

RHETORICAL DEVICES

APPEAL

an address to the audience usually through the pronoun **YOU** or **WE** use to link the speaker or writer to listener or reader.

“We don’t have to argue with anybody... We just need to go around to these stores..” George Wallace

“You can be the new majority who can lead this nation out of political darkness” President Obama

ANTITHESIS

a statement that contradicts or is opposite of an earlier thought. Placing conflicting ideas alongside each other to sharpen a meaning: *A fool trusts everyone, a wise person trusts herself alone.*

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness,

HYPERBOLE

An extravagant statement – to emphasis or heightened effect

“I died laughing”

“Well now, one winter it was so cold, that all the geese flew backward, all the fish moved south and even the snow turned blue.”

HYPOPHORA

A common technique to start a speech with a question then answers it.

“ I will win! Why? Because I have faith, courage and enthusiasm”

OXYMORON

The position of two contradictory words next to each other – the effect of drawing the reader's attention and making them realize the opposite is true:

Act naturally, Pretty ugly, awfully lucky,
original copy, mud bath, random order

PARADOX

Kind of an extended oxymoron – a phrase which suggests two irreconcilable ideas – that prove to go together.

She was concentrating very hard on being relaxed.

You can save money by spending it.

It was the beginning of the end.

SYNECHDOCHE

A figure of speech which a part is used to represent the whole, the whole for a part, the specific for the general etc.

She took us outside to look at her new set of wheels
(referring to her new car)

The Hospital worked for hours to revive him (referring to
the doctors and nurses inside the hospital)

REPETITION

Repetition can be effective in creating power and emphasis

Yes, we can, to opportunity and prosperity. Yes, we can heal this nation. Yes, we can repair this world. Yes, we can.

*What kind of brainless **garbage** are you watching? It's **Trash!***

ANAPHORA

Repetition of the same word or phrase at the beginning of successive phrases, verses or lines.

Most memorable through “I have a Dream” speech.

“We shall go on to the end, we shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence...”

ASYNDETON

the absence of conjunctions between phrases
(FANBOYS)

Without looking, without making a sound, without talking

“This is the villain among you who deceived you, who cheated you, who meant to betray you completely.....”

POLYSYNDETON

Using several conjunctions in close succession, especially where some might be omitted - used to stress the importance of each item

We lived and laughed and loved and left.

“Let the whitefolks have their money and power and segregation and sarcasm and big houses and schools and lawns like carpets, and books, and mostly-mostly-let them have their whiteness.”
(Maya Angelou, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*)

ALLUSION

Reference to something else (shared knowledge)

brief and indirect reference to a person, place, thing or idea of historical, cultural, literary or political significance. It does not describe in detail the person or thing to which it refers. It is just a passing comment and the writer expects the reader to possess enough knowledge to spot the allusion and grasp its importance in a text.

Her hair was long, just like Rapunzel's

“This will be the day all God’s children will be able to sing, with a new meaning, ‘My country tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee of sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrims pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring”
– MLK “I have a Dream”