

25 Giants of Rhetoric

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"Knowing rhetorical devices is good. Detecting them is better. Using them is MasterCard."

Alliteration Recurrence of initial consonant sounds. <i>Veni, vidi, vici. — Cesar</i> <i>Suddenly, tragedy traveled through our trivial life.</i>	Allusion Short, informal reference to a famous person or event. <i>If only Leonidas and his 300 were here. And then I faced my personal Waterloo.</i>	Amplification Repeating a word or expression while adding more detail to it. <i>Adventure. My life is an adventure. My life is an adventure similar to the one of Tom Sawyer.</i>	Anadiplosis Repetition of word or phrase at or very near the beginning of the next clause or sentence. <i>I grew up in a village, a village full of cows. These cows were our friends back then.</i>	Anaphora Repetition of the same word or words at the beginning of successive phrases, clauses, or sentences. <i>Love is the question. Love is the answer. Love is everything.</i>
Antimetabole Reversing the order of repeated words or phrases (a loosely chiasmic structure, AB-BA). <i>When you doubt your power, you give power to your doubt. — Honore de Balzac</i>	Antithesis Contrasting relationship between two ideas. <i>That's one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind. — Neil Armstrong.</i> <i>I was the right fish in the wrong pond.</i>	Assonance Similar vowel sounds repeated in successive or proximate words containing different consonants. <i>One proud round cloud in white high night.</i>	Asyndeton Omitting of conjunctions between words, phrases, or clauses. <i>Public speaking is all about self-confidence, message, impact.</i>	Climax A good-better-best structure. <i>The good thing about Barcelona is the food. What's even better is the Mediterranean flair. The best, by far, is the climate.</i>
Epistrophe Repetition at the end of successive phrases, clauses or sentences. <i>When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child. — The Apostle Paul</i>	Epizeuxis Repetition of words in immediate succession, for vehemence or emphasis. <i>O horror, horror, horror. — Macbeth</i>	Eponym Substitutes for a particular attribute the name of a famous person recognized for that attribute. <i>Is she smart? That girl is an Einstein.</i>	Hyperbole Deliberately exaggerates conditions for emphasis or effect. <i>The bag weighed a ton.</i> <i>I can give you a thousand reasons!</i>	Metaphor Comparing two things saying one is the other. <i>All the world's a stage, And all the men and women merely players. — Shakespeare, As You Like It</i>
Oxymoron Combines contradictory terms. <i>Black milk.</i> <i>Dark light.</i> <i>Likeable lawyer. ;)</i>	Paradox Anomalous juxtaposition of incongruous ideas. <i>I can resist anything except temptation. — Oscar Wilde</i> <i>We spend the time we don't have.</i>	Paralipsis Asserts or emphasizes something by pointedly seeming to ignore, or deny it. <i>If you were not my father, I would say you were perverse. — Antigone</i>	Parallelism Gives two or more parts of the sentences a similar form. <i>What you see is what you get.</i>	Personification Gives an inanimate (non-living) object human traits and qualities. <i>The stars danced playfully in the moonlit sky.</i> <i>The book cried; everyone ignored it.</i>
Pleonasm Use of more words than required to express an idea; being redundant. <i>The point he made was blank, empty and hollow.</i>	Procatalepsis Anticipates an objection and answers it. <i>In the past, I faced objection at this point. What convinced them was the fact that ...</i>	Rhetorical Question Asking a question as a way of asserting something. <i>Don't we all work too much?</i> <i>Have you never lied in your life?</i>	Simile Directly compares two things through some connective. <i>They fought like lions.</i> <i>Cute as a kitten.</i> <i>I feel happier than a bee on a spring flower field.</i>	Synechdoche A type of metaphor in which the part stands for the whole. <i>Four wheels on fire.</i> <i>All these brains in the room, and no answer to the problem.</i>