

# The Essentials of Literature

*A Tutor's Guide*

Learn to recognise the techniques, themes, and timelines that craft great writing

# **The Essentials of Literature A Tutor's Guide**

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First Edition

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# Chapter One

## The Three Narrative Perspectives

### I. The First Person Narrator

#### What Is It?

First person narration is the using of the self ('I') as the storyteller.

#### Why Use It?

Writing in the first person allows writers to better describe feelings and thoughts, as these seem to actually come from the narrator's own mind.

For non-fiction works, particular in autobiographical pieces or poetry, first person narration makes the writing more authentic and personal.

Fiction writers may choose first person narrators if they want to tell a story through one person's perspective. This is useful when the writing will describe thoughts, feelings and motivations. It is also a good tool to remove the 'distance' between the reader and the story: the first person narrator speaks like a person actually living the events.

#### Basic Examples

The stranger looked at me, his eyes with a sudden intent, and his face taking on an expression that I neither understood nor found pleasant.

"Now we begin."

It was at this moment that I knew what had I failed to see before. Oh, I had been so foolish, and so enamoured with his bravado, that I had ignored the one danger: his purpose. I was to be the guinea pig, the test subject, and I had walked willingly into it. I looked around for a door, or any type of exit, but found only locks and the knowledge that my sole escape was to fight. Without checking my bravery, my upbringing, or my lifelong reticence to engage in violence of any nature, I ran at him with arms outstretched.

Woodham Road has always held a special place in my heart. It was here that, during my childhood, I played games with a group of children who would become friends for years to come. Later, during my teenage pains, it was also the space where I hid when escaping my parents and the pressure cooker of home. At the end of the street, outside the post office, is where I had my first kiss. Being back there now, walking between the buildings that were much the same but noticing the small changes that had occurred in a few neat corners, I felt a sort of longing for those days lost to the past. I am not a person who usually embraces nostalgia, but there was something odd about this road that felt like I was spying on a person I knew, a stranger lost in history that I barely accepted was actually me.

### TASK 1

**Write a paragraph using the first person. It can be fiction or non-fiction, but should include thoughts and actions.**

## The First Person Narrator in Literature

### ***I am Malala* by Malala Yousafzai with Christina Lamb**

Excerpt from Chapter 20:

The air smelt of diesel, bread and kebab mixed with the stink from the stream where people still dumped their rubbish and were never going to stop despite all of the campaigning by my father and his friends. But we were used to it. Besides, soon the winter would be here, bringing the snow, which would cleanse and quieten everything.

The bus turned right off the main road at the army checkpoint. On a kiosk was a poster of crazy-eyed men with beards and caps or turbans under big letters saying WANTED TERRORISTS. The picture at the top of a man with a black turban and beard was Fazlullah. More than three years had passed since the military operation to drive the Taliban out of Swat had begun. We were grateful to the army but couldn't understand why they were still everywhere, in machine-gun nests on roofs and manning checkpoints. Even to enter our valley people needed official permission.

The road up the small hill is usually busy as it is a short cut but that day it was strangely quiet. 'Where are all the people?' I asked Moniba. All the girls were singing and chatting and our voices bounced around inside the bus.

Around that time my mother was probably just going through the doorway into our school for her first lesson since she had left school at age six.

I didn't see the two young men step out into the road and bring the van to a sudden halt. I didn't get a chance to answer their question, 'Who is Malala?' or I would have explained to them why they should let us girls go to school as well as their own sisters and daughters.

The last thing I remember is that I was thinking about the revision I needed to do for the next day. The sounds in my head were not the crack, crack, crack of three bullets, but the chop, chop, chop, drip, drip, drip of the man severing heads of chickens, and them dropping into the dirty street, one by one.

### **Discussion**

Skimming, Scanning and Basic Comprehension

1. What event is the passage describing?
2. What is the name of the most wanted terrorist?
3. What is Malala's mother doing on this day?

Identifying Techniques

4. Scan the passage and highlight the cases in which the writers use the first person.
5. Although the passage is in the first person, other characters appear in the story. How many other people can you see mentioned in the given passage?
6. Why do you think Malala's story is told in the first person? What would be different if it was told in the third person (using 'he', 'she', 'it', 'Malala' etc)?

### Text Analysis

7. What words or phrases are used to try to create a picture of the streets Malala lived on? What sights, smells and sounds are described?
8. How does the second paragraph contrast with the first. What information is included in the second paragraph that helps you understand more about Malala's hometown?
9. A contrast exists between the joy of the schoolgirls and the violence around them. What words or phrases depict joy? Which ones hint at violence?
10. Compare the first paragraph and the final paragraph. Both describe the street, but the tone has changed. What is the difference in tone?
11. The last paragraph uses onomatopoeia adjectives in groups of three (crack, crack, crack; chop, chop, chop; etc.). Why? Does this affect the writing?

### Provoking Opinion

12. What other autobiographies have you read? Did you find them enjoyable? Informative? Exciting? Underwhelming? How do you think Malala's autobiography would compare to them?
13. Do you believe that Malala Yousafzai could be considered a normal person in extraordinary circumstances; an inspiration; a hero; or something else? Why?
14. If you were to write your own autobiography, how would you map it out? Which events would you include, and how would you order it?

***The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn***  
**by Mark Twain**

Excerpt from Chapter 12:

Mornings, before daylight, I slipped into corn-fields and borrowed a watermelon, or a mushmelon, or a punkin, or some new corn, or things of that kind. Pap always said it warn't no harm to borrow things, if you was meaning to pay them back, some time; but the widow said it warn't anything but a soft name for stealing, and no decent body would do it. Jim said he reckoned the widow was partly right and pap was partly right; so the best way would be for us to pick out two or three things from the list and say we wouldn't borrow them any more - then he reckoned it wouldn't be no harm to borrow the others. So we talked it over all one night, drifting along down the river, trying to make up our minds whether to drop the watermelons, or the cantelopes, or the mushmelons, or what. But towards daylight we got it all settled satisfactory, and concluded to drop crab-apples and p'simmons. We weren't feeling just right before that, but it was all comfortable now. I was glad the way it came out, too, because crab-apples ain't ever good, and the p'simmons wouldn't be ripe for two or three months yet.

**Test**

1. The narrative voice of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* may be described as

- a) formal
- b) vernacular
- c) impersonal
- d) objective
- e) mature

2. The use of first person narration allows an insight into

- a) the narrator's family's opinions
- b) Jim's motivations
- c) the writer's background
- d) the politics of the time
- e) the narrator's thinking

3. In the passage, 'borrowing' can be seen as a euphemism for

- a) stealing
- b) buying
- c) choosing
- d) picking
- e) trading

4. 'So we talked it over all one night'. What was the purpose of this talk?

- a) To discuss the ethics of stealing
- b) To give moral justification to their actions
- c) To improve their friendship
- d) To consider whether their actions are legal
- e) To decide where they will go next

5. Compared to *I Am Malala*, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is more:

- a) mysterious
- b) realistic
- c) serious
- d) comical
- e) logical

## **TASK 2**

**Construct a scene with multiple characters, but told through first person narration.**

## II. The Second Person Narrator

### What Is It?

Second person narration is the use of 'you' in writing or storytelling.

### Why Use It?

Second person narration puts the reader into the story via the use of the term 'you' (although this 'you' may be abstract or represent people generally, rather than the specific reader). The most common reason that second person narration is used is if the writer can guess the reader's feelings and wants to use them to create an emotional attachment.

Because second person narration is widely seen as an inconvenient means of description, it is rarely used. For instance, whereas first and third person narratives can lay out a scene or story for the reader to observe, second person narration has to put the reader into the action and therefore guess (or tell) what the reader thinks.

On top of this, second person narration is often a distraction from the main plot. Instead of being able to concentrate on what action is happening, the reader may second-guess whether he/she would really act or think in this manner.

Due to these issues, fiction generally only sees second person narration in experimental short stories or specific genres in which the reader is supposed to be a part of the story (e.g. make your own adventure books). In non-fiction it often appears in marketing copy where the writer is trying to guess and manipulate the reader's feelings. It is sometimes used in songs or poems for the same purpose.

### Basic Examples

Everyone is looking elegant, but you know that she is thinking something. She stares at you across the room, and you try to read her mind: you think she is saying 'I want to get out of here; find an excuse.' And so you do.

'I'm sorry gentlemen, I've got to get some papers ready for the Cairo call tomorrow. You must excuse me.'

They make some half-hearted utterances of that being a shame, but they were never going to stop you. These people are not your friends and this life of pomp and cocktails is not real. You never grew up with this. It was much better when it was cheeseburgers and too many fries with the girl in the white dress that you approach now. The white dress is wrong. Junk food and sweatshirts. She dresses down so well. As you take her hand, holding her attention, you remember the times of shab when you became emotionally engaged. That, not this, is where malleable lives are forged into love.

It is a rainy day in early March, and you wake up to the cold expectations of work. You want a break, but there are three days before the weekend and your holiday is rationed to a meagre 11 days a year. Making breakfast, with the small consolation of coffee warming your hands, you gaze ahead, staring at the clock. It is the thing you detest the most these mornings, and yet dominates your attention. Ten minutes until the commute. Then nine. And when it gets to five you will have to start putting your shoes on and finding the keys. A thought wriggles in the back of your mind, trying to get heard. You try not to pay it any attention, because it is telling you that you are wrong, yet you know what it says. It is there every day. It says there must be a better way to live than this.

And there is. And it could be yours. At Albondigas Travel, our workers are given the flexibility to work at home to their own timetable. They can take days off, and even vacations, any time they wish. Furthermore, using Albondigas's online marketing platform, they can earn money even while they travel. And speaking of travel: isn't one of the perks of working in travel that you get to see the world? Albondigas employees are given two company-paid for trips every year. Flights, accommodation, and spending money. Yes, Albondigas has its workers' happiness covered. And it could have yours too. Call us at 10488 666219 to find out more, or simply stop by one of our high street agencies. Albondigas: let us take care of you.

## **TASK 1**

**Write a paragraph, either for storytelling or marketing purposes, in which the second person narrative voice is used to create an emotional effect on the reader.**

## The Second Person Narrator in Literature

### ***The Night* by Ray Bradbury**

Off somewhere, a car goes by, flashing its lights in the distance. There is such a complete lack of life, light and activity. Here and there, back off from where you are walking towards the ravine you see faint squares of light where people are still up. But most of the houses, darkened, are sleeping already, and there are a few lightless places where the occupants of a dwelling sit talking low dark talk on their front porches. You hear a porch swing squeaking as you walk near.

'I wish your father was home,' says Mother. Her large hand tightens around your small one. 'Just wait'll I get that boy. I'll spank him within an inch of his life.'

A razor strop hangs in the kitchen for this. You think of it, remember when Dad has doubled and flourished it with muscled control over your frantic limbs. You doubt Mother will carry out her promise.

Now you have walked another block and are standing by the holy black silhouette of the German Baptist Church at the Corner of Chapel Street and Glen Rock. In the back of the church a hundred yards away, the ravine begins. You can smell it. It has a dark sewer, rotten foliage, thick green odour. It is a wide ravine that cuts and twists across the town, a jungle by day, a place to let alone at night, Mother has often declared.

You should feel encouraged by the nearness of the German Baptist Church, but you are not — because the building is not illumined, is cold and useless as a pile of ruins on the ravine edge.

You are only eight years old, you know little of death, fear, or dread. Death is the waxen effigy in the coffin when you were six and Grandfather passed away — looking like a great fallen vulture in his casket, silent, withdrawn, no more to tell you how to be a good boy, no more to comment succinctly on politics. Death is your little sister one morning when you awaken at the age of seven, look into her crib and see her staring up at you with a blind blue, fixed and frozen stare until the men came with a small wicker basket to take her away. Death is when you stand by her high-chair four weeks later and suddenly realize she'll never be in it again, laughing and crying and making you jealous of her because she was born. That is death.

### **Discussion**

Skimming, Scanning and Basic Comprehension

1. What is the narrator ('you') doing in this passage?
2. The deaths of which two people are noted?
3. Which of the narrator's family members does he appear to be most afraid of?

Identifying Techniques

4. Quickly scan the passage and circle the cases in which the writer uses a pronoun indicating second person narration.



5. Although the author writes in the second person, the passage cannot realistically describe the reader's life. What connection with the reader is the writer trying to make instead?
6. The pronoun 'I' is used in the passage, but the narration is second person. How do you know that the use of 'I' does not affect or change the narration voice?

#### Text Analysis

7. Underline the sentence that highlights the contrast between how the church location is seen during daylight, and how it is now (nighttime).
8. Which sentence most directly states the emotions that the passage as a whole discusses?
9. Although the narrator is alive, the writer uses several images and adjectives that allude to death (discussed in the last paragraph) in the first four paragraphs. What are they?
10. In which paragraph does the narrator feel a sense of hope? How is that hope reduced?
11. In the final paragraph, the writer discusses the narrator's relationship with the two dead people. What are the differences between the narrator's relationship with these people, and how he feels about their deaths?

#### Provoking Opinion

12. The writer connects certain ideas - such as loneliness and darkness - with death. Do you think this is effective? What adjectives, states and/or ideas would you link with death?
13. Raymond Bradbury is most famous for his science fiction writing. What traits or ideas in this passage do you think could also be used in science fiction?
14. The piece is melancholic in tone. What positive ideas about life could you take from the passage?
15. Do you think the passage would be greatly affected if the writer had used first or third person narration? Would it have changed the way you viewed it?

***If On a Winter's Night a Traveler***  
**by Italo Calvino**

Excerpt from Chapter 1  
(translated from Italian):

You are about to begin reading Italo Calvino's new novel, *If on a winter's night a traveler*. Relax. Concentrate. Dispel every other thought. Let the world around you fade. Best to close the door; the TV is always on in the next room. Tell the others right away, "No, I don't want to watch TV!" Raise your voice--they won't hear you otherwise--"I'm reading! I don't want to be disturbed!" Maybe they haven't heard you, with all that racket; speak louder, yell; "I'm beginning to read Italo Calvino's new novel!" Or if you prefer, don't say anything; just hope they'll leave you alone.

Find the most comfortable position: seated, stretched out, curled up, or lying flat. Flat on your back, on your side, on your stomach. In an easy chair, on the sofa, in the rocker, the deck chair, on the hassock. In the hammock, if you have a hammock. On top of your bed, of course, or in the bed. You can even stand on your hands, head down, in the yoga position. With the book upside down, naturally.

Of course, the ideal position for reading is something you can never find. In the old days they used to read standing up, at a lectern. People were accustomed to standing on their feet, without moving. They rested like that when they were tired of horseback riding. Nobody ever thought of reading on horseback; and yet now, the idea of sitting in the saddle, the book propped against the horse's mane, or maybe tied to the horse's ear with a special harness, seems attractive to you. With your feet in the stirrups, you should feel quite comfortable for reading; having your feet up is the first condition for enjoying a read.

Well, what are you waiting for? Stretch your legs, go ahead and put your feet on a cushion, or two cushions, on the arms of the sofa, on the wings of the chair, on the coffee table, on the desk, on the piano, on the globe. Take your shoes off first. If you want to, put your feet up; if not, put them back. Now don't stand there with your shoes in one hand and the book in the other.

Adjust the light so you won't strain your eyes. Do it now, because once you're absorbed in reading there will be no budging you. Make sure the page isn't in shadow, a clotting of black letters on a gray background, uniform as a pack of mice; but be careful that the light cast on it isn't too strong, doesn't glare on the cruel white of the paper gnawing at the shadows of the letters as in a southern noonday. Try to foresee now everything that might make you interrupt your reading. Cigarettes within reach, if you smoke, and the ashtray. Anything else? Do you have to pee? All right, you know best.

**Test**

1. The 'you' in the passage refers to
  - a) the author
  - b) the reader
  - c) the narrator
  - d) the public
  - e) the story

2. The passage makes use of
- a) the author's personal experience
  - b) geographic-specific details
  - c) self-reference
  - d) quoted text
  - e) universal truths
3. The passage primarily concerns
- a) the history of literature
  - b) the nature of reading
  - c) the frivolity of art
  - d) the contrast between writer and reader
  - e) the similarities between fact and fiction
4. The style of *If On a Winter's Night a Traveler* could be described as
- a) gothic
  - b) religious
  - c) fantasy
  - d) postmodernist
  - e) poetic
5. Both Ray Bradbury's *The Night* and Italo Calvino's *If On a Winter's Night a Traveler* use second person narration in order to
- a) link to the reader's own life experience
  - b) display the difficulty of writing
  - c) create comedy
  - d) show the author's background
  - e) give an authentic tone to the action

## **TASK 2**

**Create a scene that involves more than one character but in which the action is described in second person narration.**

### III. The Third Person Narrator

#### What Is It?

Third person narration is the description of action by a removed narrator (i.e. a narrator outside the action). It does not use 'I' or 'you', but refers to characters by their names or the pronouns 'he', 'she', 'it' or 'they'.

Note that it is common in third person narration for characters to speak in the first and second person. This does not, however, change the fact that the narrator is still third person.

#### Why Use It?

Using the third person allows writers the greatest degree of flexibility: they can describe and manipulate the action from afar, move between characters, and present the entire landscape of the story (including setting, background, and thoughts in the heads of various characters). Third person narration is not limited by existing within one person's perspective in the way that first and second person narration is.

#### Basic Examples

Ruffalo woke, not in the early strings of morning, but surrounded by the tenor of darkness. Stretching his arm out he found his phone, easy via repetition, and checked the time: 2:08. Beside him his wife, Enid, was still asleep, quietly snoring and occasionally shifting as a dream of arguing with the local baker about the lack of quality in the apple-raisin danish pastries passed through her mind. If such things were possible, Ruffalo might have seen the visions seeping out into the night, a piece of her soul used and discarded. He might have wondered where dreams go when they are obsolete, or considered what other hidden waters were in the well of his partner's mind, and whether he knew her at all. But he did not see or wonder anything. He barely engaged in thought at all, but automatically rose from bed so he could check his social media in the isolation of another room.

The sound of the planes overhead shook the windows and made the children nervous. They were too young to be truly frightened because they did not yet comprehend the atrocities of wartime, but they all sensed something was wrong, and a few of the more switched on ones felt a truth, deeper in the heart and stomach and mind than their peers could manage. This truth was that the adult world, of Mrs Johnson and Principal Stokes and Janitor Roberts, was not as idyllic as the confines of school pretended. Outside, in the environments in which adults talked to adults, organising everything, there was a straining of goodness. Kitty Jones knew it best, because it was the same tension she saw at home when Father raged at Mother and Kitty was sent to her room until the noise and wickedness stopped.

#### **TASK 1**

**Write a descriptive or action paragraph using third person narration. It may involve one or more characters.**

# Chapter Two

## The Three Methods of Persuasion

### I. Ethos

#### What Is It?

Ethos is the attempt to persuade others by using an ethical appeal. It is done by making an argument sound fair, morally correct, practical, and credible.

#### How Is It Created?

Because this type of persuasion relies on the audience considering the speaker as a morally upstanding person, ethos often begins by creating a sense of ethical authority. Messages work better when delivered by people the audience admire, respect, or like, and so ensuring that the speaker's 'ethical credentials' are known is important. This can be done by mentioning a job title, experience, or other reason to be believed (although in some cases this is not necessary as the speaker is already known and respected).

To continue the ethical credibility, it is also important that the speaker is not seen as having ulterior or selfish motives. After the speaker's credentials are known, references to 'I' are often replaced by descriptions of society as a collective. Broader social gains are placed above personal gains.

On a similar notion, it is important that the speaker communicate in an educated manner - using well-chosen vocabulary and correct grammar - in order to emphasise his/her wisdom.

Promoting the importance of virtue is a part of ethos. Presenting general ways in which virtue aids society or individuals (improved relationships, less conflict, etc) is a common method. It is sometimes necessary to point out that long-term ethics, even if it involves sacrifice now, are more beneficial than short-term gain. It must also be made clear to the audience why choosing this particular approach is virtuous: the ethics of the decision must be evident if the audience isn't simply trusting the speaker.

Ethos can sometimes slip into pathos (an emotional appeal) by noting, for example, that it is important how others or history perceives you.

#### Basic Examples

So, ultimately, we have a choice: we can shut down the site and increase our profits by outsourcing the work, or we can continue with this workforce. I say it is a decision we should make not by thinking with our wallets, but by thinking with our conscience, because this company is more than numbers in an annual report. It stands in the world, visible, respected, growing and changing. And like every soul, it must stand for something. And what that something is should be sticking up for the workers who have got us here and upon whom we rely, because that is the right thing to do.

The ethical discussion of three parent children has been raised increasingly often since the technique was pioneered. People question whether it is right or an instance of science

providing the tools to 'play god'. As a doctor and a representative on the Disabilities Counselling board, I have come into contact with the suffering and, sometimes, grief that comes from genetic concerns and fragilities. Yet I have also seen the strength, positivity and humanity that can grow from adversity. This puts me in a position to describe some of my concerns regarding this technology going forward.

### **TASK 1**

**Construct a paragraph that establishes ethical credibility and begins an argument based on ethos.**

***No Logo***  
***by Naomi Klein***

Excerpt from Introduction  
'A Web of Brands':

There was a common element shared by all these scattered issues and campaigns: in each case, the focus of the attack was a brand-name corporation - Nike, Shell, Wal-Mart, McDonald's (and others: Microsoft, Disney, Starbucks, Monsanto and so on). Before I began writing this book I didn't know if these pockets of anticorporate resistance had anything in common besides their name-brand focus, but I wanted to find out. This personal quest has taken me to a London courtroom for the handing down of the verdict in the McLibel Trial; to Ken Saro-Wiwa's friends and family; to anti-sweatshop protests outside Nike Towns in New York and San Francisco; and to union meetings in the food courts of glitzy malls. It took me on the road with an "alternative" billboard salesman and on the prowl with "adjusters" out to "jam" the meaning of those billboards with their own messages. And it brought me, too, to several impromptu street parties whose organizers are determined to briefly liberate public space from its captivity by ads, cars and cops. It took me to clandestine encounters with computer hackers threatening to cripple the systems of American corporations found to be violating human rights in China.

Most memorably, it led me to factories and union squats in Southeast Asia, and to the outskirts of Manila where Filipino workers are making labor history by bringing the first unions to the export processing zones that produce the most recognizable brand-name consumer items on the planet.

Over the course of this journey, I came across an American student group that focuses on multinationals in Burma, pressuring them to pull out because of the regime's violations of human rights. In their communiqués, the student activists identify themselves as "Spiders" and the image strikes me as a fitting one for this Web-age global activism. Logos, by the force of ubiquity, have become the closest thing we have to an international language, recognized and understood in many more places than English. Activists are now free to swing off this web of logos like spy/spiders - trading information about labor practices, chemical spills, animal cruelty and unethical marketing around the world.

I have become convinced that it is in these logo-forged global links that global citizens will eventually find sustainable solutions for this sold planet. I don't claim that this book will articulate the full agenda of a global movement that is still in its infancy. My concern has been to track the early stages of resistance and to ask some basic questions. What conditions have set the stage for this backlash? Successful multinational corporations are increasingly finding themselves under attack, whether it is a cream pie in Bill Gates's face or the incessant parodying of the Nike swoosh - what are the forces pushing more and more people to become suspicious of or even downright enraged at multinational corporations, the very engines of our global growth? Perhaps more pertinently, what is liberating so many people - particularly young people - to act on that rage and suspicion?

## Discussion

### Skimming, Scanning and Basic Comprehension

1. What is the subject of Klein's book *No Logo*?
2. How many countries (including the mention of cities within those countries) appear in the passage?
3. Who are the 'spiders'?
4. Which three questions in particular will Klein attempt to answer within her book?

### Identifying Techniques

5. In what way does Klein use ethos in this introductory passage to persuade the reader that her book's arguments are valid and right?
6. What narrative voice does Klein use? Why?
7. Although Klein uses ethos to persuade the reader her argument is valid, the last paragraph also modestly undermines the extent of her argument. Which sentence in the last paragraph displays this modesty about the scope of her argument?

### Text Analysis

8. It could be perceived that Klein is against large corporations and for activism. Underline the words that show corporations in a negative light. Circle the words that elevate the activists.
9. Compare the examples listed in the first paragraph to those given in the second. How are they similar? How do they differ?
10. Klein makes connections between local cases and activities, and a global movement against a global problem. What are some examples of localised cases? Where does she discuss the global aspect of the topic?
11. The passage, and book, describes ideological conflict. Highlight the words that are conflictual or warring in tone.

### Provoking Opinion

12. Naomi Klein's book is generally critical of the extent to which logos and corporations have invaded people's lives. What are your opinions on this? Do you feel the world has too much branding? Or is branding a necessary part of modern living?
13. Of all the examples of 'taking on the system' or 'fighting the power' mentioned, which do you think is the most worthy?
14. In your opinion, is literary activism effective?



***Capital in the Twenty-First Century***  
**by Thomas Piketty**

Excerpt from Introduction  
(translated from French):

Compared with previous works, one reason why this book stands out is that I have made an effort to collect as complete and consistent a set of historical sources as possible in order to study the dynamics of income and wealth distribution over the long run. To that end, I had two advantages over previous authors. First, this work benefits, naturally enough, from a longer historical perspective than its predecessors had (and some long-term changes did not emerge clearly until data for the 2000s became available, largely owing to the fact that certain shocks due to the world wars persisted for a very long time). Second, advances in computer technology have made it much easier to collect and process large amounts of historical data.

Although I have no wish to exaggerate the role of technology in the history of ideas, the purely technical issues are worth a moment's reflection. Objectively speaking, it was far more difficult to deal with large volumes of historical data in Kuznets's time than it is today. This was true to a large extent as recently as the 1980s. In the 1970s, when Alice Hanson Jones collected US estate inventories from the colonial era and Adeline Daumard worked on French estate records from the nineteenth century, they worked mainly by hand, using index cards. When we reread their remarkable work today, or look at François Simiand's work on the evolution of wages in the nineteenth century or Ernest Labrousse's work on the history of prices and incomes in the eighteenth century or Jean Bouvier and François Furet's work on the variability of profits in the nineteenth century, it is clear that these scholars had to overcome major material difficulties in order to compile and process their data. In many cases, the technical difficulties absorbed much of their energy, taking precedence over analysis and interpretation, especially since the technical problems imposed strict limits on their ability to make international and temporal comparisons. It is much easier to study the history of the distribution of wealth today than in the past. This book is heavily indebted to recent improvements in the technology of research.

**Test**

1. The primary purpose of this passage is to
  - a) dismiss past works as inaccurate
  - b) prove the writer's literary skill
  - c) show the authority of this work
  - d) illustrate similarities between this work and its predecessors
  - e) discuss the history of economic analysis
2. The writer quotes past works in order to
  - a) show the evolution of economic analysis
  - b) create authenticity in his own argument
  - c) highlight the manner in which economics has changed
  - d) suggest complementary reading
  - e) prove their errors

3. Which of these is not a given reason why the writer believes his work superior to previous studies?

- a) The understanding of the purpose of economics has improved
- b) Technology has improved, making data collection and analysis easier
- c) Some effects from events such as the world wars are only visible now
- d) In the past, the time and energy for data collection often limited the ability for analysis
- e) His work can build on these previous studies

4. The writer is most thankful to

- a) past writers and their works
- b) advances in technology
- c) his education
- d) the readers
- e) pioneering economists

5. Compared to the passage from *No Logo*, the passage from *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* makes more use of

- a) current political trends
- b) first-hand experience
- c) proof of the writer's academic excellence
- d) distinct geographic cases
- e) established academic references

## TASK 2

**Write a short speech on a topic of your choice that uses ethos as its primary method of persuasion. Remember to stress your credibility as a speaker, and to show how this decision would create a common good or is ethically correct.**

# Chapter Three

## Stylistic Literary Techniques

### I. Imagery

#### What Is It?

Imagery is the use of descriptive language to appeal to a reader's senses. In many ways it is trying to paint a picture in the reader's mind of the sights, sounds, tastes etc. present within a scene.

Different types of imagery exist, each aiming to describe a certain sense:

Visual imagery: what can be seen  
Auditory imagery: what can be heard  
Olfactory imagery: what can be smelt  
Gustatory imagery: what can be tasted  
Tactile imagery: what can be physically felt  
Kinaesthetic imagery: how a body or object moves  
Subjective imagery: what can be emotionally felt

As well as interesting adjectives and verbs, imagery can be created using similes, metaphors, onomatopoeia, and other literary techniques that can describe a scene.

#### Why Use It?

Imagery is used to bring writing to life. It can help a reader believe or even feel the moment a writer is trying to describe.

It is used in any type of writing in which scenes are important. This includes fiction, poetry, and biographical pieces.

#### Basic Examples

The room was dark, too dim to make out more than the shadowy outline of objects at the far end, but had a crisp taste of diesel oil. The air felt close, and old, and unwelcoming. He groped his hand forwards, towards the shapes across from him, like a drunk unable to find the lights and aiming for his wife's bed. Inside his head he imagined bats, and rats, and other creatures of the night he widely avoided, and promised himself that his son would go to the basement next time instead. This was not fatherly behaviour, but he had long suspected that adulthood did not truly suit him. Not a brave man, Andy was a spring flower: a daffodil rather than the strong oak of a father a child should expect and would respect.

Vinnie fell on to the lightly-browned autumnal grass, and lay there, his stomach rising and falling as his heart beat excitedly inside his chest. Slowly, however, as he regained his breath, that little hill of abdominal flesh slowed its movement and his heart found a peace that he hadn't felt for many years. There was little to see - just the soft blue sky and a single half-

formed cloud - but his senses were tingling. The smell of the freshly cut straw, still scattered in the field beyond the small stone wall that separated the house from the farm, rolled across his face like a soft wind. Somewhere, beyond the top of his eyebrows, two birds were speaking to each other in awkward unintelligible squawks that sounded like an overweight couple arguing about trivial affairs. And, against his skin, he felt the tiny tips of the lawn trying to rise back up, pushing at his body, reaching for the light. The whole scene was, in his young uncluttered mind, the perfect final week of freedom.

## **TASK 1**

**Create a paragraph that describes the sights, sounds, smells, etc. in a scene.**

## Imagery in Literature

### ***Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad**

Excerpt from Chapter 2:

Going up that river was like travelling back to the earliest beginnings of the world, when vegetation rioted on the earth and the big trees were kings. An empty stream, a great silence, an impenetrable forest. The air was warm, thick, heavy, sluggish. There was no joy in the brilliance of sunshine. The long stretches of the water-way ran on, deserted, into the gloom of over-shadowed distances. On silvery sand-banks hippos and alligators sunned themselves side by side. The broadening waters flowed through a mob of wooded islands; you lost your way on that river as you would in a desert, and butted all day long against shoals, trying to find the channel, till you thought yourself bewitched and cut off for ever from everything you had known once -- somewhere -- far away -- in another existence perhaps.

#### **Discussion**

Skimming, Scanning and Basic Comprehension

1. In simple terms, what does the passage describe?
2. What form of transport is the character using?
3. In which continent does *Heart of Darkness* take place?

Identifying Techniques

4. How would you describe the image the author has created? What sort of atmosphere does the passage have? How has the author created this?
5. Highlight the adjectives the writer uses to describe the scenery. Do the adjectives have anything in common?
6. The writer uses some unusual nouns. Circle the nouns you feel are unusual.
7. As well as through word choice, Conrad uses sentence length and patterns to create atmosphere. What examples of sentence length and patterns affecting the mood can you find?

Text Analysis

8. How does the writer compare the past and the present?
9. How do the actions of the animals and trees differ from the emotions of the narrator?
10. Is there a difference between the writer's description of the foreground and the background?
11. What effect is created by the writer's use of em dashes in the final sentence?

Provoking Opinion

12. If you were embarking on this journey, how would you pass it? How would you feel?
13. Changing language can change a passage's mood. What words would you substitute to make this passage appear cheerful, without changing the action?
14. Conrad's life as a sailor during colonial times helped him write books involving travel to distant lands. What sort of books would your professional life be suited towards?

15. *Heart of Darkness* only has 3 chapters: the set up, the journey, and the climax. Do you think this is enough to tell a story? Can you think of any other books that have a small number of scenes?

***The Leopard***  
**by Giuseppe Tomaso di Lampedusa**

Excerpt from Chapter 2  
(translated from Italian):

Scorning the table of drinks, glittering with crystal and silver on the right, he moved left towards that of the sweet-meats. Huge sorrel babas, Mont Blancs snowy with whipped cream, cakes speckled with white almonds and green pistachio nuts, hillocks of chocolate-covered pastry, brown and rich as the top soil of the Catanian plain from which, in fact, through many a twist and turn they had come, pink ices, champagne ices, coffee ices, all parfaits and falling apart with a squelch at a knife cleft; a melody in major of crystallised cherries, acid notes of yellow pineapple, and green pistachio paste of those cakes called "Triumphs of Gluttony", shameless "Virgins' cakes" shaped like breasts. Don Fabrizio asked for some of these, and as he held them on his plate looked like a profane caricature of Saint Agatha claiming her own sliced-off breasts. "Why ever didn't the Holy Office forbid these puddings when it had the chance? 'Triumphs of Gluttony' indeed! (Gluttony, mortal sin!) Saint Agatha's sliced-off teats sold by convents, devoured at dances! Well Well!"

Round the room smelling of vanilla, wine, chypre, wandered Don Fabrizio looking for a place. Tancredi saw him from his table and clapped a hand on a chair to show there was room there; next to him was Angelica, peering at the back of a silver dish to see if her hair was in place. Don Fabrizio shook his head in smiling refusal. He went on looking; from a table he heard the satisfied voice of Pallavicino, "The most moving moment of my life..." By him was an empty place. What a bore the man was! Wouldn't it be better, after all, to listen to Angelica's refreshing if forced cordiality, to Tancredi's dry wit? No, better bore oneself than bore others.

**Test**

1. The feast could be described as
  - a) decadent
  - b) sombre
  - c) spiritual
  - d) exotic
  - e) immaculate
2. 'Triumphs of gluttony' refers to a contrast between
  - a) taste and appearance
  - b) affluence and poverty
  - c) reality and hope
  - d) temptation and religious morality
  - e) food and wine
3. Which of the following is not used in the imagery describing the food?
  - a) Smell
  - b) Memory
  - c) Music
  - d) Earth
  - e) Sound

4. Don Fabrizio's attitude to Pallavicino is

- a) empathetic
- b) amiable
- c) disdainful
- d) jovial
- e) cruel

5. Which of the following could not be applied to describe imagery within both the passages of *The Leopard* and *Heart of Darkness*?

- a) sensory
- b) wild
- c) grandiose
- d) overpowering
- e) awe-inspiring

## **TASK 2**

**Over 2 paragraphs, or one extended paragraph, create a scene using strong imagery. Remember to consider the different types of imagery (visual, audio, etc.) and the different techniques (adjectives, verbs, similes, etc.) that can be used.**



## II. Alliteration

### What Is It?

Alliteration is the repeating of a syllable or sound at the beginning of words throughout a phrase or sentence.

*Note: Alliteration doesn't have to repeat the same letter, only the same sound.*

### Why Use It?

Alliteration can add rhythm to sentences or phrases. It can also be used to create memorable phrases, or for comedic effect.

It is more commonly and obviously seen in children's poetry and nursery rhymes, and advertising slogans that want to grab attention and be memorable. It is occasionally and subtly used in literature to create rhythm and patterns (e.g. two or three words separated out across an entire sentence, rather than clustered).

### Basic Examples

The dog dug deep into the dirt.

The window where I had seen her creaked, but now not from a ghost but the wind.

Nonetheless, I cared not for the situation and withdrew to the parlour and the company of the living.

### **TASK 1**

**Create both an obvious and a subtle example of alliteration. Remember to note the different purposes of alliteration, and the types of work in which these appear.**

## Alliteration in Literature

### ***Fox in Socks* by Dr Seuss**

Excerpt:

Through three cheese trees three free fleas flew.  
While these fleas flew, freezy breeze blew.  
Freezy breeze made these three trees freeze.  
Freezy trees made these trees' cheese freeze.  
That's what made these three free fleas sneeze.

### **Discussion**

Skimming, Scanning and Basic Comprehension

1. What are the trees made of?
2. What made the fleas cold?
3. What did the fleas do because they were cold?
4. How many times does letter e appear in this stanza?

Identifying Techniques

5. On which of the following does the imagery in this stanza rely most heavily: nouns, adjectives, or verbs?
6. Circle the examples of alliteration in the piece.
7. As well as alliteration, there are two sets of rhyming words in this stanza. Highlight one set, and underline the other.
8. Apart from alliteration and rhyme, what do all five lines of this stanza have in common? Why is this important to the poem??

Text Analysis

9. What is the general tone of *Fox in Socks*? How is this achieved?
10. Is there an advantage in the writer using fleas instead of bees?
11. The writer uses several unusual or absurd word combinations. What examples of unusual word pairings are there?

Provoking Opinion

12. The given text is only one stanza from a longer poem. Do you think you would enjoy the rest of this poem? Why?
13. *Fox in Socks* is one of many works by Dr. Seuss. What do you think his main audience is? What is his work trying to achieve?
14. Can you think of any other writers, or any other work, that has a similar style to this piece?
15. Which do you think is more important to good writing: the content, or the style? Does this change depending on the format of the writing?

***Acquainted with the Night***  
***by Robert Frost***

I have been one acquainted with the night.  
I have walked out in rain—and back in rain.  
I have outwalked the furthest city light.

I have looked down the saddest city lane.  
I have passed by the watchman on his beat  
And dropped my eyes, unwilling to explain.

I have stood still and stopped the sound of feet  
When far away an interrupted cry  
Came over houses from another street,

But not to call me back or say good-bye;  
And further still at an unearthly height,  
One luminary clock against the sky

Proclaimed the time was neither wrong nor right.  
I have been one acquainted with the night.

**Test**

1. Which of the following is not mentioned in the poem?
  - a) Sadness
  - b) Distance
  - c) Avoidance
  - d) Quiet
  - e) Death
2. Within the poem, nighttime may be seen as a metaphor for
  - a) social isolation and depression
  - b) failure and self-loathing
  - c) unrequited love
  - d) inner peace and calm
  - e) contentment and fondness of life
3. 'I have stood still and stopped the sound of feet' is an example of
  - a) personification
  - b) anaphora
  - c) rhyme
  - d) alliteration
  - e) allegory
4. The final two lines suggest the poet is
  - a) hopeful about future events
  - b) aware of his mental state
  - c) angry with how his life has turned out
  - d) bored by other people

e) recovering from a bad event

5. Although hugely contrasting in tone, both *Fox in Sox* and *Acquainted with the Night* use alliteration to affect

- a) rhyme structure
- b) imagery
- c) the narrative voice
- d) authenticity
- e) cadence

## **TASK 2**

**Write a descriptive paragraph that includes subtle use of alliteration. Remember that the cases of alliteration do not have to be immediately next to each other.**

## **XVII. Parallelism**

### What Is It?

Parallelism is a technique of ‘balancing’ sentences (meaning all parts are similar in pattern or structure) by repeating a form or words.

### Why Use It?

Parallelism is a device that can make sentences easier to remember, emphasise a point, or simply be used to create an interesting skilful writing style.

It is used in prose, poetry, speeches, and advertising.

### Basic Examples

She has a large, red house by the lake, a quick, sexy car in the driveway, and a handsome elegant man on her arm.

At 18 those dull schoolyard ideas had been replaced by glorious university ideals. He fell for a girl with dark hair, then fell for another with red hair. It was a wonderful time, or at least it was until he fell for a girl with blonde hair who broke him and his spirit and his life.

### **TASK 1**

**Write a sentence using a complex form of parallelism.**

## Parallelism in Literature

### ***A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens**

Excerpt from Book the First  
'Recalled to Life'  
Chapter 1  
'The Period':

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way — in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.

There were a king with a large jaw and a queen with a plain face, on the throne of England; there were a king with a large jaw and a queen with a fair face, on the throne of France. In both countries it was clearer than crystal to the lords of the State preserves of loaves and fishes, that things in general were settled for ever.

### **Discussion**

Skimming, Scanning and Basic Comprehension

1. Which two countries are mentioned in the passage? By association, which two cities do you believe the book involves?
2. What does the writer mean by saying it was both 'the best of times' and 'the worst of times'?
3. Look at each phrase Dickens uses in the opening 'it was' list. What does each description mean?

Identifying Techniques

4. Dickens uses an uncommon narrative voice in the first paragraph. What is it?
5. What parallelism is used in this passage? Underline each example.
6. The text uses many examples of contrast and direct opposites. Why? What is Dickens saying about this time?

Text Analysis

7. How does Dickens compare the age he is describing to the age in which he is writing? Which phrase tells you this?
8. What does the phrase 'being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only' mean?
9. In the second paragraph, comparisons are made between two nations. In what ways are the two countries similar?
10. The author concludes the second paragraph by stating that 'it was clearer than crystal to the lords of the State preserves of loaves and fishes, that things in general were settled for

ever'. What does this mean? Considering the setting of the book (the start of the French Revolution), why does the author say this?

#### Provoking Opinion

11. Do you think a generation can be both the best and worst of times? Also considering the other descriptions Dickens uses, how do you feel about the present generation?
12. Many people state the beginning of *A Tale of Two Cities* as one of the best beginnings to a novel written in English. What do you think? Do you like it? Can you think of any other famous openings to books?
13. At the heart of *A Tale of Two Cities* is the notion of class. Do you feel that there is a class system? If so, how do you think the outlook of the classes is the same, and how does it differ, today?
14. *A Tale of Two Cities* notes how, even though they are different countries, there is often a link between the actions of England and France. Do you think that neighbouring countries do influence each other's behaviour, thinking, and state?

**Jamila**  
**by Chingiz Aytmatov**

Excerpt  
(translated from Russian):

I was astounded at the passion and fire of the melody itself. I could not describe it then, nor can I now. Was it just his voice or something more tangible emerging from his very soul that could arouse such emotion in another person, and bring one's innermost thoughts to life?

If only I could recreate his song. It contained few words, yet even without words it revealed a great human soul. I have never heard such singing before or since. This tune was neither Kirgiz nor Kazakh, yet in it was something of both. His music combined the very best melodies of the two unrelated peoples and had woven them into a single, unrepeatable song. It was a song of the mountains and the steppe, first soaring up into the sky like the Kirgiz mountains, then rolling free like the Kazakh steppe.

I listened in amazement. So that's what he's like, I thought. Who would have thought it?

As we crossed the steppe along the soft, beaten track, Daniyar's singing took wing, songs followed one another with astonishing facility. Was he really so gifted? What had happened to him? It was as if he had been saving himself for this very day. His hour had come at last.

And all of a sudden I began to understand the strangeness that made people shrug and mock; his dreaminess; his love of solitude; his silent manner. Now I understood why he sat on the look-out hill of an evening and why he spent a night by himself on the riverbank, why he constantly hearkened to sounds others could not hear and why his eyes would suddenly gleam and his drawn eyebrows twitch. He was a man deeply in love. I felt it was not simply a love for another person, it was somehow an uncommon, expansive love for life and earth. He had kept this love within himself, in his music, in his being. A person with no feeling, no matter how good his voice, could never have sung like that.

**Test**

1. The passage primarily discusses
  - a) a free spirit
  - b) jealousy
  - c) sibling conflict
  - d) the pastoral lifestyle
  - e) a love affair
2. Which of the following is not used to describe Daniyar's singing?
  - a) A blend of two people's cultures
  - b) Born from a love of life
  - c) Inspired by a great romance
  - d) Revealing a great human soul
  - e) Soaring and rolling



3. The narrator suggests people find Daniyar's typical behavior
- a) arrogant
  - b) warm
  - c) idealistic
  - d) aloof
  - e) patriotic
4. What does the sentence 'His hour had come at last' imply in this passage?
- a) Daniyar was embarrassed of his talent
  - b) The world had been waiting for Daniyar to mature
  - c) This was the best performance Daniyar had ever done
  - d) The narrator could see Daniyar was going to be famous
  - e) Daniyar finally had an opportunity to show his talent
5. Both the passage from *A Tale of Two Cities* and that from *Jamila* use parallelism to
- a) form lists
  - b) explore a character's psychological state
  - c) create an argument
  - d) evoke imagery
  - e) heighten suspense

## **TASK 2**

**Write a paragraph in which parallelism is a prominent technique.**

# Chapter Four

## Common Literary Themes

### I. Social Alienation

#### What Is It?

Social alienation is the feeling of detachment from society - a feeling of being an 'outsider' who doesn't connect to normal social behaviour.

#### What Are Some Common Characteristics?

The most common sign of social alienation as a theme is an isolated main character that does not appear to have any meaningful friendships or connections. This character usually wants to be somewhere else.

Cynicism about society and a general malaise or confusion about circumstances and situations also suggest a character who doesn't belong. This sort of character doesn't want to engage with others.

Characters who do not adhere to normal daily routines or times - such as those who sleep during the day and wander the city at night - are also common.

Sometimes social alienation is experienced by small groups, with two or three characters who only talk to each other and disregard wider society. Stories about social alienation usually occur in city settings, but can exist in the countryside.

#### How Is It Created?

Use of internal monologues rather than dialogues  
Fleeting one-time meetings with strangers that do not turn into friendships  
Scenes of alcohol abuse, particular alone  
Cynical observations or insults about society  
An unhappy character

## Alienation in Literature

### ***The Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger**

Excerpt from Chapter 12:

I was surrounded by jerks. I'm not kidding. At this other tiny table, right to my left, practically on top of me, there was this funny-looking guy and this funny-looking girl. They were around my age, or maybe just a little older. It was funny. You could see they were being careful as hell not to drink up the minimum too fast. I listened to their conversation for a while, because I didn't have anything else to do. He was telling her about some pro football game he'd seen that afternoon. He gave her every single goddam play in the whole game--I'm not kidding. He was the most boring guy I ever listened to. And you could tell his date wasn't even interested in the goddam game, but she was even funnier-looking than he was, so I guess she had to listen. Real ugly girls have it tough. I feel so sorry for them sometimes. Sometimes I can't even look at them, especially if they're with some dopey guy that's telling them all about a goddam football game. On my right, the conversation was even worse, though. On my right there was this very Joe Yale-looking guy, in a gray flannel suit and one of those flitty-looking Tattersall vests. All those Ivy League bastards look alike. My father wants me to go to Yale, or maybe Princeton, but I swear, I wouldn't go to one of those Ivy League colleges, if I was dying, for God's sake. Anyway, this Joe Yale-looking guy had a terrific-looking girl with him. Boy, she was good-looking. But you should've heard the conversation they were having. In the first place, they were both slightly crooked. What he was doing, he was giving her a feel under the table, and at the same time telling her all about some guy in his dorm that had eaten a whole bottle of aspirin and nearly committed suicide. His date kept saying to him, "How horrible . . . Don't, darling. Please, don't. Not here." Imagine giving somebody a feel and telling them about a guy committing suicide at the same time! They killed me.

### **Discussion**

Skimming, Scanning and Basic Comprehension

1. What is the narrator doing in this passage?
2. Where had the couple been that afternoon?
3. Why does the narrator think 'real ugly girls have it tough'?

Identifying Techniques

4. In what narrative voice is *The Catcher in the Rye* told?
5. What hyperbole is used in the passage? Underline it.
6. What irony exists in 'Joe Yale's' storytelling?

Text Analysis

7. The passage describes two different couples. How do these couples compare?

8. Why does the writer use the term 'Joe Yale'? What type of person is being described?
9. What does the narrator think about 'Joe Yale' types? What evidence in the text supports this?
10. The narrator sees a contrast between the men and women on these dates. What is the contrast?
11. What contrast exists between the dating couples and the narrator?

#### Theme Exploration

12. How does the writer create a sense of the narrator's social alienation within the passage?

#### Provoking Opinion

13. The narrator is dismissive of Ivy League universities and students. Do you think that certain organisations create certain types of people?
14. Social alienation and loneliness, across all ages, have been identified as growing problems. What do you think is causing these problems to become more common? How could they be solved?
15. Both the dates are described negatively. Is dating enjoyable?

**Wide Sargasso Sea**  
**by Jean Rhys**

Excerpt from Part 3:

When night comes, and she has had several drinks and sleeps, it is easy to take the keys. I know now where she keeps them. Then I open the door and walk into their world. It is, as I always knew, made of cardboard. I have seen it before somewhere, this cardboard world where everything is coloured brown or dark red or yellow that has no light in it. As I walk along the passages I wish I could see what is behind the cardboard. They tell me I am in England but I don't believe them. We lost our way to England. When? Where? I don't remember, but we lost it. Was it that evening in the cabin when he found me talking to the young man who brought me my food? I put my arms round his neck and asked him to help me. He said, 'I didn't know what to do, sir.' I smashed the glasses and plates against the porthole. I hoped it would break and the sea come in. A woman came and then an older man who cleared up the broken things on the floor. He did not look at me while he was doing it. The third man said drink this and you will sleep. I drank it and I said, 'It isn't like it seems to be.' - 'I know. It never is,' he said. And then I slept. When I woke up it was a different sea. Colder. It was that night, I think, that we changed course and lost our way to England. This cardboard house where I walk at night is not England.

**Test**

1. Which of the following does not describe the narrator's reaction to arriving in England?
  - a) Alienated
  - b) Angry
  - c) Disillusioned
  - d) Disorientated
  - e) Engrossed
2. The tone of the passage suggests the narrator is
  - a) envious of the locals
  - b) nervous about her new surroundings
  - c) eager to make friends
  - d) lacking in modesty
  - e) suffering from depression
3. The narrator's isolation is highlighted by
  - a) not knowing the names of other people
  - b) smashing the glasses and plates
  - c) asking others numerous questions
  - d) reminiscing about family back home
  - e) immersing herself in fantasies
4. The use of questions in the passage is to
  - a) emphasise confusion at the situation
  - b) prove others are interested in her background
  - c) create polite but meaningless small talk
  - d) show a keenness to learn about her new environment
  - e) challenge the reader's perception of England

5. Social alienation is both *The Catcher in the Rye* and *Wide Sargasso Sea* manifests itself as
- a) violence against others
  - b) a desire to be elsewhere
  - c) friendship with another social outcast
  - d) hatred or disdain for a person's surroundings
  - e) ennui at the frivolous chatter of locals

## VII. Post-colonialism

### What Is It?

Postcolonial literature is writing by people whose countries or homelands were colonised (the colonisation generally - but not always - done by white western Europeans). It attempts to give a voice to those who were on the receiving end of colonialism.

As well as looking at the act of colonising from the colonised population's point of view, post-colonial literature also speaks of the issues that happened once colonisation was undertaken, such as changes in religion, social status, laws, ruling classes, traditional cultural activities, and language.

### What Are Some Common Characteristics?

Postcolonial literature differs from colonial literature in that it gives a voice to the colonised population. This means that the culture, ideas and habits of the indigenous population make up much of the writing.

To highlight the effect colonialism has on the population, it is common to show how the colonised population changes due to the act of being colonised. This often shows the death of traditional ways of life. The tone of such changes is usually seen negatively, but not always: sometimes elements of the traditional life may also be depicted as 'backwards' or in need of improvement.

Another frequently used writing technique is to create a disparity or division between characters who adapt to colonial ways versus those who hold on to the past life.

Identity is a major theme in postcolonial works. Because the population is changed, often forever, by the act of colonisation, writers will often look at what it means to be a person from this area now. Concepts such as changed beliefs and language are identified, as well as sometimes questioning who can claim to be genuinely representing the culture or society.

### How Is It Created?

The writer represents an authentic voice

An examination of a society affected by colonialism, told from the colonised point of view.

A timeframe either during or after the event of colonisation.

Social commentary

***Things Fall Apart*  
by Chinua Achebe**

Excerpt from Chapter 18:

The young church in Mbanta had a few crises early in its life. At first the clan had assumed that it would not survive. But it had gone on living and gradually become stronger. The clan was worried, but not overmuch. If a gang of efulefu decided to live in the Evil Forest it was their own affair. When one came to think of it, the Evil Forest was a fit home for such undesirable people. It was true they were rescuing twins from the bush, but they never brought them into the village. As far as the villagers were concerned, the twins still remained where they had been thrown away. Surely the earth goddess would not visit the sins of the missionaries on the innocent villagers?

But on one occasion the missionaries had tried to overstep the bounds. Three converts had gone into the village and boasted openly that all the gods were dead and impotent and that they were prepared to defy them by burning all their shrines.

'Go and burn your mothers' genitals' said one of the priests. The men were seized and beaten until they streamed with blood. After that nothing happened for a long time between the church and the clan.

**Discussion**

Skimming, Scanning and Basic Comprehension

1. Why was the clan not worried about the church at first?
2. Were the three people who insulted the gods foreigners or locals?
3. What brought an end of interaction between the clan and the church 'for a long time'?

Identifying Techniques

4. Where does a rhetorical question appear in the passage?
5. What derogatory epithet, or nickname, is given to the members of the church?

Text Analysis

6. What does the phrase 'overstep the bounds' mean in this case? What does it imply about the previous relationship between the clan and the church?
7. Compare the attitude of the established villagers and the new church. Although they are in conflict, in what ways are they similar?
8. How does the writer show, within this passage, that the local clan is not a completely innocent victim?
9. How is religion portrayed in this passage? Is it positive or negative?

Theme Exploration

10. What common post-colonial literary concepts appear in this passage from *Things Fall Apart*?



### Provoking Opinion

11. An incident of violence is mentioned at the end of the passage. Is violence against a colonial group/force merited? What is the best method for dealing with an arriving colonial power?
12. While *Things Fall Apart* laments the idea of colonialism, it also highlights the cultural failings in the colonised. Is it the responsibility of outside cultures to end practices they deem inhumane when seen in another culture?
13. God and religion plays an important part in *Things Fall Apart*, especially when two different sets of beliefs meet. Do you think religion is helpful or a hinderance in conflict situations?
14. What do you think are the biggest losses a local culture potentially faces when a new group arrives? Is co-existence possible?

***A Bend in the River***  
**by V.S. Naipaul**

Excerpt from Part 2, Chapter 7:

Our ideas of men were simple; Africa was a place where we had to survive. But in the Domain it was different. There they could scoff at trade and gold, because in the magical atmosphere of the Domain, among the avenues and new houses, another Africa had been created. In the Domain Africans - the young men at the polytechnic - were romantic. They were not always present at the parties or gatherings; but the whole life of the Domain was built around them. In the town 'African' could be a word of abuse or disregard; in the Domain it was a bigger word. An 'African' there was a new man whom everybody was busy making, a man about to inherit - the important man that years before, at the lycée, Ferdinand had seen himself as.

In the town, when they were at the lycée, Ferdinand and his friends - certainly his friends - were still close to village ways. When they were off duty, not at the lycée or with people like myself, they had merged into the African life of the town. Ferdinand and Metty - or Ferdinand and any African boy - could become friends because they had so much in common. But in the Domain there was no question of confusing Ferdinand and his friends with the white-uniformed servants.

Ferdinand and his friends had a clear idea of who they were and what was expected of them. They were young men on government scholarships; they would soon become administrative cadets in the capital, serving the President. The Domain was the President's creation; and in the Domain they were in the presence of foreigners who had a high idea of the new Africa. Even I, in the Domain, began to feel a little of the romance of that idea.

**Test**

1. Which of the following does not describe how people in the Domain see being African?
  - a) An opportunity
  - b) A source of pride
  - c) Forward-looking
  - d) Aspirational
  - e) Historically meaningful
  
2. Compared to those in the Domain, the town's people view the term 'African' as
  - a) irrelevant
  - b) glorious
  - c) racist
  - d) shameful
  - e) agricultural
  
3. The passage notes that Ferdinand's behaviour
  - a) switches depending on his surroundings
  - b) is arrogant towards those with whom he was once friends
  - c) is shallowly mimicking the wealthy
  - d) is absurd
  - e) deteriorates when in the company of the powerful

4. Which of the following is not said or implied about the concept of the Domain?

- a) It is manufactured
- b) It is supported by foreigners
- c) The promises it offers for the future can be intoxicating
- d) It is rooted in traditional culture
- e) It alters the way people act socially

5. Both the passages from *Things Fall Apart* and *A Bend in the River* hint at

- a) a naïvety within pre-colonial lifestyles
- b) shallowness born from abandoning old practices
- c) conflict between the traditional and new local culture
- d) the need to revolt against oppression
- e) susceptibility due to a mistrust of local leaders

# Chapter Five

## Chronology of English Literature and Literary Movements

### I. Old English

#### Time Period

c. 5th century - Pre-14th century

The first known 'Old English' texts date from around the 7th century.

#### Background

Prior to the 5th century, languages in the British Isles were very localised. An early language labelled 'Common Brittonic' had splintered into a variety of regional variations, and people generally spoke Celtic and Pictish languages depending on their geography. The Roman occupation of what is now England and southern Scotland (AD 49 - 409) introduced both Latin and a British variant of Latin, but this did not replace local languages in many places.

However, Anglo-Saxon settlers arrived into what is now England and southern Scotland during the 5th to 7th centuries, bringing with them a version of Germanic languages. This language would come to dominate the south of Britain - the north continued to use older languages, mixed with Norse influences, for some time - and created what is now called 'Old English'. Yet Old English was not the same in all areas, as it was again open to regional variation (primarily 4 main variants).

The demise of Old English began with the Norman Conquest (1066), which brought French language and influences to the country, and by the middle of the 13th century most Old English had been replaced by what is now commonly referred to as 'Middle English'.

#### Common Traits

For modern readers, the most noticeable aspect of Old English is the unfamiliarity of the words. Some vocabulary still exists (perhaps 15% of the original language), but spellings have altered and evolved massively over time. It is therefore very difficult for modern readers to understand Old English without translation.

Furthermore, the amount of Old English texts available for study is small, meaning a limited knowledge of the ideas about which people were writing. Religion and people's personal journeys (especially spiritual pilgrimage) frequently turn up in fragments. However, the greatest known work of the time, Beowulf, is a hero's adventure in a style similar to those that appear in Greek and Roman mythology (kings, travel, mythical beasts, fighting, death etc.).

#### Famous Authors

Although there are written examples of Old English, very few denote the author. Cædmon - who lived in a monastery - is the earliest known writer using Old English. Bede, Aldhelm and Cynewulf are other known writers.

### Famous Texts

Most known Old English texts are religious or refer to royalty of the time. Many are found carved into stones at significant sites.

Perhaps the most famous Old English text is *Beowulf* (c. 700-1000AD). It is generally deemed the oldest known long poem in Old English, and its author is unknown.

***The Dream of the Rood***

Excerpt  
Lines 1-12:

Hwæt! Ic swefna cyst        secgan wylle,  
h[w]æt me gemætte        to midre nihte,  
syðþan reordberend        reste wunedon!  
þuhte me þæt ic gesawe        syllicre treow  
on lyft lædan,        leohte bewunden,  
beama beorhtost.        Eall þæt beacen wæs  
begoten mid golde.        Gimmas stodon  
fægere æt foldan sceatum,        swylce þær fife wæron  
uppe on þam eaxlegespanne.        Beheoldon þær engel dryhtnes ealle,  
fægere þurh forðgesceaft. Ne wæs ðær huru fracodes gealga,  
ac hine þær beheoldon halige gastas,  
men ofer moldan, ond eall þeos mære gesceaft.

*\*Listen! The choicest of visions I wish to tell  
which came as a dream in middle-night  
after voice-bearers lay at rest.  
It seemed that I saw a most wondrous tree  
born aloft, wound round by light  
brightness of beams. All was that beacon  
sprinkled with gold. Gems stood  
fair at earth's corners; there likewise five  
shone on the shoulder-span. All there beheld the Angel of God,  
fair through predestiny. Indeed, that was no wicked one's gallows,  
but holy souls beheld it there,  
men over earth, and all this great creation.*

## **Beowulf**

Excerpt from Prologue  
'The Rise of the Danish Nation'  
Lines 1-11:

HWÆT, WE GAR-Dēna in geardagum,  
þeodcyninga þrym gefrunon,  
hu ða æpelingas ellen fremedon!  
oft Scyld Scefing sceaþena þreatum,  
monegum mægþum meodosetla ofteah,  
egsode eorlas, syððanærest wearð  
feasceaft funden; he þæs frofre gebad,  
weox under wolcnum weorðmyndum þah,  
oð þæt him æghwylc ymbsittendra  
ofer hronrade hyran scolde,  
gomban gyldan; þæt wæs god cyning!

*\* LO, praise of the prowess of people-kings  
of spear-armed Danes, in days long sped,  
we have heard, and what honor the athelings won!  
Oft Scyld the Scefing from squadroned foes,  
from many a tribe, the mead-bench tore,  
awing the earls. Since erst he lay  
friendless, a foundling, fate repaid him:  
for he waxed under welkin, in wealth he throve,  
till before him the folk, both far and near,  
who house by the whale-path, heard his mandate,  
gave him gifts: a good king he!*

# Chapter Six

## Other Literary Terms to Know

### I. Narrative Techniques

#### Stream of Consciousness

##### What Is It?

Stream of consciousness writing is when the narrative reads like a person's continuous thoughts inside their head. It does not stop for deliberate plot points, etc., but rather is a non-stop piece of writing that is meant to resemble the continuous but non-linear thinking that occurs within the mind.

A stream of consciousness is also called an 'internal monologue'.

##### What Are Some Common Characteristics?

When people think, they seldom hold continuous linear thoughts on a single subject for long, instead getting side-tracked by external stimuli, tangents, or memory. Stream of consciousness writing therefore includes the random diversions that might make no sense to the story but are present in the narrator's mind.

In another effort to replicate how the mind thinks, a stream of consciousness will also flit between thinking about something exterior to thinking about the self.

Stream of consciousness writing seldom uses punctuation as people do not think in neat structured sentences.

As it is based on how a person thinks, stream of consciousness writing almost exclusively uses the first person (although some post-modernists have attempted to play with the format).

##### Basic Examples

The weather this morning is quite cold but quite bright, not so bright and I'm not sure whether I like it and whether I like living here, maybe I should find a new place. A dog, there is a dog barking I think it is to the left but maybe in front, definitely below on the ground, that bit outside my window that I never visit because it is really just mud and some grass and a bush. Yesterday I saw a plastic bag in the tree - yes, it's still there, quite ugly, another reason I don't think I should live here. Everything is so dirty. An ugly place. Perhaps I can have time this afternoon to think of another place to live, but I always do this and never go anywhere because...well, because I am too frightened, or have no money, or need a new job and I don't want a new job because every job is awful and working for somebody else is appalling. But I really should go because why would I stay here forever? There are places out there without dogs and mud and bags in trees. Yes, I think I should go, this month or maybe in June.



## Character Voice

### What Is It?

Character voice is the voice, including way of thinking, acting and speaking, that is specific to a particular character. It helps give the character a unique personality.

By giving each character its own voice, stories can become more varied as the different personalities react with each other in their own specific ways. It also allows the story to move forward as characters react to situations with their own motivations.

Writers generally have a choice of whether they want their work to represent their own (ie the writer's) voice, or to create a series of characters.

### What Are Some Common Characteristics?

One of the most obvious parts of character voice is speech patterns. By making a character speak in a particular way, it may separate that character from others, as well as give some idea of the geographical, educational and philosophical background of that individual.

If writing in 3rd person, it is also possible to go inside different characters' heads and examine their methods of thinking. This is a quick way to learn their different motivations.

One adage in writing is 'show, don't tell'. The way that certain characters behave can also help build up their voices, as the reader associates certain types of actions with certain individuals.

Mentions of a character's backstory and personality-building experiences can also be a method of crafting a distinct character.

### Basic Examples

Thomas looked at the man with an air of disgust.

"I'm sorry, sir, but I really don't wish to discuss this matter, or any matter, with you. We have absolutely nothing in common."

"Aye, t'at may bee, b't I d'nae fink yoo shu'd bee n sich a herree to git rid o me. I c'n elp yoo ith yer problem."

"My problem? My good man, you have no idea about my problem!"

"I no yer problem jest fine. I've livved yer problem. Back won I wes a teen, 'for I 'came dis mess'o'a'man ya see now, I noo da shoos o' deelin' ith the gangs. I noo how dey made der munee, hoo dey delt ith, und how dey cud bee browkun. Und 'f I cud elp yoo fight back, 'ell, U'd bee 'appy to 'ave my revenge. Dey guv me dis mis'rable life. Yeh, I doo fair wan my revenge."

With that, the apparently beastly man placed his hand on the right sleeve of the wealthier man's jacket.

The addict may have been a mystery, but Thomas was not going to spend any more time here. He shook himself free, briefly examined the jacket's material for signs of dirt and poverty, saw none but brushed off the perceived soiling anyway, and walked away. It was not, however, the last time the two men would meet.

## Unreliable Narrator

### What Is It?

An unreliable narrator is a narrator whose version of events is not 100% guaranteed to be correct, or whose credibility is compromised and therefore cannot be wholly trusted.

### What Are Some Common Characteristics?

The unreliable narrator is usually presented via first person accounts, as these are most like an eyewitness's potentially erroneous version of events. However, second and third person narration can be used.

It must be made clear to the audience that the narration has the potential to be wrong. This is usually done by emphasising the narrator as merely a witness to other events. However, it can also be achieved by showing personal flaws in the narrator - drunkenness, madness, a propensity for lying - or using elements in the environment, such as the weather or darkness, to cloud the facts. Ambiguous letters and statements that the narrator may misunderstand are also tools for undermining his reliability.

However, it is not always necessary for the audience to think the narrator could be mistaken. If using a twist device that shows that the whole story has been told incorrectly, it may suit the writer to keep the reader believing the narrator for as long as possible, with only possible clues about the errors dropped along the way.

When using a twist or reveal, where the errors in the narration are exposed and the truth - or a contradictory version of events - is shown, it is common to have a dramatic scene in which the errors are exposed.

In some works, two or more contradictory narrators can be used, thus making them all unreliable and the truth somewhere in the middle.

The use of uncertain phrases, such as 'I think', 'it seemed as if', 'from where I was standing it looked like', are common in unreliable narration.

### Basic Examples

"Ms. Penwright, could you tell me what you saw on the night of the murder?"

"Yes, of course."

"Objection! I would like it to be on record that the witness, Ms. Penwright, had been drinking that night."

"Your objection is noted. But please, nonetheless, Ms. Penwright, proceed in telling us what you saw."

"Very well. As the counsellor rightly says, I had been drinking, at the Dog and Bone pub on Fenchurch Street. I was with two of my friends - Andrea Liputti and Shantelle Bonze, who can verify this - and must have left at around 1.15 in the morning, possibly 1.20, when the barman told us it was closing time. Andrea and Shantelle live uptown, so they took a cab, while I walked home. It is a well-lit street with plenty of security cameras, except on the corner of Jackson and King, and I always walk on the other side of the street there just in case. Anyway, it was just as I was coming up to this corner that I saw the strangest thing. At first it looked like a dog, but one standing on its two hind legs, but as I got closer I could see that it certainly wasn't a dog. And it didn't sound like a dog either, because it seemed to wheeze like a far larger animal. If I were to hazard a guess I would say that it was human, a man, but a man with an outline of the oddest facial features."

## Epistolary Voice

### What Is It?

In literature, the epistolary voice is when the narrative is told through documents and letters.

### What Are Some Common Characteristics?

One of the most used epistolary formats is the journal. In this format, a found journal can reveal the story of a person who is missing, dead, or keeping secrets.

Letters between characters that describe recent events is another frequent epistolary narrative device. This reveals important action that is occurring away from the main plot, via characters who are not present. Due to the personal nature of letters, it is also an effective way to reveal deep emotions in characters, such as love, fear, or anxiety.

Other documents that can appear are bank books; legal agreements; birth, death and marriage certificates; medical records; and property deeds. These are all usually used to either build backstory, or to expose a secret.

By using the epistolary voice, the writer can quickly move characters between locations, skip as much time as desired, and reveal information as it is 'discovered'. It is not necessary for the character to be alive or be seen, or for the relevant information to be exposed in chronological order.

### Basic Examples

May 7th,  
12 Itill Street,  
Nottingham

My Dear Augustine,

I am writing to you with a sense of displeasure, not in you or your actions, but in what I have recently discovered to be true about Madame Swann. It appears, if all that I have seen and heard is correct, that she has been keeping a far deeper secret from us than her daughter, and it is a secret that relates to another birth: her own. I do not wish to make you anxious, my dear, but as far as I can gather, Madame Swann is not the rightful owner of Windfield Hall.

I shall not explain everything to you now, for I must hurry to London to meet with the solicitor Mr Rogers and the lawyer Mrs Macon. This situation must be resolved before the wedding, and there is really little time. However, in case you do not dare to believe me - and it is such a wild truth that I can understand such apprehension - I have included a copy of the birth certificate I found at the Office of Records.

Please do not despair, My Dear Augustine. We will resolve this issue soon.

Yours, etc.

Mylott