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| **Methods** |  |
| Call to Action | writing that urges people to action or promotes change. |
| Ethnocentricity | the belief in the inherent superiority of one’s own group and culture. |
| Irony | a mode of speech in which words express a meaning opposite to the intended meaning. |
| Motif | In literature, recurrent IMAGES, words, objects, phrases, or actions that tend to unify the work. Nabokov’s Lolita, for example, is saturated by a light-dark motif that is found in the names of the PROTAGONIST and ANTAGONIST (Humbert Humbert and Clare Quilty); patterns of day and night, blonde and brunette, summer and winter, north and south, white and black; and the game of chess. |
| Relevance | the quality or state of being closely connected or appropriate. |
| **Language Devices** |  |
| Analogy | a process of reasoning that assumes if two subjects share a number of specific observable qualities then they may be expected to share qualities that have not been observed; the process of drawing a comparison between two things based on a partial similarity of like features. |
| Anaphora | one of the devices of repetition in which the same expression (word or words) is repeated at the beginning of two or more lines, clauses, or sentences. It is one of the most obvious of the devices used in the poetry of Walt Whitman, as these opening lines from one of his poems show: As I ebb’d with the ocean of life./ As I wended the shores I know,/ As I walk’d where the ripples continually … |
| Anastrophe | the inversion of the usual, normal, or logical order of the parts of a sentence. Anastrophe is deliberate rather than accidental and is used to secure RHYTHM or to gain emphasis or EUPHONY. Anything in language capable of assuming a usual order can be inverted. /Instead of saying, “I walked home,” an inversion of this sentence would be, “Home I walked” or “Home walked I.” |
| Antithesis | A figure of speech characterized by strongly contrasting words, clauses, sentences, or ideas, as in “Man proposes, God disposes.” Antithesis is a balancing of one term against another for emphasis. True antithetical structure demands that there be not only an opposition of idea, but that the opposition in different parts be manifested through similar grammatical structure. |
| Apostrophe | a figure of speech in which someone (usually, but not always absent), some abstract quality, or a nonexistent personage is directly addressed as though present. Characteristic instances of apostrophe are found in invocations: And chiefly, Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer/ Before all temples the upright heart and pure,/ Instruct me, for Thou know’st./ Or an address to God, as in Emily Dickinson’s:/ Papa Above! / Regard a Mouse. |
| Assonance | the repetition of identical or similar vowel sounds. “A land laid waste with all its young men slain” repeats the same “a” sound in “laid,” “waste,” and “slain.” |
| Chiasmus | a type of balance in which the second part is balanced against the first but with the part reversed, as in Coleridge’s line, “Flowers are lovely, love is flowerlike.” |
| Cliché | a timeworn expression that through overuse has lost its power to evoke concrete images. For example, “gentle as a lamb,” smart as a whip,” and “pleased as punch.” |
| Compound/Complex Sentence | a sentence that contains two or more independent clauses and at least one subordinate clause. See your grammar text for numerous examples. |
| Connotation | the emotional implications that words may carry, as distinguished from their denotative meanings. They may be (1) private and personal, the result of individual experience, (2) group (national, linguistic, racial), (3) general or universal, held by all or most people. It depends on usage in a particular linguistic community and climate. A purely private and personal connotation cannot be communicated; the connotation must be shared to be intelligible to others. |
| Denotation | is the specific, exact meaning of a word, independent of its emotional coloration or associations. |
| Doublespeak | in general, language used to distort and manipulate rather than to communicate. |
| Ellipsis | the omission of a word or words necessary for complete construction, but understood in the context. (I love English as much as she.) The word does is understood, hence the nominative she is correct! Ellipsis can include the omission of a noun, verb, etc. Refer to your grammar text! |
| Emotive Language | language that both reflects the emotional tone of the writer and instigates an emotional response from the reader. It is also known as loaded language |
| Epistrophe | Figure of repetition that occurs when the last word or set of words in one sentence, clause, or phrase is repeated one or more times at the end of successive sentences, clauses, or phrases. |
| Euphemism | from the Greek word meaning to speak well of: the substitutions of an inoffensive, indirect, or agreeable expression for a word or phrase perceived as socially unacceptable or unnecessarily harsh. For example: “private parts” for sexual organs or disadvantaged” for poor. |
| Figurative Language | the use of words outside their literal or usual meanings, used to add freshness and suggest associations and comparisons that create effective images: includes elements of speech such as hyperbole, irony, metaphor, personification, and simile. |
| Hyperbole | a FIGURE OF SPEECH in which conscious exaggeration is used without the intent of literal persuasion. It may be used to heighten effect, or it may be used to produce comic effect. |
| Idiom | A use of words, a grammatic construction peculiar to a given language, or an expression that cannot be translated literally into a second language. “To carry out” may be taken as an example. Literally it means, of course, to carry something out (of a room perhaps), but idiomatically it means to see that something is done, as “to carry out a command.” |
| Juxtapose | Placing two ideas side by side or close together. Sometimes the two ideas are completely different. |
| Oxymoron | A self-contradictory combination of words or smaller verbal units: usually noun–noun, adjective–adjective, adjective–noun, adverb–adverb, or adverb–verb (jumbo shrimp, pianoforte, bittersweet). |
| Simple Sentence | is a complete sentence that is neither compound nor complex |
| **Logical Fallacies** |  |
| Begging the Question (or circular logic) | happens when the writer presents an arguable point as a fact that supports the argument. This error leads to an argument that goes around and around, with evidence making the same claim as the proposition. Because it is much easier to make a claim than to support it, many writers fall into this trap. Example: "These movies are popular because they make so much money. They make a lot of money because people like them. People like them because they are so popular." The argument continues around in the logical circle because the support assumes that the claim is true rather than proving its truth. |
| Non Sequitur arguments | don’t follow a logical sequence. The conclusion doesn’t logically follow the explanation. These fallacies can be found on both the sentence level and the level of the argument itself. Example: "The rain came down so hard that Jennifer actually called me." Rain and phone calls have nothing to do with one another. The force of the rain does not affect Jennifer’s decision to pick up the phone. |
| Hasty Generalizations | base an argument on insufficient evidence. Writers may draw conclusions too quickly, not considering the whole issue. They may look only at a small group as representative of the whole or may look only at a small piece of the issue. Example: Concluding that all fraternities are party houses because you have seen three parties at one fraternity is a hasty generalization. The evidence is too limited to draw an adequate conclusion. |
| Either—Or arguments | reduce complex issues to black and white choices. Most often issues will have a number of choices for resolution. Because writers who use the either-or argument are creating a problem that doesn’t really exist, we sometimes refer to this fallacy as a false dilemma. Example: "Either we go to Panama City for the whole week of Spring Break, or we don’t go anywhere at all." This rigid argument ignores the possibilities of spending part of the week in Panama City, spending the whole week somewhere else, or any other options. |
| False Authority | is a tactic used by many writers, especially in advertising. An authority in one field may know nothing of another field. Being knowledgeable in one area doesn’t constitute knowledge in other areas. Example: A popular sports star may know a lot about football, but very little about shaving cream. His expertise on the playing field does not qualify him to intelligently discuss the benefits of aloe. |
| Opposing a Straw Man | is a tactic used by a lot of writers because they find it easier to refute an oversimplified opposition. Writers may also pick only the opposition’s weakest or most insignificant point to refute. Doing so diverts attention from the real issues and rarely, if ever, leads to resolution or truth. Example: The debate over drink machines centers around cost and choice. Opponents of the new drink machines bring up their location as an important issue. This insignificant point has little relevance to the actual issues. |
| Slippery Slopes | suggest that one step will inevitably lead to more, eventually negative steps. While sometimes the results may be negative, the slippery slope argues that the descent is inevitable and unalterable. Stirring up emotions against the downward slipping, this fallacy can be avoided by providing solid evidence of the eventuality rather than speculation. Example: "If we force public elementary school pupils to wear uniforms, eventually we will require middle school students to wear uniforms. If we require middle school students to wear uniforms, high school requirements aren’t far off. Eventually even college students who attend state-funded, public universities will be forced to wear uniforms." |
| Ad Hominem (attacking the character of the opponent) | arguments limit themselves not to the issues, but to the opposition itself. Writers who fall into this fallacy attempt to refute the claims of the opposition by bringing the opposition’s character into question. These arguments ignore the issues and attack the people. Example: Candidate A claims that Candidate B cannot possibly be an advocate for the working people because he enjoys the opera more than professional wrestling. Candidate B’s personal entertainment preferences probably have little if anything to do with his stance on labor laws. |