

## Core F Rhetoric: Literary Style Analysis Essay

### PASSAGE ANALYSIS TIPS

When analyzing **DICTION**, consider such questions as:

Is the language **concrete** or **abstract, verbs active or passive**?

Do the words have interesting or unusual **connotations**?

Is the diction **formal, colloquial, slang, didactic, etc**?

Is there any **change in the level** of diction in the passage?

What can the reader **infer** about the speaker or the speaker's attitude from the word choice, and how does it connect to **tone**?

When analyzing **SYNTAX**, consider such questions as:

Are the sentences **simple** and direct, or **complex** and convoluted?

How do **dependent clauses** relate to **main clauses**?

Does the author use **repetition** or **parallel structure** for emphasis?

Does the author write **periodic** or **cumulative** sentences?

Are there instances of **balanced sentences, chiasmus, or antithesis**?

Are there **rhetorical questions** in the passage?

How is the passage **punctuated**, and what is the effect of punctuation?

When discussing **rhetorical devices**, consider such questions as:

Are there interesting **images** or **patterns of imagery** (word pictures) in the passage?

Does the author create **analogies**, like **similes** and **metaphors**, or broader comparisons?

Does the author make use of **personification, synecdoche, or apostrophe**?

Is there deliberate **hyperbole** or **understatement** in the passage?

Does the author employ **paradox** or **oxymoron** to add complexity?

What part do rhythm and sound devices like **assonance, consonance, alliteration, or onomatopoeia** play in the passage?

When discussing **TONE**, consider such questions as:

What seems to be the **speaker's attitude** in the passage?

Can you hear a distinct **voice**?

Is **more than one attitude** or point of view expressed?

Does the passage have a noticeable emotional **mood** or **atmosphere**?

Can anything in the passage be described as **irony**?

Remember:

- **Never** substitute terminology for analysis.
- **Always** connect the literary term (and example) directly to the **effect** it creates in the passage.
- **Include** clear **commentary** after all supporting quotations and tie to the **total meaning**.