

Creative and Descriptive Writing Knowledge Organiser

He ascended the stairs, moved through the dark, listened out for noises, but he didn't hear any. At last he reached the top of the stairs.

Narrator 1

Every narrative must have a narrator: someone who exists as the voice of the story or description, the reader's lens to observe the characters and events. They are not the writer but the writer's construct, sometimes used to voice the writer's ideas and opinions and sometimes as a character in their own right. Who your narrator is and their feelings will shape their choice of language used to describe different characters and events.

1st person perspective
written as if the narrator is a character, observing or taking part in the story.

2nd person perspective
written as if the narrator is talking directly to the reader.

3rd person perspective
written as if the narrator is talking about the characters and events, but not necessarily a character in them.

Limited narrator
a narrator aligned to a specific character, knowing nothing outside of that character's thoughts and interactions with the world and story.

Omniscient narrator
a narrator who is god-like, able to move from place to place and character to character, realigning the reader to any perspective they wish to share.

Always think about who your narrator is, what their narratorial voice is like and what their connection to the story and characters is.

Description 1

In real life we perceive the world with our five senses; smell, touch, taste, hear and see. So too must your reader. They wish to experience your fictional world, and sensory stimulation helps transport them into your character's story. This is where the power of a writer's observation and imagination mix, with amazing results.



Successful description conveys important information to the reader in strategic places about:

- place/background
- emotion and mood
- tension/atmosphere
- action

This can elicit emotions within your reader, creating tension, atmosphere, and a sense of immediacy (being there with the character).

Effect of Figurative Devices 1, 2, 3

Alliteration & Assonance: gains attention through repetition; appeals to sense of hearing, emphasizes words, enhances imagery, reinforces meaning, unifies ideas; supplies a musical sound; aids memory;

Imagery (5 senses): helps visualisation of and immersion in descriptions

Onomatopoeia: words invoking sounds; appeals to sense of hearing, enhances imagery, develops an image by creating a sound;

Simile & Metaphor: comparison; makes writing more vivid, imaginative, thought provoking, and meaningful; develops theme; stimulates ideas beyond the page; metaphors are more compact and tighter in their comparative description than similes;

Personification & Pathetic Fallacy: attributes human characteristics or emotions (respectively); makes a strong comparison by giving human qualities/emotions to an inanimate thing, emphasizes themes, animals, or objects appear more vivid;

Voice: the atmosphere created by the writer's choice of tone, in order to convey a mood to a reader;

Sentence length – short (Simple, Compound): increases pace (action and dramatic lines); creates a punchy choppy rhythm; grabs attention;

Sentence length – long (Compound, Multi-clause): slow, descriptive or explanatory; can create a sense of relaxation, flow, or time dragging;

Characters 2

Characters are the lifeblood of creative writing, driving the plot and representing the human interest element for the reader to care about. There are two forms of characterisation:

Direct – the narrator explicitly tells the reader details about the character; i.e.:
'Mr. Ramsay – he is absorbed in himself, he is tyrannical, he is unjust...'

Indirect – the narrator implicitly reveals (shows) the reader the character's traits
'He dragged the last smoke from his ravelling cigarette and then, with callused thumb and forefinger, crushed out the glowing end.'

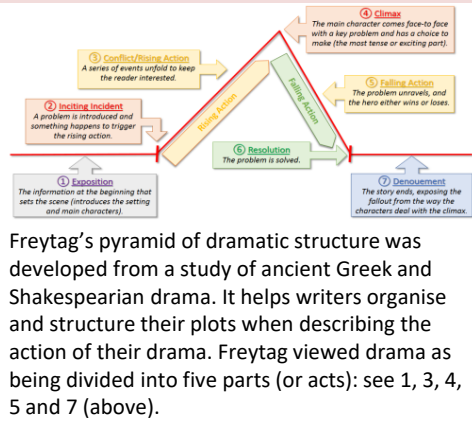
Indirect is always preferable because it involves the reader, forcing them to draw their own conclusions

Indirect Characterisation 2

Indirect characterisation can help readers infer or deduce things about a character's personality in five different ways (represented by the acronym **STEAL**):

- 1. Speech (dialogue)**
Personality is revealed through language choices (intelligence and education); speed, hesitations and length (temperament); accents (origins); and topics (status).
- 2. Thoughts (& feelings)**
Understanding personality through inner thoughts and feelings can reveal rationality, confidence, mood, intentions, motivations and other characteristics, as well as discrepancies between their inner and outer personas.
- 3. Effect (on others)**
How do they handle themselves socially? What about the relationships they can or cannot form with others? Revealing the emotional response other character have towards this one shows what explicit aspects of the character's personality are expressed to others.
- 4. Actions (& behaviours)**
Behaviours are a product of inner feelings, revealing a character's drives and motivations. How they physically and verbally interact with others can demonstrate their social standing and their innate nature, i.e.: good, mean, sympathetic, aggressive or selfish.
- 5. Looks (appearance)**
Personal hygiene, clothing, body language and facial expressions are the non-verbal cues representing 80% of communication. They may be genuine pointers to how the character feels about them self, their education, wealth, or even their natural state. It could however, be a deception at odds with their true character.

Freytag's Pyramid 2



Paragraphs and Sentences 2

Effective, engaging writing is not thoughtless. Paragraphs and sentences must be used for effect: to guide the reader and develop the narrative through action (shorter sentences, faster pace) description (longer for slower rhythm), dialogue (its own paragraph), and for single, sudden ideas meant to give the reader pause (a single sentence or single word paragraph). Adapt your use of both.

TIPTOP Paragraphing 3

Paragraphs are just a group of sentences sharing the same idea. They structure your writing to make it easier for readers to follow. Always start a new paragraph when you change the focus of your writing.

When writing about a new **TIME** period or about a different **PLACE**.

When writing about a new **TOPIC** or about or as a new **PERSON**.

Silence. He began to ascend the stairs. The wood creaked beneath his feet and he held himself still. Tense. Slowly, he unwound the knot of muscles in his chest and moved to the next step as the darkness pressed in against him. He listened. Nothing, except for the staccato thud of his heartbeat. And, as the plateau of the upper-hall emerged from the gloom, muscles twisted and stiffened again.

Freytag's Pyramid of Dramatic Structure

