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| Rhetorical Devices |
| 1. **Hyperbole** |
| 1. **Understatement** |
| 1. **Litotes** |
| 1. **Antithesis** |
| 1. **Hypophora** |
| 1. **Simile** |
| 1. **Metaphor** |
| 1. **Analogy** |
| 1. **Allusion** |
| 1. **Eponym** |
| 1. **Sententia** |
| 1. **Exemplum** |
| 1. **Rhetorical question** |
| 1. **Procatalepsis** |
| 1. **Distinctio** |

**Hyperbole:**is exaggeration used to give writing and speech some emphasis. It is never meant or understood literally. E.g *I am so hungry that I can eat a camel.* The speaker here is simply very hungry or starving, but he doesn’t mean that he is looking for camel meat.

**Understatement:** satirical in nature, understatement is a rhetorical form in which the force of a descriptive statement is less than what one would normally expect. *Leonardo da Vinci had a good idea or two.*

**Litotes:** emphasizes its point by using a word opposite to the condition. For example, instead of saying, “The trip across the mountain was a hard journey,” we may say “The trip was no easy journey.”

**Antithesis:** uses contrast in language to bring out a contrast in ideas. The rhetorical contrast of ideas is built by means of parallel arrangements of words, clauses, and sentences. E.g *They promised freedom and provided slavery.*

**Hypophora:** is the technique of asking a question, then proceeding to answer it. E.g “Why am I for putting more police officers on the streets? Their presence prevents crime.”

**Simile:** is a technique of comparing two things that are already somewhat related. *John slept like a log. Mary is as sweet as an apple pie.*

**Metaphor:** is used to compare two things directly without ‘as’ or ‘like’. *The sun was a furnace. The smoke was cotton balls billowing from the chimney.*

**Analogy:** compares two things for a specific purpose; it makes use of something already well known to explain something that is less well known. E.g *Just as a parent is responsible for damages caused by his minor children, so too should a dog owner be responsible for his dog.*

**Allusion:** is a reference to some fairly well-known event, place or person. It can evoke a negative or positive feeling. *This new war was Afghanistan all over again.*

**Eponym:** is a kind of allusion that refers to a specific famous person to link his or her attributes with someone else. If the famous person is well known for more than one distinct attribute, make it clear for the audience. For example, Stalin was both cunning and vicious so when you refer make it clear for the audience what quality do you refer to. E.g *He has the cunningness of Stalin.*  *He had the strength of Hercules.*

**Sententia:** is a fancy term for a quotation, maxim, or wise saying which is generally well known though the source is less well known. Sententia is used for summing up an argument. E.g. *“As is often said, a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.”*

**Exemplum:** provides readers with an example to illustrate the writer’s point: *The U.S. government gives it citizens freedom;* *one illustration of this is that we have right to criticize our leaders.”*

**Rhetorical Question:** is one in which the answer is merely implied. Usually, a rhetorical question is phrased in such a way that it requires either a simple “yes” or “no” answer. A well-used rhetorical question will engage and excite the readers. Overusing rhetorical questions will weaken their effectiveness.

Examples: *“For what can war but endless war breed?” , “Don’t you want to know how to use technology in the classroom well?”*

**Procatalepsis:** directly addresses objections; the writers use this device to show the readers that they (writers) have anticipated the readers’ concerns and have already thought them through.

Example: *“Many other experts want to classify Sanskrit as an extinct language, but I do not.”*

**Distinctio:** is a rhetorical device which elaborates on the definition of a word, to make sure three is no misunderstanding.

Example: *“Before we can discuss immigration, we need to agree on the fact that there are huge differences between legal and illegal immigration.”*

**Exercise:**

**Read the following examples of rhetorical devices and identify the device used in each example.**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 1. “At these words, the people became so silent you could hear a beating heart from across the room.”

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 2. “Whatever his faults, Sir Isaac Newton did have a fair good mind for science.”

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 3. “In this age of modernity, can we truly condone such horrific acts?”

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 4. She had the smile of a newborn babe.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 5. “That’s one small step for [a] man, one giant leap for mankind.”

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 6. “How do we know this to be true? We have observed it in the lab.”

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 7. “To many students high school looks like a prison.”

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 8. “As the endless waves wash eternally upon the shore, so does true love overwhelm the soul.”

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 9. “We would do well to remember, however, that all is fair in love and war.”

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 10. “At this point, we have a short time left – a short time being less than fifty years.”

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 11. “Chocolate cake is my Achilles heel.”

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 12. “Sports heroes should not be models that children should emulate. Sports figures have become increasingly more disrespectful of each other and of the public in general. “

Answer Key:

1. Hyperbole
2. Understatement
3. Rhetorical Question
4. Metaphor
5. Antithesis
6. Hypophora
7. Simile
8. Analogy
9. Sententia
10. Distincto
11. Allusion
12. Exemplum