**Alliteration**

A repetition of letters or letter sets (either consonants-*consonance* or vowels-*assonance*, or a combination of both) that creates a musicality in the words

Example:

The **s**lick **s**eal **s**lid acro**ss** the **s**lim islet, **s**niffing the shell**s** with her enormou**s** **s**nout. (The ‘S’ sound is highlighted and repeated throughout the sentence.)

**Allusion**

A reference within a literary work to a historical, literary, or biblical character, place, or event.

Example:

The title of William Faulkner’s novel *The Sound and the Fury* alludes to a line from Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*.

**Analogy**

Comparison of two similar but different things, usually to clarify an action or a relationship, such as comparing the work of a heart to that of a pump. An analogy is a comparison to a directly parallel case.

Example:

Shells were to ancient cultures as dollar bills are to modern American culture.

Running a business is like managing an orchestra.

The heart is like a pump.

**Amplification**

A practice in which the writer enhances the sentence by adding more information to increase its worth and understandability By adding more to the structure, the writer helps the reader comprehend the concept and details the writer wants to convey.

Example:

Original sentence- The vignette assignment was challenging. (7 words, grade level 15)

After amplification- The vignette assignment was challenging: students had to master a type of writing that most of them had never encountered before the class, spend a significant amount of time revising their work, and learn to use figurative language to communicate the information they collected with all their senses. (50 words, grade level 24)

**Anecdote**

A short, simple narrative of an incident; often used for humorous effect or to make a point.

**Assonance**

Repetition of vowel sounds between different consonants, such as in neigh/fade

**Colloquialism**

A word or phrase (including slang) used in everyday conversation and informal writing but that is often inappropriate in formal writing (y'all, ain't)

**Consonance**

Repetition of identical consonant sounds within two or more words in close proximity, as in boost/best; it can also be seen within several compound words, such as fulfill and ping-pong

**Diction**

The word choice of a writer that provides voice and sets a tone in the piece More formal word choice indicates a formal tone. More casual word choice gives a different tone.

Example:

Twain chose to write “The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn” in Huck’s voice, and that diction changed the way people perceived what literature should be. In “Of Mice and Men,” Steinbeck shifted back and forth between a more formal diction in his narration and a casual slang in his dialogue between characters.

**Euphemism**

A more acceptable and usually more pleasant way of saying something that might be inappropriate or uncomfortable. "He went to his final reward" is a common saying for "he died." These are also often used to obscure the reality of a situation. The military uses "collateral damage" to indicate civilian deaths in a military operation.

**Flashback**

Device in which the story shifts back to an event or series of events that happened prior to the events currently happening in the story

Example:

In “Frank Sinatra Has a Cold,” Talese uses flashback to illustrate the events leading up to his opening vignette of Sinatra in a dark bar after he introduces Sinatra in the bar.

**Foreshadowing**

An author’s deliberate use of hints or suggestions to give a preview of events or themes that do not develop until later in the narrative. Images such as a storm brewing or a crow landing on a fence post often foreshadow ominous developments in a story.

**Imagery**

The use of words to create visual (sight), kinesthetic (movement), olfactory (smell), tactile (touch), gustatory (taste), thermal (heat/cold) and auditory (hearing) sensations in the reader Imagery goes beyond adjectives and adverbs and makes use of simile, metaphor, and the use of strong verbs and nouns and illustrative phrases and clauses.

Example:

Putting on a show of attention by nodding and smiling occasionally, students pretended to care about the lesson their young intern teacher presented enthusiastically while texting their mockery from their laps.

**Internal Rhyme**

Words in a single line (usually of poetry, but also in prose) that rhyme with each other

Example:

I never should have trusted a guy who had been busted by the cops.

**Juxtaposition**

The author places a person, concept, place, idea or theme that runs parallel to another of those elements in a story. The purpose of juxtaposing two related things close together in literature is to highlight the contrast.

Example:

The Bible juxtaposes Satan and God in a struggle throughout the stories to illustrate and define each of them.

**Litotes**

By using a negation of the opposite, a thing is described.

Examples:

He was not unattractive. She was not altogether ugly. He was not unlike her previous boyfriends.

**Metaphor**

A figure of speech in which a comparison exists because one thing is called by another’s name

Example: Michael was a giraffe among hyenas. A butterfly among moths, Sadie caught John’s attention.

**Metonymy**

Replacing the formal or actual name of something with another word that is associated with it

Example:

“Let’s let Washington hear what we have to say about that.” By using Washington, D.C. to replace the United States government we are using a closely-connected place to stand in for the thing we are discussing.

**Onomatopoeia**

The use of words that imitate sounds to create auditory imagery.

Example:

Buzz, bark, yelp, hum… all of these sound like the noises they are naming.

**Oxymoron**

A figure of speech in which two unlike things are paired to create a strong image for the reader

Example:

Shakespeare’s famous line, “parting is such sweet sorrow” or the satiric comment that “military intelligence” is an oxymoron.

**Parallel Structure**

Using repetition of a structure (dependent or independent clauses, adjectives, descriptive phrases, etc.)

Example:

I washed, dried, and put away the dishes. His hair was straight, greasy, and unkempt.

Screaming, crying, and jumping, the girls celebrated their victory.

**Periodic Structure**

Placing the main clause (or simply the subject and predicate) at the end of a longer, descriptive sentence

Example:

Instead of writing, “crumpled up and discarded, the papers waited in the trash can to be collected” one may write, “in the trash can, crumpled up and discarded, waited the papers to be collected”.

**Personification**

Also known as “anthropomorphism,” this is the practice of giving human characteristics to non-human things.

Example:

“The angry surf pounded the beach” “The happy flames playfully licked his toes”

**Polysyndeton**

Using conjunctions repeatedly instead of using a comma to separate items in a series and using the conjunction only at the end of the series

Example:

a) We ran here and there and just about everywhere. (not: We ran here, there, and just about everywhere.)

b) He was sick and tired and irritated and grouchy. (not: He was sick, tired, irritated, and grouchy.)

**Pun**

The writer deliberately uses a word that has two or more meanings or two words that are homophones to establish a clever play on words.

Example:

It’s likely that a person who raises chickens drives a coupe. Grizzly bares all in a return to nature.

**Rhetorical question**

A question asked not to elicit an actual response but to make an impact or call attention to something. “Will the world ever see the end of war?” is an example of a rhetorical question.

**Simile**

A direct comparison between two things that uses “as” or “like” to make the comparison, but sometimes omits the “like” or “as” in favor of a comparison word (than)

Example:

She acts as a barometer for the class. Her eyes are like deep pools. I’m happier than a pig in slop.

**Syllepsis**

The use of a single verb to connect two unlike nouns for a comical and witty effect

Example:

The teacher lost her lesson plans and her mind. Dean kept a hold on his hat and his cool in the windstorm.