**Primary 7**

**Imaginative Writing Techniques**



**Detailed description – give the reader a picture in their mind using your well-chosen adjectives!**

* The scruffy man let his worn coat hang off his slumped shoulders.
* The worn, torn jacket hung lifelessly off the old, unkempt man.
* Scruffy, torn trousers and an emaciated frame suggested a life of neglect.
* The worn, unkempt jacket hung lifelessly off the old, dishevelled man.

**Foreshadowing – Giving the reader a clue about something which might happen later on, or a character having a premonition (feeling about the future).**

E.g.

*I knew it would be a bad day when the alarm didn’t go off and there was no milk for my cereal.*

Even better:

*As soon as I put my foot to the floor and felt the dead mouse I knew it would be a bad day.*

**Graphology – using how a word is written to show it’s meaning.**E.g.Jim walked closer, CLOser, CLOSER.

CRRRAAAASSSSSSH!

or

As we approached the giant got bigger and bigGER and BIGGER.

CRRRAAAASSSSSSH!

**Metaphor – Saying an object or person is something else, without the use of the word ‘like’ or ‘as’.**E.g.

* The man was a mighty lion.
* The man was a vulture. He preyed on the misfortunes of others.
* The sea was a hungry dog.
* Sauce-pan eyes glared at him.

**Short impact sentence**E.g.

* Silence! Nothing stirred.
* Finally he found it.
* He was alone. With nothing.
* Deafening silence

**Camera, pan, zoom description – starting with the big picture and zooming in.**

**E.g.**

* On a hill above the valley there was a wood. In the wood there was a tree. Under the tree there was a hole. In the hole lived Mr Fox and Mrs Fox and their four small foxes.
* In a far off land, beyond the mountains, there was a village and in the village there was a small wooden house and in the attic of that house was a …

**Complex sentence**

**E.g.**

* The man, in the red coat, ran down the hill after his dog.
* Although they suffered a crushing 10-0 defeat, the school football team celebrated.
* The girls entered the forest, despite their fear, and forged ahead until they reached the stream and safety.
* Joanne Kathleen Rowling, the elder of two daughters, was born in Gloucestershire in 1965.

**Connectives**

**E.g.**

* Luke went to the fair **although** he didn’t really want to go.
* I wanted to go out with Paul, **however** I had no funds!
* **Despite** the weather, the sailors still put to sea.
* **Meanwhile** Jim had exited the building and was on his way.
* Also try: **while, nevertheless, since, until**

**Oxymoron – a figure of speech which uses contradictory (opposite) ideas.   
E.g.**

* Cruel kindness
* Deafening silence
* Awfully nice
* Bittersweet
* Accidently on purpose
* Controlled chaos
* Living dead
* Alone in a crowd
* Delicious agony
* Luminous black
* Darkness visible
* Sad smile

**Ellipses**

* What was that? It sounded like…
* It can’t be…no…
* ‘Wait!’ he shouted. The shape turned and that’s when he saw…
* Then the door opened a little wider...

**Negative description – describing what was not there.   
E.g.**

* + This hobbit had no jacket, no shoes, no umbrella and no sense.
* The creature had no feathers or fur.
* Joseph looked the park but saw no swing, no slide, no fun.
* Megan hated this new school. She had no friends, no uniform, no books, no place to belong.

**Onomatopoeia – sound words  
E.g.**

* Here come the penguins. Splish, splash, splosh!  
  The fly buzzed past.
* Thwock! The arrows flew.
* The rocks clattered and crashed as they tumbled down the side of the mountain.

**Tension – Short sentences which give the reader bits of information, but not too much, leading the reader to question what is going to happen.   
E.g.**

* The boy stopped. He looked around. What was that? Was it… Yes! There it was! Run he thought. RUN!

**Pathetic Fallacy – Using weather to foreshadow something which is going to happen. Bad weather = something bad is going to happen.**

**E.g.**

* Dark thunder clouds rolled down the valley.
* The air grew still and heavy as the black crows began to circle.
* The moon looked down on the scene and wept in pity.
* Rain clouds wept and the thunder raged at what it knew was to come.

**Personification – giving human characteristics to something which is not human  
E.g.**

* The wind sang.
* The trees whispered the secrets of winter.
* The naked trees bent double in the fierce easterly wind.

**Powerful verbs  
E.g.**

* The dog growled one last growl, and then whimpered and scampered away.
* The boy screamed and screeched and ran wailing to the nearest tree and heaved himself up.
* Down the street it padded, with a glare to the right and a glare to the left, and a savage twitch of its great black nose.
* The beast rampaged through the town, demolishing everything in its wake.

**Questions – use questions to draw the reader in.   
E.g.**

* How far had he walked? Nobody knows. Where had he come from? Nobody knows.
* Why was he saying those things? What had I done?
* Would he recognise me after all this time? Surely his memory wasn’t that good?

**Repetition – repeating something which is important, particularly used in 3’s (the power of 3)  
E.g.**

* Boy did it rain. It rained and rained and rained.
* See me here! See me there!
* One two three are you ready? One two three are you steady?
* The glistening snow was deeper than last year, deeper than any his family could remember, deeper than the snows of the last hundred years.
* From roof to roof, balcony to balcony, wall to wall he leapt.

**Senses – use your senses to add more to the description  
E.g.**

* The air smelt of wood smoke and my ears were filled with the sound of squawking birds circling above.
* Wafts of salt-laden air were in her nostrils as the skittering sand on her feet led her to the edge of the cool, calming waves.

**Sentence variety – use a mixture of short impact, compound and complex sentences to keep your writing interesting.**

**E.g.**

* Terrified! He scrambled up the cliffs, leaping from rock to rock, glancing fearfully behind him until the waves of noise crashed into him. He began to panic. Must get out. Must escape.
* Jemison’s accomplishments did not end there. In 1981, she joined NASA’s space program in Houston, Texas, however it was in 1988 when Jemison realised her biggest dream – becoming an astronaut!

**Show not tell – describe *how*  a character is tired by describing their actions or facial expressions. Show what is happening by giving clues to the reader – don’t tell them all of the facts! Make them think!**

**E.g.**

* The large shape moved amongst the trees. (Shows that there is something there but doesn’t tell us what it is).
* Mary struggled to her feet. Despite the pain in her knees she would not accept help. (Shows she is proud but old and suffering from arthritis)
* Maria could hear the door opening slowly. Footsteps on the stairs worried her even more.
* The figure stood… Something was coming

**Simile – comparing two things using ‘like’ or ‘as’**

**E.g.**

* The winter breeze was as cold as ice.
* His sword cut through the tree like a wizard’s wand through the air.
* With eyes like street lamps and jaws like an oven door.
* The snow lay like a soft, white shawl on the mountain.
* The dog’s teeth was as sharp as razors.
* The snow lay like a soft, white shawl on the mountain.
* As loud as a foghorn, the man bellowed.

**Stream of consciousness – share with the reader what the character is thinking. Their inner thoughts.**

**E.g.**

* ‘Mark is always on at me to do things. Why doesn’t he lift a finger to help Dad. I am tired of his attitude.’ Gemma thought.
* ‘ I get really cheesed off with Lizzy. It’s always about her. Me this, me that. Oh I’m so sick of her,’ the anger raced through Lisa’s head.
* What was that?...It sounded like…It can’t be…no…

**Opening variety – start your sentences in different and varied ways.**

**E.g.**

* Although the team were usually victorious, today they suffered a humiliating defeat. (*Starting with a connective*)
* Sat proudly on top of the mouth-watering trifle was the freshly picked cherry (*Starting with where or when*)
* Carefully, cautiously, the innocuous thief clambered through the open window on the first floor. (*Starting with an adverb*)
* Clambering through the trees, the adventurous monkey collected his bananas. (*Starting with a verb*)

**Speech which uses an accent or slang – show more about your character using the way they speak.**

**E.g.**

* “I was so frightfully upset, old boy.”
* “Gi mi that thing thaz got under y’and.”

**Broken speech – miss parts out to show the characters feelings – tired or scared etc.**

**E.g.**

* “You can’t ma…ma…make me!” Sue stammered.
* The victim stammered, “But … I … I didn’t see… I didn’t see anything!”

**Unusual feature – give your character an unusual feature which makes the reader ask questions.**

**E.g.**

* Across his hand lay a jagged scar and behind that scar was the reason for his journey.