

# EXERCISES ON LITERARY TECHNIQUES FOR NOVEL WRITING

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*Tolentino Tuition, Grade 7 English*

*9 April 2026*

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## WHAT ARE LITERARY TECHNIQUES?

In novel writing, *literary technique* is a way of using language in order to impact the way that a reader experiences a novel.

As an author, you likely want your reader to react to, picture, or ponder the events occurring in your novel in a particular way. You may use *literary techniques* to do so.

**Table 1. Common literary techniques**

<i>Technique</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Example</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
<b>Metaphor</b>	Comparing two things that are not literally related.	“The man breathed aged cheese as he spoke”	‘aged cheese’ did not literally come out of the man’s mouth, we are trying to say that the man had bad breath.
<b>Simile</b>	Comparing two things using ‘like’ or ‘as’	“The woman had nails like talons”	We are trying to say that the woman had very sharp nails.
<b>Personification</b>	Giving non-human entities human characteristics	“The clock squatted menacingly on the shelf”	A clock cannot literally ‘squat’, we are trying to get the reader to imagine the clock as a person squatting down and preparing to pounce.
<b>Allusion</b>	A subtle reference to another thing, text, historical period, or belief.	“He grimaced at the black, white and red flag”	Nazi Germany’s flag is of these colours. We have referenced Nazi Germany without explicitly saying ‘Nazi Germany’

**Table I. Common literary techniques**

<i>Technique</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Example</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
<b>Alliteration</b>	Repeating the sound at the start of a word in two or more words which are close to each other in a sentence.	“The <i>magnanimous man merely moved</i> ”	We have repeated the ‘m’ sound at the start of 4 consecutive words. This may prompt certain emotions in our reader.
<b>Visual, tactile, auditory, olfactory and gustatory imagery</b>	Language that evokes one of the reader’s five senses.  Visual = sight Tactile = touch Auditory = hearing Olfactory = smell Gustatory = taste	“An odour of freshly baked bread wafted through the air as Grandma walked past”	We are helping the reader understand the way that Grandma smells by relating her odour to ‘freshly baked bread’, which we hope that our reader is familiar with.

## EXERCISE 1

You are an author, writing a novel set in 1942, Nazi Germany. The protagonist of your novel is a Jewish football player, who tackles the rampant discrimination in Germany whilst pursuing their football ambitions throughout the story.



For each technique in **Table 1**, please write 2 sentences that may appear in the novel above and incorporate the literary technique.

Please also explain the *effect* that you intended your technique to have on the reader in each sentence.

Metaphor
Sentence 1
Explanation
Sentence 2
Explanation

<b>Simile</b>	
Sentence 1	
Explanation	
Sentence 2	
Explanation	

<b>Personification</b>	
Sentence 1	
Explanation	
Sentence 2	
Explanation	

<b>Allusion</b>
Sentence 1
Explanation
Sentence 2
Explanation

<b>Imagery (please specify which type!)</b>
Sentence 1
Explanation
Sentence 2
Explanation