

Glossary of Literary and Rhetorical Terms  
AP Language and Composition

1. **Abstract Language** - Language describing ideas and qualities rather than observable or specific things, people, or places. The observable or "physical" is usually described in concrete language.
2. **Active Voice** - The subject of the sentence performs the action. This is a more direct and preferred style of writing in most cases, but not all. (example: *The boy grabbed his books and went to school*). See also, Passive Voice
3. **Ad hominem** - Latin for "against the man". When a writer personally attacks his or her opponents instead of their arguments. It is an argument that appeals to emotion rather than reason, feeling rather than intellect.
4. **Allegory** - A story, fictional or non fictional, in which characters, things, and events represent qualities or concepts. The interaction of these characters, things, and events is meant to reveal an abstraction or a truth. These characters, etc. may be symbolic of the ideas referred to. For example, an author may intend the characters to personify an abstraction like hope or freedom.
5. **Alliteration** - The repetition of initial identical consonant sounds. Or, vowel sounds in successive words or syllables that repeat.
6. **Allusion** - An indirect reference to something (usually a literary text, although it can be other things commonly known such as plays, movies, t.v. shows) with which the readers is supposed to be familiar. Allusion is often used with humorous intent, to establish a connection between writer and reader, or to make a subtle point.
7. **Ambiguity** - An event or situation that may be interpreted in more than one way. Also, the manner of expression of such an event or situation may be ambiguous. Artful language may be ambiguous. Unintentional ambiguity is usually vagueness.
8. **Analogy** - An analogy is a comparison to a directly parallel case. When a writer uses an analogy, he or she argues that a claim reasonable for one case is reasonable for the analogous case.
9. **Anaphora** - Repetition of a word, phrase, or clause at the beginning of two or more sentences in a row. This is a deliberate form of repetition and helps make the writer's point more coherent.
10. **Anecdote** - A brief recounting of a relevant episode. Anecdotes are often inserted into fictional or non fictional texts as a way of developing a point or injecting humor.
11. **Annotation** - Explanatory notes added to a text to explain, cite sources or give bibliographical data.
12. **Antecedent** - The word, phrase, or clause referred to by a pronoun. The AP language exam occasionally asks for the antecedent of a given pronoun in a long, complex sentence or in a group of sentences. (example: *If I could command the wealth of all the world by lifting my finger, I would not pay such a price for it.* An AP question might read: "What is the antecedent for "it"?)
13. **Antithesis** - Two opposite or contrasting words, phrases, or clauses, or even ideas. (example: "Bill's work in school was the antithesis of his sister's. Her homework was tidy and on time, while Bill's was sloppy and late." or "Darkness is the antithesis of light." or "New York is the antithesis of Nome Alaska.")
14. **Aphorism** - A terse statement which expresses a general truth or moral principle. An aphorism can be a memorable summation of the author's point. It's often equated as a synonym with "adage" or "saying" or "proverb". Ben Franklin wrote many of these in *Poor Richard's Almanac* such as "God helps them that help themselves" (Other examples: "A watched pot never boils." or "Nothing comes to those who wait.")
15. **Apostrophe** - A figure of speech that directly addresses an absent or imaginary person or personified abstraction, such as liberty or love. The effect may add familiarity or emotional

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- intensity. William Wordsworth addresses John Milton as he writes, "Milton thou shouldst be living at this hour: England hath need of thee."
16. **Appositive** - A word or group of words placed beside a noun or noun substitute to supplement its meaning. (Example: Bob, the lumber yard worker, spoke with Judy, an accountant from the city.
  17. **Argumentation** - To prove the validity of an idea, or a point of view, by presenting good sound reasoning, discussion and argument to convince the reader. Persuasive writing is a type of argumentation having the additional aim of urging some form of action.
  18. **Assonance** - Repetition of a vowel sound within two or more words in close proximity.
  19. **Causal Relationship** - In causal relationships, a writer asserts that one thing results from another. To show how one thing produces or brings about another is often relevant in establishing a logical argument.
  20. **Chiasmus (ki-AS-mus)** – (the “criss-cross”) — **reversal of grammatical structures in successive phrases or clauses.** Chiasmus is similar to antimetabole in that it too involves a reversal of grammatical structures in successive phrases or clauses, but it is unlike antimetabole in that it does not involve a repetition of words. Both chiasmus and antimetabole can be used to reinforce antithesis.
    - a. “Exalts his enemies, his friends destroys.” (John Dryden, “Absalom and Achitophel”)
    - b. “It is boring to eat; to sleep is fulfilling.”
  21. **Clause** - A grammatical unit that contains both a subject and a verb. An independent, or main, clause expresses a complete thought and can stand alone as a sentence. A dependent, or subordinate, clause cannot stand alone as a sentence and must be accompanied by an independent clause. (Example: "Other than baseball, football is my favorite sport." In this sentence, the independent clause is "football is my favorite sport" and the dependent clause is "Other than baseball")
  22. **Colloquial** - Ordinary or familiar type of conversation.
  23. **Colloquialism** - A common or familiar type of saying
  24. **Complex Sentence** - A sentence composed of at least one main clause and one subordinate clause.
  25. **conceit** – A fanciful expression, usually in the form of an extended metaphor or surprising analogy between seemingly dissimilar objects, usually used in poetry. A conceit displays intellectual cleverness as a result of the unusual comparison being made, as in Shakespeare’s Sonnet 18: *Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?/Thou art more lovely and more temperate.*”
  26. **Concession** - Accepting at least part or all of an opposing viewpoint. It is futile to deny a solid point. Rather, a concession is used to regroup and restate your position, taking the concession into account. (see qualification).
  27. **Concrete Language** - Language that describes specific, observable things, people or places, rather than ideas or qualities.
  28. **Connotation** - Rather than the dictionary definition (denotation), the associations suggested by a word. Implied meaning rather than literal meaning. (Example: Policeman, Cop, Johnny Law, all denote the same literal meaning of Police Officer, but each has a different connotation or impression). See Denotation
  29. **Consonance** - Repetition of a consonant sound within two or more words in close proximity.
  30. **Coordination** - "Coordinating" or combining sentences/clauses into one single sentence. By doing so, the author gives both clauses equal importance. Moreover, the two clauses should be related and reinforce each other. (Example: Give me liberty or give me death! -Patrick Henry). **DO NOT** hook together ideas which are superficially tied together, but are otherwise unrelated (Example: President Clinton served in office for eight years, and Abraham Lincoln wore a stove pipe hat when he was President.)

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31. **Deduction** - Moving from general statements we accept as true, to an inevitable conclusion. Then the general statements are true, and the reasoning valid, then the conclusion is *certainly* true. (Example: All men are mortal. Socrates is a man. Therefore, Socrates is mortal.) See also, **Syllogism**.
32. **Denotation** - To signify or stand as a name for. The explicit meaning of a word. (example: Policeman means Officer of the Law. If you referred to the Policeman as a Cop, it still Denotes the same literal meaning, but the word "cop" has a different Connotation). See also Connotation
33. **Description** - To recreate , invent, or visually present a person, place, event, or action so that the reader can picture that being described. Good descriptive writing creates a picture which involves the 5 senses.
34. **Diction** - Word choice, particularly as an element of style. Different types and arrangements of words have significant effects on meaning. An essay written in academic diction would be much less colorful, but perhaps more precise than street slang. You should be able to describe an author's diction. You SHOULDNT write in your thesis, "The author uses diction...". This is essentially saying, "The author chooses words to write." Instead, describe the type of diction (for example, formal or informal, ornate or plain).
35. **Didactic** - A term used to describe fiction, nonfiction or poetry that teaches a specific lesson or moral or provides a model of correct behavior or thinking.
36. **Ellipsis** - The deliberate omission of a word from prose done for effect by the author. Examples (the omitted word is supplied in parenthesis): Let us, then, take up the sword, trusting in God, who will defend the right, remembering that these are other days than those of yore; (**remembering**) that the world is on the side of universal freedom. Or It was almost nightfall. The whole day (**there was**) rain, torrents of rain
37. **Emotional Appeal** - When a writer appeals to an audience's emotions to excite and involve them in the argument.
38. **Epigraph** - A quotation or aphorism at the beginning of a literary work suggestive of theme.
39. **Ethical Appeal** - When a writer tries to persuade the audience to respect and believe him based on presentation of image of self through the text.
40. **Euphemism** - A more agreeable or less offensive substitute for generally unpleasant words or concepts. Sometimes they are used for political correctness ("physically challenged", instead of "crippled"). Sometimes they are used to exaggerate correctness to add humor (a person who is "vertically challenged" is often referred to as being "short")
41. **Explication** - The act of interpreting or discovering the meaning of a text. Attention to close reading and figurative language.
42. **Exposition** - To explain and analyze information by presenting an idea, relevant evidence, and appropriate discussion.
43. **False Analogy** - When two cases are not sufficiently parallel to lead readers to accept a claim of connection between them.
44. **Figurative Language** - A word or words that are inaccurate literally but call to mind sensation or evoke reactions. Metaphors, similes. "All the world's a stage." ....
45. **Genre** - The major category into which a literary work fits. The basic divisions of literature are prose, poetry, and drama. However, genres can be subdivided as well (poetry can be classified into lyric, dramatic, narrative, etc.). The AP Language exam deals primarily with the following genres: autobiography, biography, diaries, criticism, essays, and journalistic, political, scientific, and nature writing.
46. **Homily** - This term literally means "sermon," but more informally, it can include any serious talk, speech, or lecture involving moral or spiritual advice.

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47. **Hyperbole** - Figurative language that exaggerates. It is often used in comedy, or to create irony. (Example: "We saw a gas station every five feet when the tank was full, but when we finally needed gas, there wasn't a station for a thousand miles.")
48. **Image** - Word or words that create a picture in the reader's mind. Usually this involves the 5 senses. Authors often use imagery in conjunction with metaphors, similes, figures of speech to convey information about characters.
49. **Induction** - The process of reasoning from premises that constitute good, but not absolutely certain, reasons to a conclusion that is *probably* correct. It involved bringing together pieces of evidence, and arriving at a conclusion. (Example: I want to buy new shoes. I've had five pairs of Nikes and never had any foot problems. Reeboks gave me blisters, and Adidas made my ankles hurt. Therefore, I probably should buy Nikes.")
50. **Inference/infer** - To draw a reasonable conclusion from the information presented. When a multiple-choice question asks for an inference to be drawn from the passage, the most direct, most reasonable inference is the safest answer choice. If an inference is implausible, it's unlikely to be the correct answer. NOTE THAT IF THE ANSWER CHOICE IS DIRECTLY STATED IN THE TEXT, IT IS *NOT* INFERRED, AND IS WRONG.
51. **Interrogative sentence** - Sentences incorporating interrogative pronouns (*what*, *which*, *who*, *whom*, and *whose*). (Example: *What in the world are you doing hanging out with him?*)
52. **Invective** - An emotionally violent, verbal denunciation or attack using strong, abusive language.
53. **Imperative sentence** - Issues a command (Example: *Kick the ball now!*)
54. **Irony** - When the opposite of what you expect to happen does.
1. Verbal irony - When you say something and mean the opposite/something different. For example, if your gym teacher wants you to run a mile in eight minutes or faster, but calls it a "walk in the park" it would be verbal irony. If your voice tone is bitter, it's called sarcasm.
2. Dramatic irony - is when the audience of a drama, play, movie, etc. knows something that the character doesn't and would be surprised to find out. For example, in many horror movies, we (the audience) know who the killer is, which the victim-to-be has no idea who is doing the slaying. Sometimes the character trusts the killer completely when (ironically) he/she shouldn't.
3. Situational irony - is found in the plot (or story line) of a book, story, or movie. Sometimes it makes you laugh because it's funny how things turn out. (example: Johnny spent two hours planning on sneaking into the movie theater and missed the movie. When he finally did manage to sneak inside he found out that kids were admitted free that day).
53. **Juxtaposition** - Placing things side by side for the purposes of comparison. Comparison of things or ideas. Authors often use juxtaposition of ideas or examples in order to make a point. (For example, an author may juxtapose the average day of a typical American with that of someone in the third world in order to make a point of social commentary).
54. **Loose Sentence:** A complex sentence in which the main clause comes first and the subordinate clause follows. Example: *I do not wish to go to school, even though I might learn something interesting.*
55. **Metaphor** - A figure of speech using implied comparison of seemingly unlike things or the substitution of one for another, suggesting some similarity. Usually identified by comparing objects

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directly, using words like "was" or "is"(example: The wicked stepmother was evil. She was a cold hearted snake.)

**56. Mood** - The atmosphere created by the literature and accomplished through word choice (diction). Syntax is often a creator of mood since word order, sentence length and strength and complexity also affect pacing and therefore mood. Setting, tone, and events can all affect the mood.

**57. Non-sequitur** - Statement that does not logically follow another.

**58. Objectivity** - An author's stance that distances himself from personal involvement.

**59. Onomatopoeia** - A figure of speech in which natural sounds are imitated in the sounds of the words. When the word sounds like the idea it communicates: "murmur", "gurgle", "roar", "buzz". If you identify this in a passage, make sure to explain WHY the author chose to use it...how does it impact the passage.

**60. Oversimplification** - When the writer denies the complexity of an idea.

**61. Oxymoron** - A rhetorical antithesis -- "wise fool" "eloquent silence", "jumbo shrimp". Apparently contradictory terms are grouped together and suggest a paradox.

**62. Paradox** - A seemingly contradictory statement which is actually true. An idea which embeds a contradiction. (Example: "You can't get a job without experience, and you can't get experience without getting a job".)

**63. Parallelism** - Also known as parallel construction. Sentence construction which places equal grammatical constructions near each other or repeats patterns two or more times. **IT IS THE REPETITION OF STRUCTURE NOT THE REPETITION OF IDEAS IN DIFFERENT WORDS.** It may involve two or three modifiers in a row or repeated beginnings of longer sentences. The author might repeat a preposition, or verbal phrase. Charles Dickens' novel *A tale of Two Cities* begins with "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness..etc...etc". Parallelism is used to add emphasis, organization, or sometimes pacing to a persuasive speech. *Julius Caesar* "I came, I saw, I conquered".

Another example of Parallel construction: She looked tired, frustrated, and disgusted. **Yet another example** (notice the parallel construction of each part, as they are laid out in each new line:  
A new generation of Americans born in this century tempered by war disciplined by a hard and bitter peace proud of their ancient heritage

**64. Parenthetical Idea** - Parentheses are used to set off an idea from the rest of the sentence. It is almost considered an aside...a whisper, and should be used sparingly for effect, rather than repeatedly. Parentheses can also be used to set off dates and numbers. (example: *In a short time (and the time is getting shorter by the gallon) America will be plum out of oil.*)

**65. Parody** - An exaggerated imitation of a serious work for humorous purposes. It borrows words or phrases from an original, and pokes fun at it. This is also a form of allusion, since it is referencing a previous text, event, etc. The Simpsons often do parodies of Shakespeare plays. Saturday Night Live also does parodies of famous persons and events.

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- 66. Passive Voice** - The subject of the sentence receives the action. The passive voice is often overused, leaving writing to seem lifeless. When possible, focus on using active voice. (Example: *The books were grabbed by the boy on his way out the door.*) See also, Active Voice.
- 67. Pedantic** - adj. - observing strict adherence to formal rules or literal meaning at the expense of a wider view. This can also refer to the author's tone, as overly scholarly and academic.
- 68. Periodic Sentence** - A sentence in which the main clause (or the main idea) comes last. (notice this sentence is also parallel in construction)/  
Example: If students are absorbed in their own limited worlds,  
if they are disdainful of the work of their teachers,  
if they are scornful of the lessons of the past,  
then the great cultural heritage which must be transmitted from generation to generation will be lost.
- 69. Persona** - The fictional mask or narrator that tells a story.
- 70. Personification** - A type of figurative language which attributes human qualities to non-human subjects. (example: *The ocean roared in anger at the ship and its crew.*)
- 71. Persuasive writing** - is a type of argumentation having the additional aim of urging some form of action.
- 72. Predicate Adjective** - An adjective , group of adjectives, or adjective clause that follows a linking verb. It is in the predicate of the sentence, and modifies the subject. (Example: "My dog is fat, slow, and shaggy." the group of predicate adjectives ("fat, slow, and shaggy) describe "my dog".
- 73. Predicate Nominative** - A noun, group of nouns, or noun clause that renames the subject. it follows a linking verb and is located in the predicate of the sentence. (example: " My dog is a mutt with character." IN this case "mutt with character" is the predicate nominative since it renames "my dog".
- 74. Qualification** - Redefining your argument so that it no longer conflicts with the valid claim of an opposing viewpoint (see Concession). This is known as qualifying your argument.
- 75. Refutation** - When the writer musters relevant opposing arguments.
- 76. Repetition** - Reinforcing a point by repeating the point. Repetition can also involve simply repeating a word or series of words which are fundamental to the author's point.
- 77. Rhetoric** - The art of effective communication.
- 78. Rhetorical Question** - Question not asked for information but for effect (example: *The angry parent asked the child, "Are you done interrupting me?"* In this case, the parent does not expect a reply, but simply wants to draw the child's attention to the rudeness of interrupting.
- 79. Sarcasm** - A generally bitter comment that is ironically worded. However, not all ironic statements are sarcastic. Sarcasm is usually a way to mock or ridicule something, while irony isn't.

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- 80. Satire** - A work that reveals a critical attitude toward some element of life to a humorous effect. It targets human vices and follies, or social institutions and conventions. It usually uses wit, irony, parody, caricature, hyperbole, sarcasm. Good satire is not only funny, but thought provoking. (Kurt Vonnegut has written many great satires).
- 81. Sentence** - A group of words (including a subject and verb) that expresses a complete thought.
- 82. Simple sentence** - Contains one independent clause.
- 83. Compound sentence** - Contains at least two independent clauses but no dependent clauses.
- 84. Complex sentence** - Contains only one independent clauses and at least one dependent clause.
- 85. Compound-complex sentence** - contains two or more independent clauses and at least one dependent clause.
- 86. Balanced Sentence** - One in which two parallel elements are set off against each other like equal weights on a scale. Both parts are parallel grammatically. (example: "If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich." -J.F.Kennedy)
- 87. Loose Sentence** - The main idea is introduced at or near the beginning and then modified by less important elements. (example: "He learned to fix cars from Alice McMahon, an elderly spinster who used to spend her spare time partying with Volvo mechanics.")
- 88. Periodic Sentence** - When the main idea is not completed until the end of the sentence. The writer begins with subordinate elements and postpones the main clause. (Example: "His confidence broken, his limbs shaking, his collar wet with perspiration, he doubted whether he could ever again appear before an audience.")
- 89. Simile** - A figurative usage that compares. It usually uses the words such as "like", "as", or "if". Comparing someone to a summers day is a simile.
- 90. Style** - The choices in diction, tone, and syntax that a writer makes. Style may be conscious or unconscious.
- 91. Subordination** - Taking less important ideas and placing them in dependent clauses, and focusing the readers attention on the main important idea and placing it in the independent clause (example: *Although he was tired and wet, Bill was determined to get to school on time.* In this example, the most important piece of information to the reader is that Bill is determined to get to school on time. The fact that he was tired and wet are subordinate to this main idea.)
- 92. Subordinate Clause** - A word group that contains both a subject and a verb. but unlike the independent clause, the subordinate clause cannot stand alone; it does not express a complete thought. Easily recognized key words and phrases usually begin these clauses (although, because, unless, if, even though, since, as soon, as, while, who, when, where how, and that.)

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**93. Syllogism** - A deductive system of formal logic that presents two premises - the first one "major" the second one "minor" that inevitably lead to a sound conclusion.

Example:

*Major Premise:* All men are mortal.

*Minor Premise:* Socrates is a man.

*Conclusion:* Therefore, Socrates is mortal.

A syllogism's conclusion is valid only if each of the two premises is valid.

**94. Symbol/symbolism** - Anything that represents or stands for something else. Usually a symbol is something concrete such as an object, actions, character...that represents something more abstract.

Examples of symbols include the Whale in *Moby Dick*, the river and the jungle in *Heart of Darkness*, and the Raven in "The Raven".

**95. Syntax** - Grammatical arrangement of words. This is perhaps one of the most difficult concepts to master. First, a reader should examine the length of sentences (short or long). How does sentence length and structure relate to tone and meaning. Are they simple, compound, compound-complex sentences. How do they relate to one another? Syntax is the grouping of words, while diction refers to the selection of individual words.

**96. Theme** - The central idea or message of a work. The theme may be directly stated in nonfiction works, although not necessarily. It is rarely stated directly in fiction.

**97. Thesis** - The sentence or groups of sentences that directly expresses the author's opinion, purpose, meaning, or proposition. It should be short and clear. A thesis is NOT: A series of cold facts. A restatement of the obvious

**98. Tone** - A writer's attitude toward his subject matter revealed through diction, figurative language and organization. To identify tone, consider how the piece would sound if read aloud (or how the author wanted it to sound aloud). Tone can be: playful, serious, businesslike, sarcastic, humorous, formal, somber, etc.

**99. Topic Sentence** - It either expresses the main point outright or makes that point unmistakably clear. It tells the reader what the following paragraph will be about. (Example: "The Vanity of older people is an easier weakness to explain, and to condone.")

**100. Transition** - Smooth movement from one paragraph (or idea) to another. Words and ideas are used to connect two distinct and separate ideas and/or paragraphs. A few commonly used transitional words or phrases are: furthermore, consequently, nevertheless, for example, in addition, likewise, similarly, and on the contrary.

**101. Understatement** - The ironic minimizing of fact, understatement presents something as less significant than it is. The effect can frequently be humorous.



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**102. Vernacular** – 1. Language or dialect of a particular country. 2. Language or dialect of a clan or group. 3. Plain everyday speech

**103. Synecdoche (sih-NECK-duh-kee)** — **figure of speech in which a part stands for the whole**

- a. "I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears, and sweat." (Winston Churchill, 1940)
- b. "In Europe, we gave the cold shoulder to De Gaulle, and now he gives the warm hand to Mao Tse-tung." (Richard Nixon, 1960)
- c. "Give us this day our daily bread." (Matthew, 6:11)

**104. 23. Antanaclasis (AN-ta-na-CLA-sis)** – **repetition of a word or phrase whose meaning changes in the second instance.** These are often "puns" as well.

- a. "Your argument is sound, nothing but sound." (Benjamin Franklin)
- b. "If we don't hang together, we'll hang separately." (Benjamin Franklin)
- c. "If you aren't fired with enthusiasm, you will be fired with enthusiasm." (Vince Lombardi)

**105. Litotes (LI-tuh-tees OR lie-TOE-tees)** — **deliberate use of understatement**

- a. "Last week I saw a woman flayed, and you will hardly believe how much it altered her appearance for the worse." (Jonathan Swift, *A Tale of a Tub*)
- b. "It isn't very serious. I have this tiny little tumor on the brain." (*Catcher in the Rye*)
- c. "For four generations we've been making medicines as if people's lives depended on them." (*Ad for Eli Lilly Drug Company*)

**106. . semantics** – The branch of linguistics that studies the meaning of words, their historical and psychological development, their connotations, and their relation to one another.

*Terms for the Essay Section*

**1. Attitude:** A writer's intellectual position or emotion regarding the subject he or she is writing on. Expect to be asked in the essay section what the writer's attitude is and how their language conveys that attitude. Often the author's attitude will be complex, and students who are able to identify and explain this complexity will score higher on the exam than those who do not. Of course, you'll need to support your position regarding the author's attitude with evidence from the text.

**2. Concrete Detail:** On the exam, directions may read something like: "Provide concrete detail that will convince the reader." This means that your essay should include detail in the passage.

**3. Descriptive Detail:** When an essay question uses this phrase, look for the writer's sensory description. Descriptive detail appealing to the visual sense is usually the most predominant, but don't overlook other sensory detail. As usual, after you identify a passage's descriptive detail, analyze its effect.

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- 4. Devices:** The figures of speech, syntax, diction, and other stylistic elements that collectively produce a particular artistic effect.
- 5. Language:** When you're asked to "analyze the language", concentrate on how the elements of language combine to form a whole - how diction, syntax, figurative language, and sentence structure create a cumulative effect.
- 6. Narrative Devices:** This term describes the tools of the storyteller, such as ordering events so that they build to a climactic moment or withholding information until a crucial or appropriate moment when revealing it creates a desired effect. on the essay exam, this term may also apply to biographical and autobiographical writing.
- 7. Narrative Technique:** Related to Narrative Devices, this refers to the style of telling the "story", even if the passage is nonfiction. Concentrate on the order of events and on their detail in evaluating a writer's technique.
- 8. Persuasive Devices:** When asked to analyze an author's persuasive devices, look for the words in the passage that have strong connotations - words that intensify the emotional effect. In addition, analyze HOW these words complement the writer's argument as it builds logically. Speeches are often used in this context, since they are generally designed to persuade.
- 9. Persuasive Essay:** When asked to write a persuasive essay, you should present a coherent argument in which the evidence builds to a logical and relevant conclusion. Strong persuasive essays often appeal to the audience's emotions or ethical standards.
- 10. Resources of Language:** this phrase refers to all the devices of composition available to a writer, such as diction, syntax, sentence structure, and figures of speech. The cumulative effect of a work is produced by the resources of language a writer chooses.
- 11. Rhetorical Features:** This phrase refers to how a passage is constructed. If asked to consider rhetorical structure, look at the passages organization and how the writer combines images, details, or arguments to serve his or her purpose.
- 12. Sentence Structure:** When an essay question asks you to analyze sentence structure, look at the type of sentences the author uses. Remember that the basic sentence structures are simple, compound and complex, and variations created with sentence combining. Also consider variation or lack of it in sentence length, any unusual devices in sentence construction, such as repetition or inverted word order, and any unusual word or phrase placement. As with all devices, be prepared to discuss the effect of the sentence structure. For example, a series of short, simple sentences or phrases can produce a feeling of speed and choppiness, which may suit the author's purpose.
- 13. Stylistic Devices:** An essay that mentions stylistic devices is asking you to note and analyze all the elements in language that contribute to style - such as diction, syntax, tone, attitude, figures of speech, connotations, and repetition.

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**TONE (POSITIVE)**

**Happiness**

amiable*	cheery	contented*	ecstatic	elevated*
elevated*	enthusiastic	exuberant*	joyful	jubilant*
sprightly*				

**Pleasure**

cheerful	enraptured*	peaceful	playful	pleasant
satisfied	amused	appreciative	whimsical*	

**Friendliness, Courtesy**

accommodating*	approving	caressing	comforting	compassionate
confiding	cordial*	courteous	forgiving	gracious*
helpful	indulgent*	kindly	obliging*	pitying
polite	sociable	solicitous*	soothing	sympathetic
tender	tolerant	trusting		

**Animation**

ardent*	breathless	brisk	crisp	eager
excited	earnest*	ecstatic	energetic	exalted*
feverish*	hasty	hearty	hopeful	inspired
lively	passionate	rapturous*	vigorous*	impassioned*

**Romance**

affectionate	amorous*	erotic*	fanciful*	ideal*
lustful	sensual*	tender		

**Tranquility**

calm	hopeful	meditative*	optimistic	serene
relaxed	soothing	spiritual	dreamy	

**TONE (NEUTRAL)**

**General**

authoritative*	baffled*	ceremonial	clinical*	detached*
disbelieving	factual	formal	informative	learned
matter-of-fact	nostalgic*	objective*	questioning	reminiscent*
restrained*	sentimental*	shocked	urgent	

**Rational/Logical**

admonitory*	argumentative	candid*	coaxing	critical
curious	deliberate	didactic*	doubting	explanatory
frank*	incredulous*	indignant*	innocent	insinuating*
instructive	oracular*	pensive*	persuasive	pleading
preoccupied*	puzzled	sincere	studied*	thoughtful
uncertain	unequivocal*	probing*		

**Self-Control**

solemn*	serious	serene	simple	mild
gentle	temperate*	imperturbable*	nonchalant*	cool
wary*	cautious	prudent*		

**Apathy**

blasé*	bored	colorless	defeated	dispassionate*
dry*	dull	feeble*	helpless	hopeless
indifferent*	inert*	languid*	monotonous*	resigned*

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sluggish*	stoical*	sophisticated*	vacant*	
<b>TONE (HUMOR/IRONY/SARCASM)</b>				
amused	bantering*	bitter	caustic*	comical
condescending*	contemptuous*	cynical*	disdainful*	droll*
facetious*	flippant*	giddy*	humorous	insolent*
ironic*	irreverent*	joking	malicious*	mock-heroic*
mocking	mock-serious*	patronizing*	pompous*	quizzical*
ribald*	ridiculing	sarcastic	sardonic*	satiric*
scornful*	sharp	silly	taunting	teasing
whimsical*	wry*	belittling	haughty*	insulting
playful	hilarious	uproarious		
<b>TONE(NEGATIVE)</b>				
<b>General</b>				
accusing	aggravated*	agitated*	angry	arrogant
artificial	audacious*	belligerent*	bitter	brash*
childish	choleric*	coarse*	cold	condemnatory
condescending	contradictory	critical	desperate	disappointed
disgruntled*	disgusted	disinterested	passive	furious
harsh	hateful	hurtful	indignant*	inflammatory*
insulting	irritated	manipulative*	obnoxious*	quarrelsome
shameful	superficial	surly*	testy*	
threatening	uninterested			
<b>Sadness</b>				
despairing	despondent*	foreboding*	gloomy	bleak
melancholy*	maudlin*	regretful	tragic	
<b>Pain</b>				
annoyed	biter	bored	crushed	disappointed
disgusted	dismal*	fretful*	irritable	miserable
mournful	pathetic	plaintive*	querulous*	sore
sorrowful	sour	sulky	sullen”	troubled
uneasy*	vexed*	worried		
<b>Unfriendliness</b>				
accusing	belittling	boorish*	cutting	derisive*
disparaging*	impudent*	pitiless	reproving*	scolding
severe	spiteful	suspicious	unsociable	reproachful*
<b>Anger</b>				
belligerent*	furious	livid*	wrathful*	savage
indignant*	enraged			
<b>Passion</b>				
fierce	frantic*	greedy	voracious*	hysterical
insane	impetuous*	impulsive*	jealous	nervous
reckless	wild			
<b>Arrogance/Self-Importance</b>				
boastful	bold	condescending	contemptuous	pretentious*
pompous*	supercilious*	pedantic*	didactic*	bombastic*
self-righteous*	assured	confident	defiant	dignified
domineering	egotistical	imperious*	impressive	smug*
knowing	lofty	peremptory*	profound*	proud
resolute*	sententious*	stiff	saucy*	

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### Sorrow/Fear/Worry

aggravated	anxious	apologetic*	apprehensive*	concerned
confused	depressed	disturbed	embarrassing	fearful
grave*	hollow*	morose*	nervous	numb
ominous*	paranoid*	pessimistic	poignant*	remorseful*
serious	staid*	enigmatic*		

### Submission/Timidity

aghast*	alarmed	ashamed	astonished	astounded
awed	contrite*	self-deprecatory*	docile*	fawning*
groveling*	ingratiating*	meek*	modest*	obedient]
obsequious*	resigned	respectful	reverent*	servile*
shy	submissive*	surprised	sycophantic*	terrified
timid	tremulous*	unpretentious*	willing	

**Rhetorical fallacies, or fallacies of argument**, don't allow for the open, two-way exchange of ideas upon which meaningful conversations depend. Instead, they distract the reader with various appeals instead of using sound reasoning. They can be divided into three categories:

1. **Emotional fallacies** unfairly appeal to the audience's emotions.
2. **Ethical fallacies** unreasonably advance the writer's own authority or character.
3. **Logical fallacies** depend upon faulty logic.

Keep in mind that rhetorical fallacies often overlap.

## EMOTIONAL FALLACIES

**Sentimental Appeals** use emotion to distract the audience from the facts.

Example: The thousand of baby seals killed in the Exxon Valdez oil spill have shown us that oil is not a reliable energy source.

**Red Herrings** use misleading or unrelated evidence to support a conclusion.

Example: That painting is worthless because I don't recognize the artist.

**Scare Tactics** try to frighten people into agreeing with the arguer by threatening them or predicting unrealistically dire consequences.

Example: If you don't support the party's tax plan, you and your family will be reduced to poverty.

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**Bandwagon Appeals** encourage an audience to agree with the writer because everyone else is doing so.

Example: Paris Hilton carries a small dog in her purse, so you should buy a hairless Chihuahua and put it in your Louis Vuitton.

**Slippery Slope** arguments suggest that one thing will lead to another, oftentimes with disastrous results.

Example: If you get a B in high school, you won't get into the college of your choice, and therefore will never have a meaningful career.

**Either/Or Choices** reduce complicated issues to only two possible courses of action.

Example: The patent office can either approve my generator design immediately or say goodbye forever to affordable energy.

**False Need** arguments create an unnecessary desire for things.

Example: You need an expensive car or people won't think you're cool.

### ETHICAL FALLACIES

**False Authority** asks audiences to agree with the assertion of a writer based simply on his or her character or the authority of another person or institution who may not be fully qualified to offer that assertion.

Example: My high school teacher said it, so it must be true.

**Using Authority Instead of Evidence** occurs when someone offers personal authority as proof.

Example: Trust me – my best friend wouldn't do that.

**Guilt by Association** calls someone's character into question by examining the character of that person's associates.

Example: Sara's friend Amy robbed a bank; therefore, Sara is a delinquent.

**Dogmatism** shuts down discussion by asserting that the writer's beliefs are the only acceptable ones.

Example: I'm sorry, but I think penguins are sea creatures and that's that.

**Moral Equivalence** compares minor problems with much more serious crimes (or vice versa).

Example: These mandatory seatbelt laws are fascist.

**Ad Hominem** arguments attack a person's character rather than that person's reasoning.

Example: Why should we think a candidate who recently divorced will keep her campaign promises?

**Strawperson** arguments set up and often dismantle easily refutable arguments in order to misrepresent an opponent's argument in order to defeat him or her

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Example: A: We need to regulate access to handguns.

B: My opponent believes that we should ignore the rights guaranteed to us as citizens of the United States by the Constitution. Unlike my opponent, I am a firm believer in the Constitution, and a proponent of freedom.

### LOGICAL FALLACIES

A **Hasty Generalization** draws conclusions from scanty evidence.

Example: I wouldn't eat at that restaurant—the only time I ate there, my entree was undercooked.

**Faulty Causality** (or **Post Hoc**) arguments confuse chronology with causation: one event can occur after another without being caused by it.

Example: A year after the release of the violent shoot-'em-up video game *Annihilator*, incidents of school violence tripled—surely not a coincidence.

A **Non Sequitur** (Latin for “It doesn't follow”) is a statement that does not logically relate to what comes before it. An important logical step may be missing in such a claim.

Example: If those protesters really loved their country, they wouldn't question the government.

An **Equivocation** is a half-truth, or a statement that is partially correct but that purposefully obscures the entire truth.

Example: “I did not have sexual relations with that woman.” – President Bill Clinton

**Begging the Question** occurs when a writer simply restates the claim in a different way; such an argument is circular.

Example: His lies are evident from the untruthful nature of his statements.

A **Faulty Analogy** is an inaccurate, inappropriate, or misleading comparison between two things.

Example: Letting prisoners out on early release is like absolving them of their crimes.

**Stacked Evidence** represents only one side of the issue, thus distorting the issue.

Example: Cats are superior to dogs because they are cleaner, cuter, and more independent.