# The D-I-D-L-S Packet

### DICTION

The author's choice of words and their connotations (See handout.)

What words appear to have been chosen specifically for their effects?

What effect do these words have on your mood as the reader?

What do they seem to indicate about the author's tone?

# **IMAGERY**

# The use of descriptions that appeal to sensory experience

What images are especially vivid? To what sense do these appeal?

What effect do these images have on your mood as a reader?

What do they seem to indicate about the author's tone?

# **DETAILS**

#### Facts included or those omitted

What details has the author specifically included? What details has the author apparently left out?

(NOTE: This is only for analysis. <u>Do not</u> write about these omitted details in an essay.) What effect do these included and excluded details have on your mood as a reader? What do these included and excluded details seem to indicate about the author's tone?

# **LANGUAGE**

Characteristics of the body of words use (slang, jargon, scholarly language, etc.)

How could the language be described?

How does the language affect your mood as a reader?

What does the language seem to indicate about the author's tone?

### SYNTAX

The way the sentences are constructed (See extended handout.)

Are the sentences simple, compound, declarative, varied, etc.?

How do these structures affect your mood as a reader?

What do these structures seem to indicate about the author's tone?

#### **Literary Analysis**

**TONE:** Author's attitude toward the subject, toward himself, or toward the audience.

<u>DIDLS</u>: Diction, Imagery, Details, Language, and Syntax. Use *diction* to find tone. Use *imagery, details, language* and *syntax* to support tone.

**<u>DICTION</u>**: Adjectives, nouns, verbs, adverbs, negative words, positive words, synonyms, contrast.

Look at the words that jump out at you - Evaluate only those words to find tone

Also look at:

Oxymoron

Colloquial (Slang) Concrete (Specific)

Old-FashionedAbstract (General or Conceptual)Informal (Conversational)Euphonious (Pleasant Sounding)Formal (Literary)Cacophonous (Harsh sounding)Connotative (Suggestive meaning)Monosyllabic (One syllable)

**Denotative** (Exact meaning) **Polysyllabic** (More than one syllable)

#### Describe diction (choice of words) by considering the following:

- 1. Words can be *monosyllabic* (one syllable in length) or *polysyllabic* (more than one syllable in length). The higher the ratio of polysyllabic words, the more difficult the content.
- 2. Words can be mainly colloquial (slang), informal (conversational), formal (literary) or old-fashioned.
- 3. Words can be mainly *denotative* (containing an exact meaning, e.g., dress) or *connotative* (containing suggested meaning, e.g., gown)
- 4. Words can be *concrete* (specific) or *abstract* (general or conceptual).
- 5. Words can *euphonious* (pleasant sounding, e.g., languid, murmur) or *cacophonous* (harsh sound, e.g., raucous, croak).

#### **IMAGERY:** Creates a vivid picture and appeals to the senses

Alliteration repetition of consonant sounds at the start of a word The giggling girl gave gum. Assonance repetition of vowel sounds in the middle of a word Moths cough and drop wings. repetition of consonant sounds in the middle of a word Consonance The man has kin in Spain. Onomatopoeia writing sounds as words The clock went tick tock. a direct comparison of unlike things using like or as Simile Her hair is like a rat's nest. Metaphor a direct comparison of unlike things The man's suit is a rainbow. Hyperbole a deliberate exaggeration for effect I'd die for a piece of candy. Understatement represents something as less than it is A million dollars is okay. attributing human qualities to inhuman objects The teapot cried for water. Personification word exchanged for another closely associated with it Metonymy Uncle Sam wants you! play on words – Uses words with multiple meanings Shoes menders mend soles. Pun something that represents/stands for something else Symbol the American Flag comparing two things that have at least one thing in common Analogy A similar thing happened...

Use or words seemingly in contradiction to each other

**<u>DETAILS</u>**: specifics the author includes about facts – his opinion

bittersweet chocolate

**LANGUAGE**: Words that describe the entire body of words in a text – not isolated bits of diction

Artificial Literal apparent, word for word **Bombastic** pompous, ostentatious Moralistic puritanical, righteous

Colloquial Obscure vernacular unclear

Concrete actual, specific, particular dull-witted, undiscerning Obtuse **Connotative** alludes to; suggestive **Ordinary** everyday, common Cultured **Pedantic** didactic, scholastic, bookish

cultivated, refined, finished

**Detached** cut-off, removed, separated Plain clear, obvious

**Emotional** expressive of emotions Poetic lyric, melodious, romantic Esoteric understood by a chosen few **Precise** exact, accurate, decisive **Euphemistic** insincere, affected **Pretentious** pompous, gaudy, inflated Exact verbatim, precise **Provincial** rural, rustic, unpolished intellectual, academic **Figurative** serving as illustration Scholarly **Formal** academic, conventional Sensuous passionate, luscious

Grotesque hideous, deformed Simple clear, intelligible Homespun folksy, homey, native, rustic Slang lingo, colloquialism

Idiomatic Peculiar, vernacular **Symbolic** representative, metaphorical Insipid uninteresting, tame, dull **Trite** common, banal, stereotyped Jargon vocabulary for a profession casual, relaxed, unofficial **Informal** educated, experienced Learned Vulgar coarse, indecent, tasteless

**Rhetorical Devices** -- The use of language that creates a literary effect – enhance and support

**Rhetorical Question** food for thought; create satire/sarcasm; pose dilemma **Euphemism** substituting a milder or less offensive sounding word(s) **Aphorism** universal commends, sayings, proverbs – convey major point Repetition also called refrain; repeated word, sentence or phrase

Restatement main point said in another way

Either verbal or situational – good for revealing attitude **Irony** 

Allusion refers to something universally known

**Paradox** a statement that can be true and false at the same time

# **SYNTAX**:

#### Consider the following patterns and structures:

Does the sentence length fit the subject matter?

Why is the sentence length effective?

What variety of sentence lengths are present? Sentence beginnings - Variety or Pattern?

Arrangement of ideas in sentences

Arrangement of ideas in paragraph - Pattern?

#### Construction of sentences to convey attitude

**Declarative** assertive - A statement **Imperative** authoritative - Command

**Interrogative** asks a question

one subject and one verb **Simple Sentence** 

**Loose Sentence** details after the subject and verb – happening now

**Periodic Sentence** details before the subject and verb - reflection on a past event **Juxtaposition** normally unassociated ideas, words or phrases placed next together

**Parallelism** show equal ideas; for emphasis; for rhythm

Repetition words, sounds, and ideas used more than once - rhythm/emphasis

**Rhetorical Question** a question that expects no answer

#### Punctuation is included in syntax

Ellipses: a trailing off; equally etc.; going off **Colon:** a list; a definition or explanation; a result

into a dreamlike state

**Dash:** interruption of a thought; an interjection

of a thought into another

**Semicolon:** parallel ideas; equal ideas; a piling

up of detail

**Italics:** for emphasis

**Capitalization:** for emphasis

Exclamation Point: for emphasis; for emotion

SHIFTS IN TONE: Attitude change about topic/Attitude about topic is different than the attitude toward subject

Key Words (but, nevertheless, however, although) Changes in the line length Paragraph Divisions Punctuation (dashes, periods, colons) Sharp contrasts in diction

### **SYNTAX (SENTENCE STRUCTURE)**

Describe the sentence structure by considering the following:

- 1. Examine the sentence length. Are the sentences *telegraphic* (shorter than 5 words in length), *short* (approximately 5 words in length), *medium* (approximately 18 words in length), or *long and involved* (30 or more words in length)? Does the sentence length fit the subject matter? What variety of lengths is present? Why is the sentence length effective?
- 2. Examine sentence beginnings. Is there a good variety or does a patterning emerge?
- 3. Examine the arrangement of ideas in a sentence. Are they set out in a special way for a purpose?
- 4. Examine the arrangement of ideas in a paragraph. Is there evidence of any pattern or structure?
- 5. Examine the sentence patterns. Some elements to consider are listed below:
  - a. A declarative (assertive) sentence makes a statement: e.g., The king is sick.
  - b. An imperative sentence gives a command: e.g., Stand up.
  - c. An interrogative sentence asks a question: e.g., Is the king sick?
  - d. An exclamatory sentence makes an exclamation: e.g., The king is dead!
  - e. A simple sentence contains one subject and one verb: e.g., The singer bowed to her adoring audience.
  - f. A *compound sentence* contains two independent clauses joined by a coordinate conjunction (and, but, or) or by a semicolon: e.g., The singer bowed to the audience, but she sang no encores.
  - g. A *complex sentence* contains an independent clause and one or more subordinate clauses: e.g., You said that you would tell the truth.
  - h. A *compound-complex sentence* contains two or more principal clauses and one or more subordinate clauses: e.g., The singer bowed while the audience applauded, but she sang no encores.
  - I. A *loose sentence* makes complete sense if brought to a close before the actual ending: e.g., We reached Edmonton/that morning/after a turbulent flight/and some exciting experiences.
  - j. A *periodic sentence* makes sense only when the end of the sentence is reached: e.g., That morning, after a turbulent flight and some exciting experiences, we reached Edmonton.
  - k. In a *balanced sentence*, the phrases or clauses balance each other by virtue or their likeness of structure, meaning, or length: e.g., He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters.
  - l. *Natural order of a sentence* involves constructing a sentence so the subject comes before the predicate: e.g., Oranges grow in California.
  - m. *Inverted order of a sentence (sentence inversion)* involves constructing a sentence so that the predicate comes before the subject: e.g., In California grow oranges. This is a device in which normal sentence patterns are reverse to create an emphatic or rhythmic effect.
  - n. *Split order of a sentence* divides the predicate into two parts with the subject coming in the middle: e.g., In California oranges grow.
  - o. *Juxtaposition* is a poetic and rhetorical device in which normally unassociated ideas, words, or phrases are placed next to one another creating an effect of surprise and wit: e.g., "The apparition of these faces in the crowd:/ Petals on a wet, black bough" ("In a Station of the Metro" by Ezra Pound)
  - p. Parallel structure (parallelism) refers to a grammatical or structural similarity between sentences or parts of a sentence. It involves an arrangement of words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs so that elements of equal importance are equally developed and similarly phrased: e.g., He was walking, running, and jumping for joy.
  - q. *Repetition* is a device in which words, sounds, and ideas are used more than once to enhance rhythm and create emphasis: e.g., "...government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth" ("Address at Gettysburg" by Abraham Lincoln)
  - r. A *rhetorical question* is a question that expects no answer. It is used to draw attention to a point that is generally stronger than a direct statement: e.g., If Mr. Ferchoff is always fair, as you have said, why did he refuse to listen to Mrs. Baldwin's arguments?