Stylistic Analyses

Throughout the semester, you will write *ten* brief analyses (about 300 words each) of specific stylistic choices in some of the works covered in class. You may chose which works you want to analyze, but be sure to have ten analyses by the end of the semester.

For each analysis, you should pick a few lines from one of the assigned texts, then focus on a particular linguistic detail in them (a surprising word choice, an arresting metaphor, a complex allusion, a striking use of rhythm), and offer your insights into what that specific stylistic nuance does for a reader.

Begin by quoting the text you will analyze. Then start your analysis with a clear thesis statement, letting your reader know what element of the passage you will be analyzing. Develop the analysis point by point with frequent reference to the text.

Everything you say in your analysis should relate directly to the actual words of the text. Don't get sidetracked; stick with the words. Think about how the author has shaped and arranged the language. I am looking for fine-grained analysis, not mushy generalizations.

You will find a sample Stylistic Analysis below that you can use as a model for your own analyses.

Your Analyses will not receive letter grades. I will grade them on a Credit/No Credit basis. If you submit all ten analyses, you will make 100% on the assignment.

Post your Stylistic Analyses in the Journal component of Blackboard. *Please DO NOT submit your analyses as attached files*.

To accommodate the flexibility of a distance learning class, I have not set deadlines for individual analyses. I encourage you, however, to submit them at regular intervals throughout the semester rather than waiting till the last minute to write and submit them all. I will not accept any analyses after the final deadline; any not submitted by then receive a zero.

Due Date:

- Final Deadline: **December 4**

> A long time ago in a galaxy far,
> far away …

The repetition "far, far" makes this phrase much more powerful that it otherwise would be. The meaning of the phrase would be practically identical without the repetition: "A long time ago in a galaxy far away …" So what does the repetition add?

First, the repetition affects the rhythm of the passage. Just having two strongly stressed, one-syllable words together gives the phrase an extra punch near the end. That's why the phrase sounds so flat without the repetition. There's a lilting, almost child-like rhythm to this repetition. I think that's what gives it its almost fairy-tale-like quality. It feels like a science fiction version of "Once upon a time."

The repetition also serves as an intensifier. We take the phrase "far, far away" to mean something like "very far away indeed." So the distance seems much greater because of the repetition. But the phrase "A long time ago in a galaxy *very* far away" would not have the same impact because repetition also intensifies emotion. We often express our intense emotions through verbal repetition. Think of a football fan cheering on a player running for a touch-down ("Go, go, go, go, go!") or an exasperated parent trying to stop a disobedient child ("No, no, no!"). Or consider Meg Ryan's "Yes, yes, yes!" scene in *When Harry Met Sally*. So the repetition heightens the emotional impact of the phrase making it feel more emotionally urgent and significant. The main emotion conveyed by the repetition here seems to be a feeling of awe or wonder, which sets just the right tone to begin a space fantasy like *Star Wars*.

The simple stylistic flourish of repetition makes this phrase more memorable and more powerful. It enhances the rhythm and intensifies the emotional impact of the words.