What Is Literature and Why Do We Study It?

- Literature is
  - Composition that tells a story, dramatizes a situation, expresses emotions, analyzes and advocates ideas
  - Helps us grow personally and intellectually
  - Provides an objective base for knowledge and understanding
  - Shapes our goals and values by clarifying our own identities, both positively and negatively
  - Literature makes us human.
Tone and Style (cont’d)

• Language may be:
  – Specific = images
  – General = broad classes
  – Concrete = qualities of immediate perception
  – Abstract = broader, less palpable qualities
• Denotation = word meanings
• Connotation = word suggestions
• Verbal irony = contradictory statements
  – One thing said, opposite is meant
  – Irony = satire, parody, sarcasm, double entendre
• Understatement = does not fully describe the importance of a situation – deliberately
• Hyperbole (overstatement) = words far in excess of the situation