

: Common
X: rare

Segment 1.2 – Common Writer's Craft Techniques Examined			
Technique 1	Punctuation: Ellipsis	Technique 6	Present Tense
Technique 2	Punctuation: Quotation Mark	Technique 7	Repetition
Technique 3	Punctuation: Question Mark	Technique 8	Use of Personal Pronouns
Technique 4	Punctuation: Exclamation Mark	Technique 9	Sentence Length
Technique 5 X	Punctuation: Parenthesis	Technique 10 X	Italics

Technique 1: Punctuation – Ellipsis → create certain effect (ineaky?)

An ellipsis can be used to express unfinished thoughts. In narrative texts, ellipsis can also express a voice trailing off in speech.

↳ emotions ... → interpret / infer

The ellipsis usually creates one of the following effects:

creates suspense for the reader	I turned the doorknob slowly, my breath caught in my throat. From behind the door, I heard a faint scratching sound...
creates a hopeless tone for a character or the story	"I tried to stop them. I begged, I cried, but they wouldn't listen... there was nothing else I could do." Jason lamented.
signify a never-ending series of events or things	She worked all day — meetings, reports, emails, calls, more meetings... it never seemed to end.

(intention)
→ arouse curiosity
- anxiety

list of events / things

Technique 2: Punctuation – Quotation Mark

Quotation marks around individual words or phrases are often used by authors to show that these words are **not used for their literal or usual meaning**.

Questions will often ask you to interpret the meaning created by the writer's use of the quotation mark. The intended meaning of the word or phrase put in quotation marks is **usually the opposite of the original meanings**.

→ have to state the 2 contrasting meanings

e.g. The so-called "genius" couldn't even solve a basic math question.

The person-in-question was not actually a genius but was actually quite simple-minded.

e.g. He claimed he was too "busy" to help clean the house, though he had spent the entire afternoon playing video games.

The person-in-question was not busy with work, but rather spending time on self-entertainment.

*unpack:

- what is said is NOT
- what is implied ☺

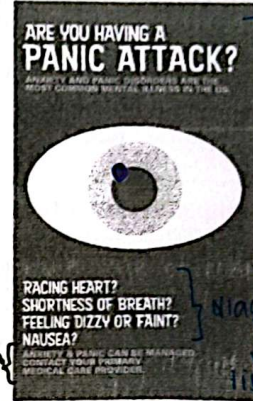
Technique 3: Punctuation – Question Mark → used frequently in text 1 in VT

In writing, authors may sometimes employ Question Marks for many uses depending on where or when it is used. Typically it is to **engage and involve** the reader or to **stir curiosity** in the reader. On the other hand, the writer can use it **retorically to create rhetorical questions** to highlight a particular idea to the reader, or signal doubt or disbelief. *express sarcasm*

• get readers / listeners to reflect / challenge their existing beliefs :
[Rhetorical questions - questions which need not be answered]

retoritical an (hook)

rhetorical and - emphasises that people are not doing anyt. to address climate change



acts as a checklist for readers to see if they need help

an gets readers to think about where they can find a restaurant with meaty portions

acts as a lead up the answer --> their own company

Technique 4: Punctuation – Exclamation Mark → heightened emotions: terror, joy, deep sorrow, surpr

Though uncommonly used as a specific writing technique, the use of exclamation marks usually **expresses shock or emphasises the urgency** of something. This means that the writer may deliberately employ exclamation marks to **highlight certain emotions**, or **signal his/ her attitude** towards something. In some dialogues or more informal contexts, more than one exclamation mark may be used.

joy, deep sorrow, surpr utter disbelief anger, frustration

exclamation mark used to convey confidence & conviction



exclamation mark used to impress upon readers the importance of not wasting food.

exclamation mark used to highlight the amazement one feels at the effect of the product

Technique 5: Punctuation – Use of Parenthesis

Parenthesis (or brackets) are either used to **express the writer's personal opinion**, or it can be used to **provide extra elaboration**. The extra elaboration is **not seen to be vital** in terms of the explanation in the text. The personal opinion or elaborative detail can be either **supporting** or **contrasting**.

Contrasting

She claimed to be an expert in art (though her last painting looked more like a toddler's scribble) and confidently began the gallery tour.

Supporting

The project was completed ahead of schedule (a rare achievement in this industry), earning the team well-deserved praise from the client.

Technique 6: Repetition

Repetition is often used to emphasise a key idea or concept. Repetition can be seen in entire texts or paragraphs with the **same pattern of similar words, phrases, or clauses** in a text to show that the thought, feeling or idea has high importance. As a technique, it is one of the simplest, yet most effective and visible methods, which is why it is a very common author's technique.

Winston Churchill – “We Shall Fight on the Beaches” (1940)

“We shall fight on the beaches, **we shall fight** on the landing grounds, **we shall fight** in the fields and in the streets, **we shall fight** in the hills; **we shall never** surrender...”

Churchill's repetition of “we shall fight” reinforces British resilience and defiance during WWII. It instills confidence, unity, and courage in a time of crisis.

Technique 7: Use of Present Tense

Writing in the present tense serves two main purposes:

1. **Immediacy and Engagement:** Writing in the present tense creates a sense of immediacy, making the events or ideas feel like they are happening right now. This can draw readers into the narrative or argument more effectively, making them feel like they are experiencing the events alongside the characters. It can also be used to make descriptions more vivid through this effect, or increase the tension felt by the reader.
 - Example: "She walks through the forest, listening to the leaves rustle underfoot."
2. **Universal Truths:** Present tense is often used to express general truths, facts, or statements that are considered universally or timelessly valid.
 - Example: "Water boils at 100°C."

-live the experience vicariously

Technique 8: Use of Personal Pronouns

First, second and third-person pronouns are used for different types of writing (such as personal recount or fictional narrative) and can sometimes be used for different effects.

Personal Pronouns		
First-Person Pronouns	Second-Person Pronouns	Third-Person Pronouns
I, me, my, mine, myself We, us, ours, ourselves	you, your, yours, yourself/yourselves	he, him, his, himself she, her, hers, herself they, them, their, theirs, themselves it, its, itself one, oneself
Usually Used In		
- personal recounts - fiction - visual texts / SW	<i>the use of imperative</i> - visual texts / SW - rarely appears in fiction/non-fiction	- expository text - fiction
Effects		
shows the reader the writer's POV, coloured by the narrator's emotions, biases, and limited knowledge.	makes readers feel as though they are directly involved in the context / events establish a conversational, intimate, or confrontational tone.	to create the impression of an objective and unbiased view offer multiple viewpoints within a single narrative.

Technique 9: Sentence Length

Contrasting sentence lengths is a powerful technique in the writer's craft that involves varying the length of sentences within a passage to enhance the rhythm, emphasise key points, and influence the reader's emotions and engagement. Writers can manipulate sentence length to achieve specific effects and guide the reader through the text in a deliberate way. Here are some key ways contrasting sentence lengths can be used effectively:

1. Creating Rhythm and Pace

Short sentences can speed up the pace of a narrative, injecting energy and urgency into the text. They mimic the quick, clipped nature of rapid thought or action. Long sentences, by contrast, slow down the pace, allowing for more reflective, complex, or descriptive passages. By alternating between the two, a writer can create a dynamic rhythm that keeps the reader engaged and ensures that the narrative doesn't become monotonous.

In moments of high tension or climactic scenes, a writer might use short sentences to build up a sense of immediacy and intensity. This technique can make the scene feel abrupt, sharp, and impactful. Following this with a longer, perhaps more introspective sentence can provide a moment of relief and reflection, enhancing the emotional impact of the scene.

2. Highlighting Important Ideas

A short sentence following a series of longer ones can stand out starkly and draw the reader's attention to a key idea or turning point being indicated by the short sentence. This contrast ensures that the reader takes notice of important concepts or plot developments, effectively spotlighting them amidst more complex surrounding text.

Technique 10: Use of Italics

Italics refers to the font effect of making words *slanted* to one side (as can be seen in the word 'slanted' in this sentence).

There are a few reasons why writers use italics.

1. To create emphasis - italicised words indicate that they carry extra importance in the sentence
2. To indicate the use of words/phrases from a foreign language (that is not English) - e.g. *kiasu*, *sushi*
3. To indicate the writer's thoughts / internal monologue (plays a similar function to quotation mark)