

AP Style Analysis Notes

Domain	Questions to Ask
Imagery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensory details • Symbols • Allusions • Words/phrases • Effect/intent • Connection to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mood/tone ○ Theme ○ Plot ○ Character 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What sensory information do I find in the language: color, scents, sounds, tastes, or textures? • What is the author trying to convey or achieve by using this imagery? • Are these images part of a larger pattern or structure within the text (e.g., does it connect to one of the major themes)? • What figures of speech—metaphors, similes, analogies, personification—does the writer use? How do they affect the meaning of the text? What is the author trying to accomplish by using them?
Diction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slang • Colloquial • Jargon • Dialect • Concrete • Abstract • Denotation • Connotation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which of the following categories best describes the diction in the passage or text? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Low or informal (e.g., dialect, slang, or jargon) ○ Elevated or formal language ○ Abstract and concrete diction ○ Denotation and connotation • What effect is the author trying to achieve through the use of a specific type of diction? • What does the author's use of diction suggest about his or her attitude toward the subject, event, or character? • What are the connotations of a given word used in a particular context? (To <i>begin</i>, you might ask if the word(s) have a positive or negative connotation, then consider them in the specific context.) • What words would best describe the diction in a specific passage or the text in general?
Syntax <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentence structure • Sentence patterns <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declarative • Imperative • Interrogative • Exclamatory • Simple • Compound • Complex • Comp-Complex • Loose/Cumulative • Periodic • Balanced • Inversion • Interruption • Juxtaposition • Parallelism • Repetition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Punctuation</i>: How does the author punctuate the sentence and to what extent does the punctuation affect the meaning? • <i>Structure</i>: How are words and phrases arranged within the sentence? What is the author trying to accomplish through this arrangement? • How would you characterize the author's syntax in this text? • <i>Changes</i>: Are there places where the syntax clearly changes? If so, where, how, and why? • <i>Sentence length</i>: How many words are in the different sentences? Do you notice any pattern (e.g., a cluster of short sentences of a particular type)? • <i>Devices</i>: How would you describe the author's use of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Independent and dependent clauses ○ Coordinating, subordinating, or correlative conjunctions ○ Repetition ○ Parallelism ○ Fragments ○ Comparisons • <i>Sentence beginnings</i>: How does the author begin his or her sentences? (Does the author, for example, consistently begin with introductory phrases or clauses?) • <i>Language</i>: What use does the author make of figurative language or colloquial expressions?
Attitude (Tone) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word choice • Details • Imagery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the author's use of words, imagery, or details such as gesture or allusions reveal the author's attitude toward a character or event in the story? • What words best describe the author's attitude toward this subject, character, or event?
Literary Elements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting • Characterization • Plot • Theme • Point of View • Tone/Attitude 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the author's use of these different elements contribute to the text's meaning? • Do the different elements interact with or otherwise affect the meaning of the others? • Do you notice any significant shifts in any of the elements at any point? If so, what changes, how, and why? What is the importance and meaning of this change? • What words best describe the different use of these elements? For example, how would you describe the point of view and the effect it has on the meaning of the text?
Organization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compare/Contrast • Importance • Chronology • Cause-Effect • Order of degree • Classification • Spatial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which organizational pattern does the author use? • Why does the author choose to use that particular organizational strategy? • Are there places where the author blends or alternates between different organizational patterns? If so, what is the author trying to accomplish by mixing them in these ways? • To what extent and in what ways do you think the author's organizational strategy is effective? Why?
Types of Writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrative • Persuasive • Expository • Descriptive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Exposition</i>: Is the author defining, comparing, classifying, analyzing (a process), describing, or narrating? • <i>Persuasion</i>: Is the author arguing about what something means, whether something is true, which alternative is the best (or most important), or what course of action someone should take? • <i>General</i>: What is the author trying to accomplish? How is the writer using e.g., narrative to solve that problem?

Tone – Style – Syntax Handout

Another List of Words but in Categories

Tone is defined as the writer or speaker's attitude toward the subject.

Developing A Tone Vocabulary

Angry	sad	sentimental
Sharp	cold	fanciful
Upset	complimentary	urgent
Silly	joking	condescending
Boring	poignant	sympathetic
Afraid	detached	contemptuous
Happy	confused	apologetic
Hallow	childish	humorous
Joyful	peaceful	horrific
Allusive	mocking	sarcastic
Sweet	objective	nostalgic
Vexed	vibrant	zealous
Tired	frivolous	irreverent
Bitter	audacious	benevolent
Dreamy	shocking	seductive
Restrained	somber	candid
Proud	giddy	pitiful
Dramatic	provocative	didactic

Another list of tone words

Satiric	pedantic	colloquial
Whimsical	indignant	compassionate
Dramatic	bantering	impartial
Learned	flippant	insipid
Informative	condescending	pretentious
Somber	patronizing	vibrant
Urgent	facetious	irreverent
Confident	clinical	sentimental
Mock-heroic	mock-serious	moralistic
Objective	inflammatory	diffident
Complimentary	benevolent	contemptuous
Ironic	burlesque	sympathetic
Petty	detached	taunting
Factual	cynical	angry
Restrained	incisive	turgid
Elegiac	allusive	sardonic
Disdainful	scornful	contentious
Lugubrious	effusive	insolent
Candid	fanciful	concerned

Words That Describe Language

Jargon	pedantic	poetic
Vulgar	euphemistic	moralistic
Scholarly	pretentious	slang
Insipid	sensuous	idiomatic
Precise	exact	concrete
Esoteric	learned	cultured
Connotative	symbolic	picturesque
Plain	simple	homespun
Literal	figurative	provincial
Colloquial	bombastic	trite
Artificial	abstruse	obscure
Detached	grotesque	precise
Emotional	concrete	exact

Reverence

Awe
Veneration
Solemn

Happiness

Glad
Pleased
Merry
Glee
Delight
Cheerful
Gay
Sanguine
Mirth
Enjoy
Relish
Bliss

Sadness

Somber
Melancholy
Sorrow
Lament
Despondent
Regret
Dismal
Funereal
Saturnine
Dark
Gloomy
Dejection
Grave
Grief
Morose
Sullen
Woe
Bleak
Remorse
Forlorn
Agony
Anguish
Depression
Misery
Barren
Empty
Pity
Lugubrious
Distress

Ironic Tones

Smirking
Sneering
Derisive
Icy
Acerbic

Love

affection
cherish
fondness
Admiration
tenderness
sentiment
romantic
Platonic
adoration
narcissism
passion
lust
rapture
ecstasy
infatuated
enamor
compassion

Anger

vehement
rage
outrage
antipathy
indignant
vexation
incensed
petulant
irascible
riled
bitter
acrimony
irate
fury
wrath
rancor
consternation
hostility
miffed
choleric
aggravation
futility
umbrage
gall
bristle
exasperation

Ironic Tones

biting
Playful
witty
humorous
sardonic
flippant
cynical
mocking

Joy

exaltation
zeal
fervor
ardor
elation
jubilant
buoyancy

Calm

serene
tranquil
placid

Hope

expect
anticipate

Hate

vengeance
abhorrence
animosity
enmity
pique
rancor
aversion
loathing
despise
scorn
contempt
disdain
jealousy
repugnance
repulsion
resentment
spite
disgust

Fear

timidity
apprehension
anxiety
terror
horror
dismay
agitation
sinister
alarm
startle
uneasy
qualms
trepidation
intimidation
appalled
dread

Often a change or shift in tone will be signaled by the following:

- Key words (e.g. *but, yet nevertheless, however, although*)
- Punctuation (dashes, periods, colons)
- Stanza and paragraph divisions
- Changes in line and stanza or sentence length

There are at least four areas that may be considered when analyzing **style**: diction, sentence structure, treatment of subject matter, and figurative language.

- I. **Diction** (choice of words) – Describe diction by considering the following:
- A. Words may be **monosyllabic** (one syllable in length) or **polysyllabic** (more than one syllable in length). The higher the ratio of polysyllabic words, the more difficult the content.
 - B. Words may be mainly **colloquial** (slang), **informal** (conversational), **formal** (literary), or **old-fashioned**.
 - C. Words may be mainly **denotative** (containing an exact meaning), e.g. dress, or **connotative** (containing a suggested meaning), e.g., gown.
 - D. Words may be **concrete** (specific) or **abstract** (general).
 - E. Words may be **euphonious** (pleasant sounding), e.g., butterfly, or **cacophonous** (harsh sounding), e.g., pus.

II. **Sentence Structure** – Describe the sentence structure by considering the following:

- A. Examine the sentence length. Are the sentences **telegraphic** (shorter than five words in length), **medium** (approximately eighteen words in length), or **long and involved** (thirty words or more in length)? Does the sentence length fit the subject matter; what variety of lengths is present? Why is the sentence length effective?
- B. Examine sentence patterns. Some elements to consider are listed below:
 - 1. A **declarative** (assertive) sentence makes a statement, e.g., The king is sick. An **imperative sentence** gives a command, e.g., Stand up. An **interrogative sentence** asks a question, e.g., Is the king sick? An **exclamatory sentence** makes an exclamation, e.g., The king is dead!
 - 2. A **Simple sentence** contains one subject and one verb, e.g., The singer bowed to her adoring audience. A **compound sentence** contains two independent clauses joined by a coordinate conjunction (and, but, or) or by a semicolon, e.g., The singer bowed to the audience, but she sang no encores. A **complex sentence** contains an independent clause and one or more subordinate clauses, e.g., You said that you would tell the truth. A **compound-complex sentence** contains two or more principal clauses and one or more subordinate clauses, e.g., The singer bowed while the audience applauded, but she sang no encores.

3. A **loose sentence** makes complete sense if brought to a close before the actual ending, e.g., We reached Edmonton / that morning / after a turbulent flight / and some exciting experiences. A **periodic sentence** makes sense only when the end of the sentence is reached, e.g., That morning, after a turbulent flight and some exciting experiences, we reached Edmonton.

4. In a **balanced sentence**, the phrases or clauses balance each other by virtue of their likeness or structure, meaning, and / or length, e.g., He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters.

5. **Natural order of a sentence** involves constructing a sentence so the subject comes before the predicate, e.g., Oranges grow in California. **Inverted**

order of a sentence (sentence inversion) involves constructing a sentence so the predicate comes before the subject, e.g., In California grow oranges. This is a device in which normal sentence patterns are reversed to create an emphatic or rhythmic effect. This is reversed to create an emphatic or rhythmic effect. **Split order of a sentence** divides the predicate into two parts with the subject coming in the middle, e.g., In California oranges grow.

6. **Juxtaposition** is a poetic and rhetorical device in which normally unassociated ideas, words, or phrases are placed next to one another, creating an effect of surprise and wit, e.g., “The apparition of these faces in the crowd;/ Petals on a wet, black bough” (“In a Station of the Metro” by Ezra Pound).

7. **Parallel structure (parallelism)** refers to a grammatical or structural similarity between sentences or parts of a sentence. It involves an arrangement of words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs so that elements of equal importance are equally developed and similarly phrased, e.g., He was walking, running, and jumping for joy.

8. **Repetition** is a device in which words, sounds, and ideas are used more than once for the purpose of enhancing rhythm and creating emphasis, e.g., “. . . government of the people, shall not perish from the earth.”

9. A **rhetorical question** is a question which expects no answer. It is used to draw attention to a point and is generally stronger than a direct statement, e.g., If Mr. Ferchoff is always fair, as you have said, why did he refuse to listen to Mrs. Baldwin’s arguments?

- C. Examine sentence beginning. Is there a good variety or does a pattern emerge?
- D. Examine the arrangement of ideas in a sentence. Are they set out in a special way for a purpose?
- E. Examine the arrangement of ideas in a paragraph to see if there is evidence of any pattern or structure.

III. Treatment of Subject Matter

Describe the author’s treatment of the subject matter by considering the following. Has the author been

- **Subjective**? Are his conclusions based upon opinions; are they rather personal in nature?
- **Objective**? Are his conclusions based upon facts; are they impersonal or scientific?
- **Supportive of his main idea**? If so, how did he support his claims? Did he (a) state his opinions, (b) report his experience, (c) report observations, (d) refer to readings, (e) refer to statements made by experts, (f) use statistical data?

IV. Figurative Language

- A. **Simile** is a comparison of two different things or ideas through the use of the words like or as. It is definitely a stated comparison, where the poet says one thing is like another, e.g., The warrior fought like a lion.
- B. **Metaphor** is a comparison without the use of like or as. The poet states that one thing *is* another. It is usually a comparison between something that is real or concrete and something that is abstract, e.g., Life is but a dream.

- C. **Personification** is a kind of metaphor which gives inanimate objects or abstract ideas human characteristics, e.g., The wind cried in the dark.
- D. **Hyperbole** is a deliberate, extravagant, and often outrageous exaggeration. It may be used either for serious or comic effect, e.g., The shot that was heard 'round the world.
- E. **Understatement (Meiosis)** is the opposite of hyperbole. It is a kind of irony which deliberately represents something as much less than it really is, e.g., I could probably manage to survive on a salary of two million dollars per year.
- F. **Paradox** is a statement which contradicts itself. It may seem almost absurd. Although it may seem to be at odds with ordinary experience, it usually turns out to have a coherent meaning and reveals a truth which is normally hidden, e.g., The more you know the more you know you don't know. (Socrates)
- G. **Oxymoron** is a form of paradox which combines a pair of contrary terms into a single expression. This combination usually serves the purpose of shocking the reader into awareness, e.g., sweet sorrow, wooden nickel.
- H. **Pun** is a play on words which are identical or similar in sound but which have sharply diverse meanings. Puns may have serious as well as humorous uses, e.g., When Mercutio is bleeding to death in *Romeo and Juliet*, he says to his friends, "Ask for me tomorrow, and you shall find me a grave man."
- I. **Irony** is the result of a statement saying one thing while meaning the opposite. Its purpose is usually to criticize, e.g., It is simple to stop smoking. I've done it many times.
- J. **Sarcasm** is a type of irony in which a person appears to be praising something while he is actually insulting the thing. Its purpose is to injure or hurt, e.g., As I fell down the stairs head-first, I heard her say, "look at that coordination."
- K. **Antithesis** involves a direct contrast of structurally parallel word groupings generally for the purpose of contrast, e.g., sink or swim.
- L. **Apostrophe** is a form of personification in which the absent or dead are spoken to as if present, and the inanimate as if animate. Those are all addressed directly, e.g., The answer, my friend, is blowing in the wind.
- M. **Allusion** is a reference to a mythological, literary, historical, or Biblical person, place or thing, e.g., He met his Waterloo.
- N. **Synecdoche (Metonymy)** is a form of metaphor. In synecdoche, a part of something is used to signify the whole, e.g., All hands on deck.
 *Also, the reverse, whereby the whole can represent a part, is synecdoche, e.g., Canada played the United States in the Olympic hockey finals.
 *Another form of synecdoche involves the container representing the thing being contained, e.g., The pot is boiling.
 *One last form of synecdoche involves the material form which an object is made standing for the object itself, e.g., The quarterback tossed the pigskin.

*In metonymy, the name of one thing is applied to another thing with which it is closely associated, e.g., I love Shakespeare.

Elements of Rhetoric

I. STYLE

- Syntax
- Diction
- Devices of language (alliteration, assonance, etc.)
- Tone
- Imagery
- figures of speech
- Paraphrasing
- Coordination / subordination
- Selection of detail
- Parallelisms
- Repletion

II. MODES OF DISCOURSE (Purpose)

- Definition
- Cause / Effect (casual analysis)
- Comparison / Contrast
- Argumentation
- Description
- Narration
- Summary
- Persuasion (elements of logic -persuading by emotion)
- Classification / Division
- Process analysis

Words that Describe the Reader's Perception of the Speaker are as follows:

humble	shallow
bold	fatuous
insipid	haughty
imperious	proud
confident	insecure
credulous	innocent
naïve	triumphant
vivacious	insolent
sincere	inane
vain	gullible

Words that describe style and syntax are as follows:

Plain, spare, austere, unadorned
 Ornate, elaborate, flowery
 Jumbled, chaotic, obfuscating
 Erudite, esoteric
 Journalistic, terse, laconic
 Harsh, grating
 Mellifluous, musical, lilting, lyrical
 Whimsical
 Elegant
 Staccato, abrupt
 Solid, thudding
 Sprawling, disorganized
 Dry
 Deceptively simple