

Technical Terms

Language Features and Techniques

Persuasive Techniques

Alliteration	Words in series (or close together), all beginning with the same letter or sound, e.g., “Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled pepper”.
Rhetorical question	A question asked for effect that either does not have an answer or that has an answer that the writer (or speaker) assumes is obvious, e.g., “Are you stupid?”
Repetition	Words or phrases used more than once in a text (can be close together or spaced apart), e.g., “I felt happy because I saw the others were happy and because I knew I should feel happy, but I wasn’t really happy.”
Exaggeration	Making something sound better or worse than it actually is, e.g., “this is the most fabulous exercise book the world has ever seen!”.
Statistics and facts	Using numbers or factual information to support a point, e.g., “I’m really good at sleeping. The average person falls asleep in seven minutes but I can do it in two”.
Triplets	Any group of three within a text. This can be words, phrases, sentences, chunks of text, or motifs, e.g., “I came; I saw; I conquered”.
Emotive language	Language used to bring the reader or audience round to the writer’s point of view, usually strongly against or strongly in favour of something, e.g., “scrounging illegal immigrants” in contrast to “vulnerable refugees”.
Direct address	Talking directly to the reader or audience, usually by referring to “you” or by mentioning a specific person (“Alan”) or group of people (“children”) by name.

Literary Terms

Juxtaposition	When two or more ideas, characters, places, or actions are placed side by side so that the reader can make comparisons, e.g., “the old lady’s wrinkled hand stroked the baby’s plump cheek”. (NB. this can also be used as a structural technique).
Metaphor	A way of vividly describing something by comparing it (without using “like” or “as”) to something very different but with similar qualities, i.e., “we are all shadows on the wall of time”.
Pathetic fallacy	When human emotions are attributed to things in nature, particularly the weather. This is often used to mirror the emotions of a character, e.g., “the furious wind battered his face as he shouted across the street”.
Personification	When an object or animal is given a human characteristic, e.g., “the wind danced among the trees”.
Simile	Another technique for vivid description in which one thing is directly compared with another, e.g., “as difficult as nailing jelly to a tree”.

Parts of Speech

Adjectives	Words describing a noun or pronoun, e.g., “red apple”, “despicable me”, “three trees”.
Adverbs	These serve a lot of purposes, including describing verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs, but they often end in “ly” (and occasionally “-wards” or “-wise”), e.g., “he ran quickly”; “it faced inwards”; “she turned clockwise”.
Nouns	A word that names a person, place, or thing., e.g., “table”, “sun”, “lampshade”. A “proper noun” is used to name an individual person, place, or organisation, e.g., “John”, “London”, “Activate Learning”.
Pronouns	Words used in place of nouns that refer to specific people, places, or things, e.g., “he”, “she”, “it”, “we”, “they”, “them”.
Verbs	Words describing an action or a state of being, e.g., “running”, “existing”.

Structural Features

Types of Narrative

Chronological	A narrative that moves forward through time in a logical manner, usually presenting events as they happen, one after another, without any flashbacks.
Circular	A narrative that starts in one time and place, then moves away (to a different time and/or place), before coming back to finish either with the original scene or with a scene that is very similar.
Flashback	When the main narrative is interrupted by passages depicting a different time, often as it is remembered by one of the main characters. This can occur at a critical moment, when a character remembers something important to them, or it can form the main part of the narrative with short references to the present day at the beginning and end.

Key Terms

Climax	The most exciting or dramatic moment in a narrative.
Dialogue	A conversation between two or more characters. Remember to use speech marks!
Focus	The character, place, or object towards which the writer is drawing your attention at any particular moment.
Narrative hook	A way of starting a narrative so that it grabs the attention of the reader. The writer may drop you right into the middle of an exciting piece of action, raise questions that need answering, describe a mysterious setting, or introduce an intriguing character.
Narrator	The person telling the story. He or she may be a character within the narrative, or may be an ‘omniscient narrator’, a voice outside of the text who knows everything that is going on, including what the characters are thinking and feeling.
Protagonist	The main character.
Zoom	As in a film, when the text’s focus moves from a close up to looking at the bigger picture (zoom out), or vice versa (zoom in).