

descriptions

I. There are two types of descriptions which contain opinionated language— *Objective* and *Subjective*.

A. **Objective descriptions:** these remain neutral to the author's feelings, yet contain strong sensory words to connect with the reader. The word-choice becomes arbitrary with the use of the phrase: "unexpected citrus scent"—which stresses a possible reaction from the audience if they smelled this particular species of rose. The author does not reflect his/her personal feelings.

example:

*The Hampshire rose, with a pale-off-white hue,
has an unexpected citrus scent when cultivated properly.*

descriptions

B. **Subjective descriptions**, on the other hand, want to convey an emotional response and capture the author's opinions, all in order to get a reaction from the audience.

example:

Desperate to free his twisted, bloody leg from the rusty teeth of the trap, the timber wolf savagely and fanatically gnawed through his own flesh and muscle.

general rule of thumb:

do not use more than two adjectives per noun, nor use more than two adverbs per verb.

literary devices

II. Two important literary devices used in all forms of writing are the *metaphor* and the *simile*.

Both metaphors and similes have the same function, which is to *describe* a *comparison* between elements.

A. **simile**: makes comparisons of elements, but ties them together with specific words: *like* or *as*.

example:

The manuscript's yellow pages proved to be as bright as a late October moon.

literary devices

B. **metaphor**: language that implies a relationship between two elements:

example:

All the world's a stage.

• There are various types of metaphors. Three basic metaphors are:

1. **extended metaphor**— This type of metaphor extends beyond the opening phrase and continues into subsequent sentences.

example:

*All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages.*

literary devices

- Other types of metaphors include:

2. implied metaphors— Subtle, “hidden” or indirect metaphors. Poetry uses this technique; the entire poem becomes an implied metaphor to explain modern life. A simpler example is shown below.

example:

Angrily she barked commands at her husband.

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3. mixed metaphor— These types of metaphor create an analogy between elements which cancel one another out or sounds ridiculous.

example:

All at once he was alone in this noisy hive with no place to roost.

—Tom Wolfe, *The Bonfire of the Vanities*

literary devices

III. One other common type of literary device is called *personification*.

A. **personification:** a figure of speech giving an inanimate object or abstract idea personalities and human characteristics.

example:

Death sat in the corner, thoughtfully smoking his pipe, staring at the young men and women in the pub.