Further Recommendations on Preparing for the Literary and Rhetorical Content of the Secondary English TExES

As you know, most of the secondary English TExES involves classroom teaching, but you will also need to have some familiarity with standard literary and rhetorical terms, as well as the major movements, genres, and periods of American, British, and world literature. This happens to be one of the components of the exam that you can study for during the week before the exam. Just to give you an idea of what you need to know, below is a collection of terms that appear in the TExES preparation materials, competencies, and practice materials.

setting, tragic flaw, classical allusion, dramatic irony, extended metaphor, character, stage direction, dialogue, plot, voice, sonnet, Petrarch, personification, chivalric romance, gothic novel, sentimental comedy, picaresque novel, tone, point-of-view, mood, theme, imagery, tone, dialogue, characterization, irony, figurative language, narration, hyperbole, syllabication, literary criticism (definition of), critical method, stanza, stanza structure, meter, tone, text, literary text, narrative structure (of a novel), subplot, literary allusions, rhyme, meter, scanning, onomatopoeia, protagonist

Of course, that’s not to say that this is an inclusive list, but it does give you an idea of what might appear on the real test. Some of these terms are incidental—embedded in the question somehow—and some of them ARE the question—you have to know them to get it right. Anyway, it gives you a good idea of what you are going to see on the exam (though, again, it’s not as important as the pedagogy). The first site below (the Gale one) is recommended, but it isn’t perfect. With this in mind, I went looking for other sites to recommend to you. What I discovered is that there is no “one-size-fits-all” site. If you are going to do any further study in this area, I would suggest you read the descriptions below and decide—based on your self-assessment of your knowledge of these subjects—which of these sites would be the best for you to visit as you prepare for the TExES exam. Of course, there are other sites, and there are always the old standby handbooks, such as Holman or the Bedford Guide.

The Gale Research online site. Very comprehensive, with excellent definitions and cross-links. Comprehensive in literary and rhetorical terms, and really excellent on literary movements, genres, and periods. (In fact, if you are weak in genres and literary movements, this is the best site for you.) The problem (or maybe not a problem) is that this is practically a handbook on line. Every term you could possibly need is here, but if you don’t have a good sense of what you’re looking for, there’s too much. (There are 43 entries under the letter “A” alone.) This is the best of these sites, but you shouldn’t use it unless you already have a feel for what you need to look for.

http://www.english.cam.ac.uk/vclass/terms.htm
This site was constructed by the Cambridge University faculty for their on-line course work. British spellings, but good, clear definitions. Good mix of literary and rhetorical terms and not too many (59). This site also has a dozen or so grammar/usage terms, in case you need a little review there. No literary movements, genres, periods. No history/development of English.