Mr. Valentine’s 12th Grade English – Vocabulary List 7 - Standard

1. Abjure – (Verb) - formally reject or disavow a formerly held belief.

Example – If Hermia becomes a nun, she must “abjure forever the society of men.”

Synonyms – Forswear, renounce, abstain from. Antonyms – Allow, emphasize.

2. Austerity – (Noun) - self-denial, especially refraining from worldly pleasures.

Example – Monks and nuns live a life of austerity, often swearing off wealth, romance, and other things.

Synonyms – Strictness, rigor, hardness. Antonyms – Indulgence, luxuriousness.

3. Comedy – (Noun) - any play in which the main characters manage to avert an impending disaster and have a happy ending. The comedy did not necessarily have to be funny, though sometimes were. Shakespeare’s comedies often have complicated, intertwined plots, mistaken identity, and end with a wedding.

Example – A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Twelfth Night, and the Merry Wives of Windsor are all Shakespearean comedies.

Synonym – N/A Antonym – N/A

4. Drama – (Noun) - A play presenting -- in actions, gestures, and dialogue -- a narrative involving conflict between a character or characters and some external or internal force.

Example – Most of the works Shakespeare is famous for are classified as dramas.

Synonyms – Plays, stage performances. Antonyms – N/A

5. Extempore – (Adverb) - With little or no preparation or forethought; ad lib.

Example – The actor was happy that the part could be done extempore, for he was bad at memorizing lines.

Synonyms – Ad lib, impromptu. Antonyms – Scripted, planned.

6. Iambic Pentameter – (Noun) – Verse / poetry whose lines are composed of five pairs (iambs) of syllables, or ten syllables, total.

Example – Many famous authors, such as Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Wordsworth, wrote in iambic pentameter.

Synonyms – N/A Antonyms – N/A

7. Pastoral – (Noun) – Any work of art or literature dealing with the life of shepherds or with a simple, rural existence. It usually idealized shepherds' lives in order to create an image of peaceful and uncorrupted existence. More generally, pastoral describes the simplicity, charm, and serenity attributed to country life.

Example – The beautiful painting was a pastoral of a man sleeping beneath a tree, beside his herd of sheep, beneath a beautiful blue sky.

Synonyms – Agrarian, rustic, country, rural. Antonyms – Urban, metropolitan, city.

8. Tragedy – (Noun) - A serious play in which the chief character, by some peculiarity of psychology or weakness of character (i.e. tragic flaw), passes through a series of misfortunes leading to a final, devastating catastrophe.

Example – Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, Macbeth, and King Lear are some of Shakespeare’s tragedies.

Synonyms – N/A Antonyms – N/A

9. Verse – (Noun) – Referring to any type of poetry or, sometimes more specifically, to poetry written in meter.

Example – Some books are written in verse, such as the works of Shakespeare, and some are written in the natural speech of prose, such as the Lord of the Rings or Song of Fire and Ice novels.

Synonyms – Poetry. Antonyms – Prose.

10. Vexation – (Noun) - anger produced by some annoying irritation.

Example – The constant error messages, slow-downs, and crashes filled the computer-user with much vexation.

Synonyms – Annoyance, frustration. Antonyms – Happiness, joy.