

**Detail includes facts, observations, and incidents used to develop a subject and impart voice.**

Specific details refer to fewer things than general descriptions, thereby creating a precise mental picture.

Detail brings life and color to description, focusing the reader's attention and bringing the reader into the scene. Because detail encourages readers to participate in the text, use of detail influences readers' views of the topic, the setting, the narrator, and the author.

Detail shapes reader attitude by focusing attention: the more specific the detail, the greater the focus on the object desired.

**Detail makes an abstraction concrete, particular, and unmistakable, giving the abstraction form.**

For example, when Orwell describes an elephant attack, the attack comes alive through the elephant's specific violent actions.

By directing readers' attention to particulars, detail connects abstraction to their lives: to specifics they can imagine, have participated in, or understand vicariously.

Detail focuses description and prepares readers to join the action. As a result, readers can respond with conviction to the impact of the writer's voice.

**Detail can also state by understatement, a lack of detail.**

The absence of specific details, for example, may be in sharp contrast to the intensity of a character's pain. In this case, elaborate, descriptive detail could turn the pain into sentimentality.

Good writers choose detail with care, selecting those details which add meaning and avoiding those that trivialize or detract.

\*\*3 important things I learned about detail (in my own words):

1.

2.

3.

## Practice!

**Assignment #1:** Choose 1 passage from *The Great Gatsby* where you feel Fitzgerald uses strong detail and type out the entire passage, including a proper citation. (Note: a passage is 1-3 paragraphs, a solid “chunk” of text). Underline/highlight examples of his strong detail. In 1-2 paragraphs, explain WHY you think the details are strong. How does it impact your enjoyment/understanding of the text?

**Assignment #2:** Write an imitation of your chosen passage. Your imitation should be similar in length and should include similar sentence structures. Make sure to incorporate strong details! Try to include one or more of the rhetorical devices that you learned this week in your imitation (and annotate for those in parenthesis after the device). (Note: you have complete freedom of subject matter for your imitation).

\*\* Assignments should be typed and should utilize proper MLA formatting.