

Technical Vocabulary

You should be able to write about key language features. Here's a reminder of what they are and how they work:

Alliteration: The first letter of a word is repeated in words that follow; the cold, crisp, crust of clean, clear ice.

Assonance: The same vowel sound is repeated but the consonants are different; he passed her a sharp, dark glance, shot a cool, foolish look across the room.

Colloquial: Language that is used in speech with an informal meaning; 'chill', 'out of this world', 'take a rain check'.

Dialect: The version of language spoken by particular people in a particular area, such as Scots.

Dialogue: Conversation between two people; sometimes an imagined conversation between the narrator and the reader. This is important in drama and can show conflict through a series of statements and challenges, or intimacy where characters mirror the content and style of each other's speech. It can also be found in the conversational style of a poem.

Dissonance: A discordant combinations of sounds; the clash, spew and slow pang of grinding waves against the quay.

Enjambment: A device used in poetry where a sentence continues beyond the end of the line or verse. This technique is often used to maintain a sense of continuation from one stanza to another.

Hyperbole: Exaggerating something for literary purposes which is not meant to be taken literally; we gorged on the banquet of beans on toast.

Imagery: Similes, metaphors and personification; they all compare something 'real' with something 'imagined'.

Irony: The humorous or sarcastic use of words or ideas, implying the opposite of what they mean.

Lexical Field: A group of words that are connected in subject that are woven into a text.

Metaphor: A word or phrase used to imply figurative, not literal or 'actual', resemblance; he flew into the room.

Monologue: An uninterrupted monologue can show a character's importance or state of mind. Monologue can be in speech form, delivered in front of other characters and having great thematic importance, or as a soliloquy where we see the character laying bare their soul and thinking aloud.

Onomatopoeia: A word that sounds like the noise it is describing: 'splash', 'bang', 'pop', 'hiss'.

Oxymoron: Where two words normally not associated are brought together: 'cold heat' 'bitter sweet'.

Pathos: Language that evokes feelings of pity or sorrow.

Personification: Attributing a human quality to a thing or idea: the moon calls me to her darkened world.

Repetition: The repetition of a word or phrase to achieve a particular effect.

Rhyme: The way that words sound the same at the end of lines in poetry. Poems often have a fixed rhyme-scheme (for example, sonnets have 14 lines with fixed rhyme scheme ABAB CDCD EFEF GG). Try to comment as to what contribution the rhyme-scheme is making to the text as a whole. Why do you think the poet has chosen it? Does it add control or imitate the ideas in the poem?

Rhythm: A repetitive beat or metre within a poem. Tennyson's poem *The Lady of Shalott* uses a strong internal rhythm to build up the sense of unrelenting monotony in the poem:

Simile: A phrase which establishes similarity between two things to emphasise the point being made. This usually involves the words 'like' or 'as'; 'he is as quick as an arrow in flight', 'as white as snow', 'like a burning star'.

Symbolism: Often objects, colours, sounds and places work as symbols. They can sometimes give us a good insight into the themes. So, snakes are often symbols of temptation as in the story of Adam and Eve, white usually symbolises innocence and a ringing bell can be a symbol for impending doom.

Tone: The writer's tone or voice or atmosphere or feeling that pervades the text, such as sadness, gloom, celebration, joy, anxiety, dissatisfaction, regret or anger. Different elements of writing can help to create this; long sentences or verses, with assonance (repeated vowel sounds), tend to create a sad, melancholic mood. Short syllabic, alliterative lines can create an upbeat, pacy atmosphere.

Word choice: Sometimes called 'register', this is the common thread in an author's choice of language. Authors may use words commonly associated with religion, words describing sensory experience such as touch, smell or colour or 'mood' words that reflect a character's state of mind