 Figurative language

Highlight the different elements of figurative and explain how they help to establish a distinctive and consistent narrative voice.

My tongue still feels like a dead mollusc (Page 156)

It’s bubbling closer and closer to the surface. And I’m worried I’ll burst (Page 307)

Lionel expected Jasper Jones to have been poisoned by the lie. Planted by his father and fertilised by the town (Page 248)

There was a new Truman Capote book… Every time I opened it I felt as though insects were crawling over my scalp and down my neck. (Page 215)

I want to quickly stuff those words back down into their black little hole and rummage about for something, anything else (Page 182)

There’s a blizzard in my bubble. (Page 24)

The knowing, it’s a cold kiln for this brick. It’s stuck firm. It’s not going anywhere. (Page 77)

I think he saw my lamplight and was drawn to it like an insect to a bulb (Page 356)

I watch them. Silently. Two black dragonflies in the sky. (Page 116)

I look up. The cold brick. They’re coming for me. (Page 116)

It should be getting easier, the tide of anxiety should be creeping back. (Page 226)

He knew all her little secrets, the holes she’d dug for herself (Page 371)

The bloated bubble of her nightdress. (Page 31-32)

I’m not sure if just locked the wasp in or outside of my room. (Page 78)

And I read on with my brick sinking, patching together the story of Sylvia Likens. (Page 85)

She stands at the edge of the hole, in front of me, hands on her hips, nodding slowly. (Page 103)

Sorry is a lot of things. It’s a hole refilled. A debt repaid. (Page 202)

I think of Eliza… it’s the only way I can ward off the insects itching my eyes… (Page 128)

A cold fish slinks and bucks in my gut (Page 249)

What is the significance of each motif? What do they relate to within the novel, or what ideas or events if Silvey reminding the reader of when he uses each motif? Think of this as you answer each of these questions.

1. Why does Silvey use lots of water-related words? What event is he keeping at the forefront of the reader’s mind?
2. What feeling do insects represent for Charlie? Why does he (on Page 148) refer to two planes as ‘big black dragonflies’?
3. What is the ‘brick’ a metaphor for?
4. What might holes symbolise for Charlie and his mother?