The Essay as a Genre

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/685/02/>

**There are four types of essays that can stand on their own or can be combined. For example, there are narrative expository essays, descriptive narrative essays, persuasive expository, etc.**

1. Expository – explains, expounds - accomplished through comparison and contrast, definition, example, the analysis of cause and effect, etc.
2. Persuasive/ argumentative – has an argument – will attempt to convince – the write evaluates evidence, and establishes a position on the topic in a concise manner.
3. Descriptive -The descriptive essay is a genre of essay that asks the student to describe an object, person, place, experience, emotion, situation, etc.
4. Narrative - These essays are often anecdotal, experiential, and personal—allowing the student to express him/ herself in a creative and, quite often, moving way. The purpose emerges through the telling of the story.

**Using rhetorical and poetic devices and other techniques improves writing in all these types of essays. Among other things, it makes your writing stronger, more interesting and showcases your voice.**

Here are just a few that you will look for in the essay examples AND use in your own narrative essay.

# Find the definition for numbers 1-14 and record it beside the concept. In some cases, I have provided examples to help with the definition. I have done the first one for you. *Note that poetic devices are also used to enhance prose, not just poetry!! Eg. Symbolism, metaphors, hyperbole, etc.*

1. **Rhetorical question** *A rhetorical question is a figure of speech in the form of a question that is asked to make a point rather than to elicit an answer*

*Can we really expect the school to keep paying from its limited resources?*

1. **Emotive language** **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*Imagine being cast out into the street, cold, lonely and frightened.*

1. **Parallel structures \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*To show kindness is praiseworthy; to show hatred is evil.*

1. **Contrast/juxtaposition \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*Sherlock Holmes is in contrast to Dr. Watson. A story of poverty in a setting of wealth.*

1. **Imagery** **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**
2. **Repetition \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**  
     
    *Evil minds will use evil means.*
3. **The ‘rule of three’ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*I ask you, is this fair, is it right, is it just?*

1. **Anecdote - \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**
2. **Ironic understatement** – **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*The* *journalist* *wrote* *that* *the* *earthquake* *had* *caused* *some* *damage.* *This* *turned* *out* *to* *be* *a* *massive* *understatement* *of* *the* *devastation.*

1. **Descriptive detail** – **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**
2. **Paradox** – **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**
3. **Idiom** - **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**
4. **tone** – **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**
5. **Circle technique**- **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**
6. **Sentence fluency-** this is where the author uses a mix of short and long sentences. Short sentences can be used for emphasis, or to show stress, or to highlight a strong emotion. Long sentences are used to show deeper thinking or to highlight a big idea. If the author uses too many long sentences, the reader can get tired or confused; if the author uses too many short sentences, the writing looks and sounds too simple. A blend with purpose is best.