

Connecting Grammar Instruction to Rhetorical Tropes and Figures

Canons of Rhetoric	Virtues of Style	Levels of Style
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Invention discovery of matter to use in rhetoric 2. Arrangement organization of the invented matter 3. Style expression in words and sentences 4. Memory techniques for memorizing a speech 5. Delivery study of voice, stance, posture, gesture 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Purity, i.e., grammatical correctness 2. Clarity 3. Vividness and vigor 4. Propriety; i.e., aptness for subject, occasion, audience 5. Ornamentation; i.e., use of tropes and figures (the flowers of rhetoric) <p>Trope: A trope is the substitution of a figurative word or phrase for a literal one.</p> <p>Figure: A figure (also called a scheme) is a syntactical construction that purposely alters normal word order for rhetorical effect. It is intended to affect the emotional power and argumentative thrust of the statement by making it unusual and thus more memorable. There are figures of repetition, figures of addition, figures of subtraction, figures of (trans)position, and figures of appeal.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Low or plain style The aim of this style is to prove or teach. The style is clear and based on current usage; unembellished, sparing in use of tropes and figures; adroit; loose but not rambling; full of maxims, proverbs, adages; humorous and witty, but pleasantly so. 2. Middle style The aim of this style is to please or delight. It has a minimum of vigor, maximum of charm; it is richer than the plain style, but plainer than the grand, full of tropes and figures (but <i>not</i> figures of appeal) to the point of being almost overdone; arguments are developed with breadth and erudition. 3. High or grand style The aim of this style is to move or sway. It is magnificent, opulent, stately, ornate, powerful, brilliant, fluent, alternately fiery and calm; appropriate to an eminent and weighty subject; only to be attempted by those rhetors who have mastered the other two styles. It uses the figures of appeal—apostrophe, rhetorical question, and exclamation. Often used at the end of sermons and speeches of great import.

For more complete information about rhetoric, virtues of style, levels of style, and tropes and figures, see Gideon Burton's Web site, *Silva Rhetoricae* [The Forest of Rhetoric], at <http://humanities.byu.edu/rhetoric/silva.htm>

Name of trope or figure	Grammatical construction or concept it can be paired with	Illustrations	Punctuation mark to be taught in connection
1. Interrogatio (rhetorical question, one of the figures of appeal used in the grand style)	Sentence types: interrogative Question types: Yes/no question Wh- question Intonation question Tag question	Hath not a Jew eyes? . . . If you prick us, do we not bleed, if you tickle us, do we not laugh? (<i>Merchant of Venice</i>) Marriage is a wonderful institution, but who would want to live in an institution? (H.L. Mencken) You call this living? I can dream, can't I? (Andrews Sisters)	Question mark
2. Exclamatio (one of the figures of appeal used in the grand style)	Sentence types: exclamatory Interjection	Thank God men cannot fly and lay waste the sky as well as the earth! (Thoreau) Alas, poor Yorick! (<i>Hamlet</i>) Holy smoke!	Exclamation mark
3. Apostrophe (one of the figures of appeal used in the grand style) 4. Personification	Noun of address	Hello, darkness, my old friend. (Simon & Garfunkel) O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? (I Cor. 15:55) O World, I cannot hold thee close enough! (Edna St. Vincent Millay)	Comma
5. Metaphor	Noun Subject complement / predicate noun Types of negation	My life is a country song. (Morrissey) Memory is a crazy woman that hoards colored rags and throws away food. (Austin O'Malley) I am a rock. I am an island. (Simon and Garfunkel) No man is an island. (John Donne) Love's not Time's fool. (Shakespeare Sonnet 116)	
6. Simile	Nouns <i>like</i> as preposition <i>as . . . as</i> comparative <i>as</i> as subordinator	The skin on her face was as thin and drawn as tight as the skin of an onion, and her eyes were gray and sharp like the points of two picks. (Flannery O'Connor) This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves. (Martin Luther King)	

		<p>Like a rat in a maze the path before me lies, And the pattern never alters until the rat dies. (“Patterns” by Simon & Garfunkel)</p> <p>It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night/As a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear. (<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>)</p>	
7. Metonym	Nouns	<p>The pen is mightier than the sword.</p> <p>The suits on Wall Street walked off with most of our savings.</p> <p>The White House announced a new policy.</p> <p>She didn't want her daughter to aspire to be a sash and a tiara.</p>	
8. Synecdoche	Nouns	<p>The last thing that his mama needs is another little hungry mouth to feed in the ghetto. (Elvis Presley)</p> <p>Come and rest your bones with me. (“Sunday Morning” by Maroon 5)</p> <p>I should have been a pair of ragged claws / Scuttling across the floor of silent seas. (T.S. Eliot)</p> <p>Take thy face hence. (<i>Macbeth</i>)</p>	
9. Syllepsis	Abstract and concrete nouns Direct object	<p>The levees were broken and so were the promises. (Anderson Cooper, <i>Dispatches from the Edge</i>)</p> <p>Time and her aunt moved slowly. (Jane Austen)</p> <p>When I address Fred I never have to raise either my voice or my hopes. (E.B. White)</p> <p>He carried a strobe light and the responsibility for the lives of his men. (Tim O'Brien, <i>The Things They Carried</i>)</p> <p>You held your breath and the door for me. (Alanis Morissette, “Head over Feet”)</p>	
10. Polysyndeton	Coordinating conjunctions	<p>Let the white folks have their money and power and</p>	comma

		<p>segregation and sarcasm and big houses and schools and lawns like carpets and books, and mostly—mostly—let them have their whiteness. (Maya Angelou)</p> <p>We lived and laughed and loved and left. (James Joyce)</p> <p>If there be cords, or knives, or poison, or fire, or suffocating streams, I'll not endure it. (<i>Othello</i>)</p> <p>Oh, my piglets, we are the origins of war—not history's forces, nor the times, nor justice, nor the lack of it, nor causes, nor religions, nor ideas, nor kinds of government—not any other thing. We are the killers. (from <i>The Lion in Winter</i>)</p>	
11. Asyndeton	Coordinating conjunctions (teach by noticing where they could be but aren't)	<p>But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground." (Lincoln)</p> <p>He was a bag of bones, a floppy doll, a broken stick, a maniac. (Jack Kerouac)</p> <p>Are all thy conquests, glories, triumphs, spoils, / Shrunk to this little measure? (<i>Julius Caesar</i>)</p> <p>I speak here as a politician and also as a Catholic—a layperson baptized and raised in the pre-Vatican II Church, educated in Catholic schools, attached to the Church first by birth, then by choice, now by love. (Mario Cuomo)</p>	comma
12. Polypoton	Functional shift of words from one lexical class to another	<p>Choosey mothers choose Jif.</p> <p>Not as a call to battle, though embattled we are. (John F. Kennedy)</p> <p>Love is an irresistible desire to be irresistibly desired. (Robert Frost)</p> <p>Love is not love / Which <i>alters</i> when it <i>alteration</i> finds, Or bends with the <i>remover</i> to <i>remove</i>. (Shakespeare, Sonnet 116)</p> <p>Matchmaker, matchmaker make me a match, find me a find, catch me a catch. (<i>Fiddler on the Roof</i>)</p>	

13. Antimetabole	Functional shift	<p>Never let a fool kiss you or a kiss fool you.</p> <p>It is not how old you are, but how you are old. (Jules Renard)</p> <p>Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country. (John Kennedy)</p> <p>The odds are good, but the goods are odd. (a slogan in a town where men outnumber women 5 to 1)</p>	
14. Hyperbaton	Subject Predicate Direct object Subject complement/predicate adjective Pronoun case	<p>Sorry I be but go you must. (Yoda)</p> <p>I shall arise and go now, and go to Innisfree, And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made. (W. B. Yeats)</p> <p>Bloody thou art; bloody will be thy end. (<i>Richard III</i>)</p> <p>Thee will I honor, praise, and give glory. (Hymn, "Beautiful Savior")</p>	
15. Ellipsis	Elliptical clauses	<p>And he to England shall along with you. (<i>Hamlet</i>)</p> <p>Wise men talk because they have something to say; fools, because they have to say something. (Plato)</p> <p>There is much to support the view that it is clothes that wear us, and not we, them. (Virginia Woolf)</p> <p>Prosperity is a great teacher; adversity, a greater. (William Hazlitt)</p> <p>Truth is beauty, beauty truth. (John Keats)</p>	Semicolon Comma Ellipses in quotations
16. Oxymoron	Adjectives Adverbs Noun adjuncts	act naturally wise fool organized mess friendly fire military intelligence	

		the sounds of silence	
17. Paronomasia (pun)	Homonyms, homophones, homographs	<p>Novice pirates make terrible singers because they can't hit the high seas.</p> <p>Horse lovers are stable people.</p> <p>An invisible man and an invisible woman's children probably aren't much to look at.</p> <p>Atheism is a non-prophet organization.</p> <p>A bicycle can't stand alone because it is two-tired.</p>	
18. Parenthesis	Clause structure and ways of interrupting usual structure	<p>In the valley of the jolly—ho-ho-ho!—Green Giant.</p> <p>The English (it must be owned) are rather a foul-mouthed nation. (William Hazlitt)</p> <p>He came at night, at precisely 10:25, to ask for you.</p> <p>But what might you think, / When I had seen this hot love on the wing— / As I perceiv'd it (I must tell you that) / Before my daughter told me—what might you, / Or my dear Majesty your queen here, think...? (<i>Hamlet</i>)</p> <p>Then shall our names, / Familiar in his mouth as household words— / Harry the King, Bedford and Exeter, / Warwick and Talbot, Salisbury and Gloucester— / Be in their flowing cups freshly remembered. (<i>Henry V</i>)</p>	<p>Dash</p> <p>Comma</p> <p>Parentheses</p> <p>Brackets</p>