Literary Terms Assignment

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Period 5

**Allegory:** The scarlet letter on Hester’s bosom is an allegory to punishment and sin.

**Alliteration:** When describing Hester, the words used are poor, painful, picturesque, prison and peculiarity.

**Allusion:** Pearl is drawn to the rosebush because she represents the rosebush by being completely unique instead of everyone else in the puritan garden.

**Ambiguity:** See allusion.

**Antagonist:** Roger Chillingworth is the antagonist because he is against Hester.

**Apostrophe:** It shows possession like Master Dimmesdale’s church or to shorten up words like from over to o’er.

**Archetype:** Every time someone asks Pearl who her father is, she answers that she is mother’s child.

**Cacophony:** When Hester steps out from the prison doors, there is a mixture of different people talking.

**Caricature:** The description of the scarlet letter on Hester is always luminous, red, and fancy looking.

**Characterization:** They characterize Hester as a beautiful women compared to everyone else in the town.

**Conceit:** Everyone in the town favors the same opinion that Hester is a criminal and should be punished.

**Connotation:** The sun has two meanings, warmth and it represents the puritan light shining down on the townspeople.

**Denotation:** See connotation or allusion.

**Diction:** See caricature.

**Epiphany:** Everyone is surprised to find out that Dimmesdale loves Hester Prynne.

**Ethos:** Hester is strongly against the Puritan community.

**Euphemism:** Chillingworth is compared to a leach because not only is he a doctor, but he also is a nasty person that Hester always describes him as.

**Euphony:** While Hester and Pearl are in the forest there are probably a lot of noises that are pleasing to hear.

**Exposition:** Hester is the main attraction in the middle of the town for her punishment.

**Figurative Language:** See allusion.

**Foreshadowing:** When Dimmesdale gets sick, it foreshadows that he is getting weaker from keeping his secret and could die.

**Hubris:** Hester wears the scarlet letter with confidence and pride.

**Hyperbole:** They put exaggeration on the scarlet letter when saying that it gives off enough light to light up the room in a red.

**Imagery:** See hyperbole.

**Irony:** It’s ironic that the town people do not know that Reverend Dimmesdale sins.

**Metaphor:** Pearl is a living form of the scarlet letter is a metaphor.

**Narration:** The story is told from a third person point of view.

**Oxymoron:** Chillingworth to a leach is an oxymoron because in size Chillingworth is obviously bigger than the size of a leach.

**Paradox:** When everyone in town finds out about Dimmesdale’s sin, it doesn’t seem true at all because he is a reverend but it’s a possible truth.

**Parallelism:** See allusion.

**Pathos:** Dimmesdale feels pity towards Hester because she has to go through all that she does.

**Persona:** Hester could be considered the persona because the novel is sometimes told from her point of view.

**Personification:** The rosebush could be considered an example because it is compared to Pearl who is human.

**Point of View:** See Persona.

**Rhetoric:** The opposite of Hyperbole, an example would be how much time Hester and Pearl spent in prison.

**Satire:** Hester rebels against the Puritan society so this is an example of satire.

**Setting:** The book takes place in a seventeenth century puritan town in Boston.

**Simile:** See metaphor.

**Symbolism:** See allusion or allegory.

**Syntax:** Most all sentences in the Scarlet Letter are long complex sentences because that is the way they spoke back then.

**Theme:** Some themes are sin, knowledge and evil.

**Tone:** When Hester is near Chillingworth the reader senses that Hester is scared, not confident and alone which is what the tone is.

**Voice:** Hester’s voice is demanding when she begs the governor to allow her to keep Pearl.

Caricature

Caricature is when someone’s item is exaggerated by the peculiarities. In “The Scarlet Letter”, Hester’s scarlet letter is continuously brought up in the book. This is significant to the book as a whole because it represents multiple things. The first and obvious one is her sin. She will be forever followed/haunted by this and she has to deal with it. The next thing the scarlet letter represents in individuality. She is now different from everyone in the puritan society and shows this off with confidence. Lastly, her scarlet letter represents her punishment for her sin. All three of these reasons exaggerate the significance of the scarlet letter that Hester wears on her bosom.

Characterization

In the beginning of the book, all the women in the town are characterized as not that pretty and on the heavier side until Hester steps out from the prison doors. Hester is then described as beautiful, slim, and different from all the other women. This characterization sets Hester apart from them and all the other women, from the tone in the chapter, are immediately jealous of her beauty and individualism. There is not another women character in the book that is described in the same way that Hester is described, therefore helping the reader conclude that she is important and one of the main characters from the beginning.

Connotation

Having a dual meaning is the definition of connotation and this is best represented in the book by the sun. The sun stands for warmth to everyone but in “The Scarlet Letter” it also stands for the puritan society. The reader can tell this because Hester is never really in full sun light, except for when she is in the middle of the town. In the forest she is in the shade, and Pearl asks her why she isn’t in the sun and she still doesn’t come out. This is important to the book because Hester is completely against the puritans and this just proves her point.

Epiphany

Everyone in the town is surprised to hear that Dimmesdale is in love with Hester. This is surprising because it shows that reverend Dimmesdale is sinning. This is important to the work as a whole because it shows that the puritan society isn’t as perfect as it seems. No one would have ever suspected that a reverend would sin and hide it from the whole town like Dimmesdale does throughout the entire book up until the end when he dies.

Euphemism

Calling Chillingworth a leach is a euphemism because it is substituting what Chillingworth really is, a doctor, to a harsh term which would be a leach. This is important to the book because it adds another description of Chillingworth as, again, an ugly person. Even though the term leach was used back then to call doctors leaches it still adds another negative appearance to the real guilty character of Hester Prynne’s sin. Hester continuously bashes the appearance of Chillingworth and for everyone to call him a leach just says the he is not very liked, even though he plays an important part of the puritan society by trying to cure Hester Prynne.

Hubris

Hester always shows confidence in herself by wearing her scarlet letter with pride. This use of hubris is important to the work as whole because it again shows Hester’s hatred of the puritan society in which she lives in. She enjoys being different from the rest of society and that is why she decorated her scarlet letter to show that she isn’t afraid of what everyone else thinks of her. This in turn, backfires against the puritans as they have tried to single her out to mock and punish her of her sin to the entire town.

Irony

It is ironic that reverend Dimmesdale sins. He isn’t supposed to because that’s what reverends aren’t supposed to do. This relates to the book as a whole because it shows that the puritan society has its downsides and everyone will know about it. Hawthorne and Hester make sure to point that out as they both strongly dislike that society. To point out that one of the puritan’s own kind sins and is just as bad is another bonus to Hester as she is always trying to get ahead of the puritans.

Metaphor

Pearl is a living example of the scarlet letter on Hester. She is the warning to the town people that if you sin like Hester did, you will be punished like Hester. This is important to the book because if this comparison isn’t made then Pearl is just a baby. Instead this connection reveals more about Pearl because she has a sense when she gets a little bit older that she is different from the other kids in the town. Pearl is the result of the sin and she knows this because of the scarlet letter on her mother.

Satire

Hester is always rebelling against the puritan society. She accepts the challenge to be different and turns into a positive for her and making all the other puritan women jealous of her. This satire of rebelling is crucial to the book because if she doesn’t then there is little purpose to the book. Hester shows society that she disapproves of the puritans by hiding from the “puritan sunlight”, sinning, and making the shame of the scarlet letter on her bosom into something she can be proud of. She is so against the puritan society that she does everything she can to prove them wrong and make herself superior to them.

Symbolism

The symbolism that Pearl represents the rosebush in the garden of the governor’s home is important to the book because it shows that Pearl is different from the other. The garden represents the puritan society because everything is not cared for and not doing as well but there is this random rosebush that is somehow thriving and looks beautiful in the society and that is because it is Hawthorne’s way of saying that the puritan society is bad and Pearl and Hester are not a part of that so they are real life representations of the rosebush in the puritan garden. This comparison may be subtle but it is crucial for the reader to understand that the author is with Hester and Pearl.