 Creating voice

Stage 6 preliminary common module

Reading to Write – Transition to Senior English

Techniques in creating a sense of voice

In creating a sense of voice, a wide range of literary techniques is brought into play:

* Nouns, adjectives, adverbs, verbs
* Pronouns
* Dialogue
* Repetition
* Punctuation
* Capitalisation
* Metaphors and similes
* Hyperbole
* Irony
* Setting

Nouns, adjectives, adverbs, verbs

* These can give us insight to the character’s voice and how it is being used but also adds to understanding the author’s voice.
* If an author focuses on nouns, s/he is creating a concrete world.
* The addition of adjectives and adverbs can add to mood in setting or in the event that is happening.
* This will affect the voice of the texts.
* The verb form will also affect how the meaning is conveyed.
* Some authors have a limited vocabulary while others choose to embellish their writing – this contributes to the author’s voice.

Pronouns, dialogue, repetition

* Pronouns: First, second or third person all position the audience differently. The composer’s choice of writing in first or third person will affect the way the text’s meaning is conveyed.
* Dialogue: this alerts us to the values of individual characters. Each character has a particular voice, created by using words in different ways – this reflects the character, beliefs and attitudes of the person. Dialogue may utilise colloquial, expletive, emotive, and imperative language amongst others. Phonetic spelling may create accent.
* Repetition: is about what is important; it can also show us the type of person who is speaking – he/she might be obsessed with the point being made.

Punctuation

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* Changes the rhythm of speech.
* Lots of full stops with short sentences may sound frantic. Commas around phrases in the middle of sentences slow down the rhythm and suggest thoughtfulness.
* Exclamation marks add emphasis.
* Lack of punctuation may suggest breaking the rules. In poetry, lack of punctuation may mean a refusal to abide by rules.
* Punctuation can break up ideas, add pauses, and indicate thought.

Capitalisation

* conveys loud sound or importance

Imagery, irony, setting

* Metaphors and similes: create images which we associate with feelings. We can visualise the scene but also understand the mood.
* Hyperbole: exaggeration can amuse or can be ironic. It can be associated with falsity.
* Irony: the difference between what appears to be the case and the reality of the situation. This gap between appearance and reality creates a sense of ‘mismatch’ and draws our attention to or criticises an idea.
* Setting: settings establish expectations and offer the background to events or sometimes a contrast to characters. This provides contextual voice – tells us about the world the story exists in.

Your composition

* Using the knowledge we have developed, read and edit your own composition draft, developing the use of voice in your writing.
* Utilise your teacher’s help to assist you in further improving and refining your piece.
* Using the information given above, look at your composition and write a paragraph about how you as an author use these techniques.
* Include examples and discussion of techniques that convey the voice.
* Also consider the learning we have completed for Point of View and Voice in prior lessons.

This is your opportunity to share your voice