

Parallelism
(PARE uh lel iz um)

Chiasmus
(ki AZ mus)

Antithesis
(an TITH uh sis)

Climax
(KLI maks)

Asyndeton
(uh SIN duh tahn)

Polysyndeton
(pol e SIN duh tahn)

Sentential Adverb

Irony
(EYE ruh nee)

Understatement

Litotes
(LIE toe tees)

Multiple ideas, balanced
in reverse order

He danced all day
but at night he slept.

Multiple ideas,
same grammatical balance

Digging all day and dancing all night
soon made Fred tired.

Presenting ideas
in the order of
increasing importance

The wildfires burned
the trees, the barn, and finally the house.

Contrasting two ideas,
often by using parallelism

All these pages make
for a heavy document,
but the contents are
decidedly light weight.

Using conjunctions
between each element

I promise a campaign of integrity
and fairness and honesty and reason.

Omitting conjunctions
between elements

The children gorged themselves
on ice cream, soda, candy,
popcorn, hot dogs, pizza.

A statement with a hidden
meaning, often the opposite
of the surface meaning

They argued for three hours
over the discrepancy of one dollar.
Who says a dollar isn't worth much anymore?

A word or short phrase
used to emphasize
a phrase or sentence

This sentence, of course, is an example.

An understatement that
denies the opposite of an idea

We must not omit an example
of this device.

Expressing an idea
as less important
than it actually is

Doubling the subscription rate
might result in
our losing a subscriber or two.

Hyperbole
(High PER bow lee)

Metabasis
(Muh TAB uh sis)

Procatalepsis
(pro cat uh LEP sis)

Hypophora
(high POFF or uh)

Distinctio
(diss TINCT ee oh)

Exemplum
(egg SEM plum)

Amplification
(am plih fih CAY shun)

Metanoia
(met uh NOY uh)

Zeugma
(ZOOG muh)

Diazeugma
(die uh ZOOG muh)

Summing up what has been said
and what is to be discussed next

Now that we have studied similes,
let's turn to the use of metaphor.

Asking a question and
answering it

But is the money already budgeted
being spent on the project? No.

Offering an example to clarify

Kids like anything sweet. For
instance, ice cream, soda, candy.

Calling a statement back and
expressing it in another way

The problem was they didn't listen.
Or rather, they listened but didn't hear.

Single subject, multiple verbs

They sawed and drilled and
hammered until dark.

Exaggeration

I've told you a million times,
stop exaggerating.

Raising and responding to
an objection

But someone might say it is impossible
to know the exact amount. True,
but we can estimate very accurately.

Offering a specific definition

Young children—that is, children
under the age of six—are
more susceptible to infection.

Restating a word
and adding more detail

We want the push-buttons to reflect
quality—quality that can be seen
and quality that can be felt.

Multiple subjects, single verb
or any multiple-to-single linking

The paper, the speech, and the
project were all due on Monday.

Prozeugma
(pro ZOOG muh)

Mesozeugma
(meh zoh ZOOG muh)

Hypozeugma
(HIGH po zoog muh)

Syllepsis
(sill EP sis)

Hyperbaton
(high PER buh tawn)

Anastrophe
(uh NASS tro fee)

Appositive
(uh POZZ uh tive)

Parenthesis
(pear IN thih sis)

Simile
(SIM uh lee)

Analogy
(uh NAL uh gee)

Linking word in the middle of the sentence

The shrimp and the egg rolls were ordered, and then, as an afterthought, the fired rice.

Linking word presented once and then implied for subsequent linkages

We installed PosiLock for the security system, CrystalView for the monitors, and AcmeTronix for computers.

Ideas linked by a word that changes senses

The swimming pool was enormous, but so was the price of the house.

Linking word follows the words it links

The rifles in the racks and the swords on the wall reminded everyone that this was Nathan's room.

A reversal or transposition of words

Let's find a cheaper solution and more effective.

A departure from normal word order

This truth we will always remember.

A word or phrase inserted into the middle of another sentence

He always disparaged credit cards—he called them imitation money—and used cash whenever possible.

A noun that redescribes another noun next to it

Aspirin, a powerful anti-inflammatory, would probably require a prescription if introduced today.

An often extended comparison of two unlike things for the purpose of clarifying the unfamiliar thing by the familiar one.

An outline for a document is like the skeleton for your body: it provides a place to hold each part.

Comparison of two unlike things often using *like* or *as*

The flow of money from the project dried up like a desert creek bed in July.

Metaphor
(MET uh fore)

Catachresis
(cat uh KREE sis)

Metonymy
meh TAWN uh mee)

Synecdoche
(sin EK doh kee)

Personification
(per son ih fih KAY shun)

Allusion
(al LOO shun)

Eponym
(EP oh nim)

Apostrophe
(un POSS troh fee)

Transferred Epithet
(EP ih thet)

Anaphora
(uh NAFF uh ruh)

An extreme, implied metaphor

The telescope of truth will not shine its light as it falls over the cascades of error.

A comparison of two unlike things by identifying one with the other

Life is a tree that you must care for and manage well if you want fruit.

A metaphor using a part of something to represent the whole

Thanks for volunteering to help with the food line. We can always use another pair of hands.

A metaphor where something closely associated with an idea substituted for the idea.

This update came directly from the fire station.

A direct or indirect reference to someone or something historical

Talk about creative: they turned out patents almost as fast as Thomas Edison

Presenting an idea by giving it human qualities

My computer screen first gave me a blank look, and then a bored look.

A direct address to someone or something, present or absent.

And now, you critics, I will explain why.

Using the name of a person famous for some thing or attribute in place of the thing or attribute itself.

In spite of the dominance of electronic media, Gutenberg is still with us.

Repetition of words or phrases at the beginning of successive phrases or clauses

After the beach, there was sand in their suits, sand in the radio, and sand in the food.

An unusual adjective-noun combination

It was an undead movie. Too bad it wasn't about zombies.

Epistrophe
(ee PISS troh fee)

Simploce
(SIM ploh kee)

Anadiplosis
(an uh dih PLO sis)

Conduplicatio
(con due plih KAHT ee oh)

Epanalepsis
(ep an uh LEP sis)

Diacope
(die AHH ko pee)

Epizeuxis
(ep ih ZOOK sis)

Antimetabole
(an tih muh TAB oh lee)

Scesis Onomaton
(SKEE sis oh NO muh tawn)

Alliteration
(uh lit er A shun)

Repeats words at both the beginning and ending of phrases, clauses, or sentences

Yes, Fred likes buying tools, but Fred really likes using tools.

Repetition of words at the end of phrases, clauses, or sentences

As the day grew hotter, the tractor stopped working. Then the excavators stopped working.

Repetition of a keyword or phrase from the previous sentence in the subsequent sentence.

We must consider cost, logistics, promotion, venue, and timing. Promotion however, is the crucial key.

Repetition of the last word in a sentence at the beginning of the next sentence

The rap of the gavel indicated that the judge's decision was final. The final ruling was for Paul.

Repetition of a word or phrase after an intervening word or phrase

It works, I tell you. It works.

Repetition of words or phrases at both the beginning and ending of sentences

Electric rates were the center of debate at the beginning of the meeting, and at the end the argument was about electric rates.

Reversal of words or phrases in a loosely chiasmic form

With a billion sold so far, the world has made Joe a richer man, and Joe has made the world a richer place.

Repetition of one word or short phrase

The end of the battle left no hopes, no wishes, and no plans, because most of the soldiers were dead, dead, dead.

Repetition of sounds at the beginning of successive phrases

So swift the sands of time, so sternly do the timepieces tell their tale.

A string of generally synonymous phrases or sentences

The film, your honor, violates the copyright of our studio, infringes on our intellectual property rights, and breaks the law protecting our work.

Onomatopoeia
(aw no mat oh PEE uh)

Assonance
(ASS oh nunce)

Consonance
(CON so nunce)

Rhetorical Question

Aporia
(uh PORE ee uh)

Apophasis
(uh POFF uh sis)

Anacoluthon
(an uh co LOOTH un)

Oxymoron
(awk see MOH ron)

Pun

Anthimeria
(an thih MARE ee uh)

Repeating vowel sounds in the stressed syllables of successive words

When the results were final, the campaign headquarters was filled with moans and groans.

A question whose answer is implied

Do we really want to spend millions of dollars on a statewide vote about a tax on sodas? Isn't that the legislature's job?

Bringing up a subject while pretending not to bring it up.

I need not remind you that the average outdoor temperature on our trip will be below freezing.

A condensed paradox, often of two words

The contractor was precisely vague about how he would install the windows.

One part of speech used for another, often a noun used as a verb

Don't forget to card the nightclub visitors.

A word that imitates the sound it names

What I thought was going to be a peaceful walk through the aviary ended up being a set of nonstop squawks, chirps, cheeps, clacks, clucks, and cock-a-doodle-dos.

Repeating the same consonant sound with different vowels before each one

They decided to kick the track off the album.

A statement of real or pretended doubt.

The senator's point is well taken, though I'm not so sure it is relevant to the issue.

A sentence whose pieces do not fit together grammatically

Wait. One side to keep warm, one side to stay cool, but both under a hot—are you making this up?

A play on the multiple meanings of a word

She's very creative. Why, just yesterday she cooked up three new ideas for seasoning steaks.