neil Armstrong walked on the moon it might have been one small step for a man but it was one giant leap for mankind.
4. **Aside**—a remark or passage by a character in a play that is intended to be heard by the audience but unheard by the other characters in the play.
5. **Assertion**— a confident and forceful statement of fact or belief
6. **Asyndeton** –refers to a practice in literature whereby the author purposely leaves out conjunctions in the sentence, while maintaining the grammatical accuracy of the phrase. Asyndeton as a literary tool helps in shortening up the implied meaning of the entire phrase and presenting it in a succinct form. This compact version helps in creating an immediate impact whereby the reader is instantly attuned to what the writer is trying to convey. Use of this literary device helps in creating a strong impact and such sentences have greater recall worth since the idea is presented in a nutshell. *Example*: 1. Read, Write, Learn. 2. Watch, Absorb, Understand. 3. Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.
7. **Bandwagon appeal—** The argument that since something is popular or everybody is doing it, so should you. Think of peer pressure or popularity as being the basis of the argument. Generally a fallacy.
8. **Chiasmus** -- a figure of speech containing two phrases that are parallel but inverted to each other. *Example*: You can take the patriot out of the country but you cannot take the country out of the patriot.
9. **Circular reasoning**— is an attempt to support a statement by simply repeating the statement in different or stronger terms.  In this fallacy, the reason given is nothing more than a restatement of the conclusion that poses as the reason for the conclusion."
10. **Elegy**—a form of literature which can be defined as a poem or song in the form of elegiac couplets, written in honor of someone deceased. It typically laments or mourns the death of the individual.
11. **Enthymeme**-- An argumentative statement in which the writer or the speaker omits one of the major or minor premises, does not clearly pronounce it, or keeps this premise implied is called enthymeme. However, the omitted premise in enthymeme remains understandable even if is not clearly expressed. For instance, “*Where there is smoke, there is fire.*” (The hidden premise: The smoke is caused by fire.)
12. **Entreaty--** an earnest or humble request
13. **Exhortation—** an address or communication emphatically urging someone to do something
14. **Fable** a literary device which can be defined as a concise and brief story intended to provide a moral lesson at the end. Fables are often described through plants, animals, forces of nature and inanimate objects by giving them human attributes wherein they demonstrate a moral lesson at the end.
15. **Invective**-- A long, emotionally violent, attack using strong, abusive language.
16. **Juxtaposition**—a literary device wherein the author places a person, concept, place, idea or theme parallel to another. The purpose of juxtaposing two directly or indirectly related entities close together in literature is to highlight the contrast between the two and compare them. This literary device is usually used for etching out a character in detail, creating suspense or lending a rhetorical effect. *Example*: In Paradise Lost, Milton has used juxtaposition to draw a parallel between the two protagonists, Satan and God, who he discusses by placing their traits in comparison with one another to highlight their differences.
17. **Litote**—figures of rhetoric speech that use an understated statement of an affirmative by using a negative description. Rarely talked about, but commonly used in modern day conversations, litotes are a discreet way of saying something unpleasant without directly using negativity. Sometimes called an ironical understatement and/or an avoidance of a truth which can be either positive or negative. *Common examples*: “I'm not feeling bad,” or “he's definitely not a rocket scientist.” The actual meanings are: “I am feeling well,” and “he is not smart.” In everyday conversations in the 21st century, one may hear expressions like: “not the brightest bulb“, “not a beauty”, “not bad”, “not unfamiliar”
18. **Malapropism**—refers to the practice of misusing words by substituting words with similar sounding words that have different, often unconnected meanings, and thus creating a situation of confusion, misunderstanding and amusement. Malapropism is used to convey that the speaker or character is flustered, bothered, unaware or confused and as a result cannot employ proper diction. A trick to using malapropism is to ensure that the two words (the original and the substitute) sound similar enough for the reader to catch onto the intended switch and find humor in the result. *Example*: In the play Much Ado About Nothing, noted playwright William Shakespeare’s character Dogberry says, "Our watch, sir, have indeed *comprehended* two auspicious persons." Instead, what the character means to say is “"Our watch, sir, have indeed *apprehended* two suspicious persons."
19. **Motif**— The literary device ‘motif’ is any element, subject, idea or concept that is constantly present through the entire body of literature. Using a motif refers to the repetition of a specific theme dominating the literary work. Motifs are very noticeable and play a significant role in defining the nature of the story, the course of events and the very fabric of the literary piece. *Example*: In many famed fairytales, the motif of a ‘handsome prince’ falling in love with a ‘damsel in distress’ and the two being bothered by a wicked step mother, evil witch or beast and finally conquering all to live ‘happily ever after’ is a common motif.
20. **Non-sequitur**— literary devices which include the statements, sayings and conclusions that do not follow the fundamental principles of logic and reason. They are frequently used in theater and comedies to create comedic effects. *Example*: For instance: a) Maria drives a car. She must be a wealthy person. B) David eats broccoli. David should love to eat meat.
21. **Polysyndeton**­­—refers to the process of using conjunctions or connecting words frequently in a sentence, placed very close to one another. Opposed to the usual norm of using them sparsely, only where they are technically needed. The use of polysyndetons is primarily for adding dramatic effect as they have a strong rhetorical presence. *Example*: a) Saying “here and there and everywhere”, instead of simply saying “here, there and everywhere”. b) “Marge and Susan and Anne and Daisy and Barry all planned to go for a picnic”, instead of “Marge, Susan, Anne, Daisy and Barry…” emphasizes each of the individuals and calls attention to every person one by one instead of assembling them as a group.
22. **Slippery slope argument**— a fallacy in which a course of action is objected to on the grounds that once taken it will lead to additional actions until some undesirable consequence results. Also known as the *domino fallacy*.
23. **Syllogism**— a rhetorical device that starts an argument with a reference to something general and from this it draws conclusion about something more specific. Example: We start with a general argument “All men are mortal,” we know that “John is a man” so “John is mortal.” It is a deductive approach to reason and is based on deducing specific conclusions from general facts.
24. **Testimonial**—a written declaration certifying to a person's character, conduct, or qualifications, or to the value, excellence, etc., of a thing; a letter or written statement of recommendation. In rhetoric, testimonials function to further lend credibility to an argument, a speaker’s character, or to verify an event as a witness or participant.
25. **Zeugma**—a figure of speech in which a word, usually a verb or an adjective, applies to more than one noun, blending together grammatically and logically different ideas. For instance, in a sentence “John lost his coat and his temper”, the verb “lost” applies to both noun “coat” and “temper”.