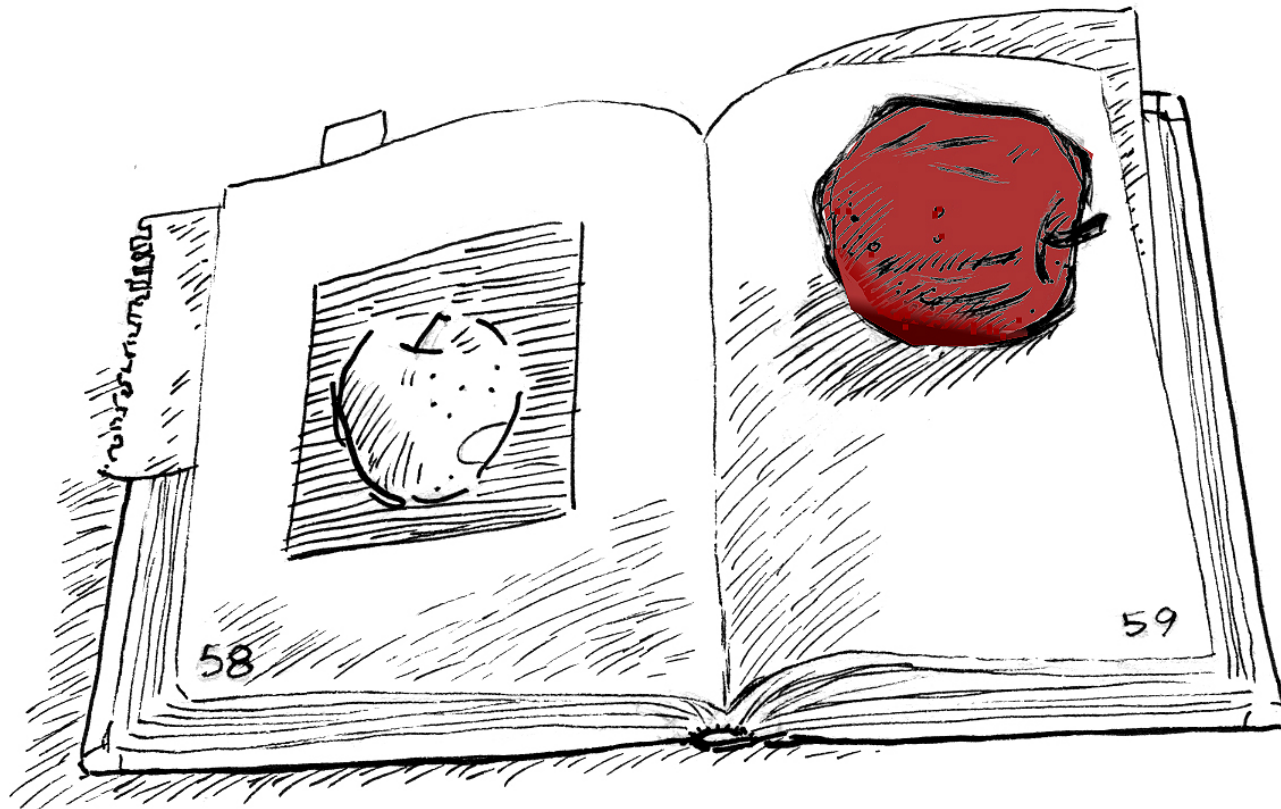


Poetical Devices



Literary Devices- review

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; especially in creative writing, these tools are essential to build a connection between the author's work and the reader.

Simile

A simile makes comparisons of elements and ties them together with key words:

like or ***as***.

example:

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

Metaphor

On the other hand, a metaphor uses language that *implies a relationship* between two unlikely elements. A well known example comes from William Shakespeare's *As You Like It*:

example:

All the world's a stage.

•

There are various types of metaphors.

Three basic metaphors are:

- **extended metaphor**
- **implied metaphor**
- **mixed metaphor**

Extended Metaphor

This type of metaphor motions beyond the opening phrase and continues its theme into subsequent sentences. Again, using the Shakespearian phrase itself, the monologue continues:

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.*

Implied Metaphor

In the case of implied metaphors, these are more subtle, “hidden” or indirect metaphors. Poetry uses this technique; it can be argued that any full poem is an implied metaphor to explain a poet’s theme.

example:

Angrily she barked commands at her husband.

Mixed Metaphor

In the case of a mixed metaphor, these types of devices create an analogy between elements which cancel one another out or sound ridiculous when paired together. For comedy or sarcastic writing these can embellish your work. However, for a serious academic research paper an instructor may be prone to count off for illogical reasoning.

example:

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

—Tom Wolfe, *The Bonfire of the Vanities*

Sylvia Plath

Metaphors

I'm a riddle in nine syllables,
An elephant, a ponderous house,
A melon strolling on two tendrils.
O red fruit, ivory, fine timbers!
This loaf's big with its yeasty rising.
Money's new-minted in this fat purse.
I'm a means, a stage, a cow in calf.
I've eaten a bag of green apples,
Boarded the train there's no getting off.

Plath, Sylvia. *The Collected Poems*. Ted Hughes, ed. New York: Harper & Row, 1981.

Personification

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

This is a figure of speech which gives an inanimate object or an abstract idea personalities and human characteristics. For informal essays and creative writing a personification adds a sense of the writer's presence to a project. However, mentioned in the past, as you can guess, this literary device would not work well with a formal research paper.

example:

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

Poetical Devices

These Terms Will Be Used Frequently In Class

- **rhyme:** A concurrence of terminal sounds, usually at the ends of lines which usually entails identical vowels or identical consonants at the end of words.

There are many types of rhymes:

half-rhymes (<i>also called near rhyme or slant rhyme</i>)	soul / all
<hr/>	
masculine (<i>or expected rhyme</i>)	lives / gives
	stairs / pears
<hr/>	
feminine (<i>or double rhyme</i>)	bigger / digger
<hr/>	
triple rhymes	admonish you / astonish you
<hr/>	
backwards	step / pets

Poetical Devices

- **Rhyme schemes** are various formulas showing patterns of the rhyme throughout an entire poem.

For example, a common four line formula: AABB

*Stop all the clocks, cut off the telephone,
Prevent the dog from barking with a juicy bone,
Silence the pianos and with muffled drum
Bring out the coffin, let the mourners come.*

—W. H. Auden, “Stop All The Clocks”

Poetical Devices

- **Rhythm** is the internal beat in a line of poetry; deals with pauses in spoken languages and strategic stresses of words. Every poet seeks out a sense of rhythm in their work.

Literature and the Writing Process, p 502 (see page 536 in Eighth Edition)

contains a good chart for understanding meter in poetry.

- know how to count the **feet** per line of poems; a majority of poems are composed with an internalized meter in a poem.

The unit of measurement is called a **foot**. Depending on the complexity of the meter, the number of syllables dictates the size of the foot.

Meter and Feet

To put this in another manner, **meter** is measured in **feet** which are units of measurement dealing with stressed *and* unstressed syllables.

Depending on the type of feet dictates the number of syllables per foot.

Four Types of Feet

Iambic	}	these are based on <i>two</i> syllables per foot and are easier to recognize; iambic in fact is the most common type of foot; it is used frequently in English poetry	com • poun ^ˈ d
Trochaic			wit ^ˈ ch • craft
<hr/>			
Dactylic	}	these are based on <i>three</i> syllables per foot and are a little more difficult to create; in the ancient poetry of Greece and Rome however these are more frequently used and easier to identify	m ^ˈ ur • mur • ing
Anapestic			In • the • night

Poetical Devices

In simplest terms, the most common form is called **iambic pentameter** which consists of five feet per line.

Iambic— is defined by words which contain a stress on the second syllable.

Pentameter—is the number of feet.

Sonnets, which we will cover later, use this primarily.

Shall *I* | compare | thee *to* | a *sum* | mer's *day*

1 2 3 4 5

Poetical Devices

As the book tells you, a **trochaic** meter is defined by words which contain a stress on the first syllable. Emily Dickinson uses this on occasion.

Witch craft | *was* hung, | *in* His | *to* ry,

But His | *to* ry | *and* I

Find all | *the* Witch | *craft* that | *we* need

A round | *us*, eve | *ry* Day —

Counting the feet in the above example we find she is using an alternating rhythm of **trochaic tetrameter** and **trochaic trimeter**.

monometer 1 foot

dimeter 2 feet

trimeter 3 feet

tetrameter 4 feet

pentameter 5 feet

hexameter 6 feet

Poetical Devices

Example of **iambic monometer**:

Thus I
Passe by,
And die:
As one
Unknown
And gon:
I'm made
A shade,
And laid
I'th' grave:
There have
My cave
Where tell
I dwell.
Farewell.

—Robert Herrick “Upon His Departure Hence”

Poetical Devices

Example of **iambic dimeter**:

When up | aloft
I fly | and fly,
I see | in pools
The shin | ing sky,
And a | hap py | bird < *extra half foot*
Am I, | am I!

When I descend
Toward the brink
I stand and look
And stop and drink
And bathe my wings,
And chink, and prink.

When winter frost
Makes earth as steel,
I search and search
But find no meal,
And most unhappy < *extra half foot*
Then I feel. < *minus .5 foot*

But when it lasts,
And snows still fall,
I get to feel
No grief at all
For I turn to a cold, stiff < *extra 1.5 feet*
Feathery ball!

—Thomas Hardy “The Robin”

Poetical Devices

Stanza:

group lines in a full poem; undefined,
unregulated length; different
poetry formulas dictate size of stanzas
in some cases

penultimate stanza:

next to last stanza

Stanza Types / Line Count

two lines = **couplet**

three lines = **tercet**

four lines = **quatrain**

five lines = **cinquain**

six lines = **sestet**

seven lines = **septet**

eight lines = **octave**