

Writing Terms and Devices

When writing, we always think of our **purpose** and **audience** before we choose the style we will write in. Choose genre, style, and language accordingly. Find your **voice** through these things.

Genre – writing that shares certain features that all examples of this type share

Allegory – an extended narrative that carries a second meaning along with the surface story

Autobiography – an account of one's own life

Biography – an account of the life of another person

Caricature – a character consisting of certain exaggerated features done for comic effect

Case Study – a detailed account of the development of a particular person, group or situation

Comedy – any literary work, but especially a play, commonly having a happy ending

Diary – see autobiography

Drama – any work designed to be presented on stage; generally of a serious nature

Editorial – a piece of writing in a newspaper that gives the editor's opinion

Fable – a type of allegory where personified animals are used to teach a lesson

Fantasy – a departure from the conventions of realism

Farce – a play which evokes laughter by devices of low comedy (silly stuff)

Graphic Text – writing combined with some kind of graphic

Legend – an old, well-known story based in fact that also includes imaginative material

Melodrama – a story or play with exaggerated events, characters and emotions

Mystery – a story about something that is hard to understand or explain

Myth – an idea or story that many people believe, but is not true

Parody – copies a serious literary work in an amusing way

Satire – writing about something serious in a funny way to show the nature of its faults

Tragedy – serious play or book that ends sadly, especially with death of the main character

Language Types: (Diction)

Archaic language – old and not used anymore

Biased language – unfairly influenced by someone's opinion

Clichéd language - overused so as to no longer be effective

Colloquial language – highly informal and conversational

Didactic language – intended to teach or give instructions

Figurative language – language that makes use of figures of speech to achieve effects beyond the range of literal language

Formal/Informal language – used for serious/casual writing

Idiomatic language – typical of the natural way in which someone using their own language speaks or writes

Literal language – basic or original meaning

Objective language – based on facts rather than personal feelings and opinions

Subjective language – influenced by personal opinion or feelings

Cliché – an idea or phrase that has been used so much it is not effective anymore

Colloquialism – an expression or phrase used mainly in informal conversation

Dialect – a form of language that is spoken in one area and is different from how it is spoken in another

Idiom – a group of words that has a special meaning different to the meaning of each individual word

Jargon – technical words and expressions belonging to a particular professional group

Pathos – quality that makes you feel pity and sadness

Propaganda – false or partly false information used by a government or political party to make people agree with them

Proverb – a short, well-known phrase containing advice about life in general

Rhetorical Question – a question whose answer is already known or implied

Sarcasm – way of speaking or writing wherein the opposite of what is meant is said in order to make a joke that is not nice or show annoyance

Slang – very informal language that includes new and sometimes informal words

Understatement – a statement that is not strong enough to express how something really is

Wit – the ability to say things that are clever and amusing

Grammatical and Construction Terms:

Active/passive voice – the active or passive form of verbs (kicked/was kicked by)

Connotation – associated meanings implied or suggested

Denotation – the thing or situation to which the word specifically refers

Parallelism – repeats specific words, phrases or clauses in a series

Thesis – a big-picture overview of what an essay is about

Thesis Statement – topic of the essay and writer's position in relation to this topic

Essay Styles:

Argumentative

Cause and Effect

Compare and Contrast

Descriptive

Personal

Persuasive

Expository

Formal/Informal

Narrative (Narration)

Research

Stylistic Techniques:

Anecdotal evidence – using short stories based on personal experience

Chronological Order – in time sequence

Climactic Order – from least to most important

Comparison – showing similarities

Contrast – showing differences

Expert Testimony – coming from a knowledgeable source

Emotional Appeal – affecting our emotions and feelings

Dialogue - conversation

Direct Presentation – saying exactly what is meant in a clear way

Historical Reference – referring to a historical event or person

Indirect Presentation – suggesting something without saying it directly

Persuasive Technique – influence others to believe you especially by giving reasons why

Pro and Con Argument – advantages and disadvantages

Question and Answer – posing and responding to questions

Statistical Evidence – using a collection of numbers that represent facts or measurements