**SOME FEATURES TO LOOK OUT FOR IN THE ‘HOW’ QUESTION**

**AND TO USE IN YOUR WRITING**

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| **FEATURE** | **EXAMPLE** | **POSSIBLE REASONS WHY USED** |
| **Direct address** | ***Your*** *money will save starving children.* | Appeals directly to the reader / involves **you**. |
| **Modal verbs** | *Your money* ***will*** *save starving children.* | Suggests certainty here. It **can** also suggest possibility or urge the reader that they **must** do something. |
| **Emotive language** | *Your money will save* ***starving children****.* | Plays on the readers’ heartstrings. |
| **Punctuation** | *Act now****!*** *If you don’t, only one thing will happen****:*** *death.* | Punctuation in my examples can be used to suggest urgency (e.g. the exclamation mark) or to highlight a key word/phrase (e.g. the colon). |
| **Straightforward punctuation** | *Act now****.***  | Sometimes a lack of punctuation or simply a use of straightforward punctuation is used so that it doesn’t detract from the message.  |
| **Short sentences / paragraphs** | ***Act now.*** | Dramatic / to the point. |
| **1st person plural pronoun** | *Together* ***we*** *can make a difference.* | Suggests unity and is sometimes used to distance the writer & reader from **them** (**3rd person plural pronoun**). |
| **Listing**  | *Your money will help provide* ***schools, hospitals, safe playgrounds, clean drinking water****.* | Used to demonstrate all the benefits (or not, depending on your article). *If you wish to use the term, asyndetic listing (like my example) doesn’t have a conjunction (and, or, etc.).* |
| **Expert opinions** | ***Professor Smith*** *stated that “a lack of clean drinking water is the #1 threat to humanity”.* | Gives authority to the argument. **Direct speech** adds to that authority. |
| **Anecdotes** | ***Last year, Georgia was struggling to find water and had to…*** | Makes the argument ‘real’ / personal. Can be used for various effects, e.g. humorous, emotive, etc. Again, depends on your text. |
| **Contrasts / antithesis** | ***Dangerous*** *drinking water is now* ***safe*** *to drink.*  | Often used to demonstrate how something could work, has worked, etc. by contrasting ‘before’ and ‘after’. |
| **Metaphors / similes** | *From surviving in a* ***desert of despair***, they now live in an **oasis of happiness**. | Used for a variety of reasons: to make things seem better, worse, ridiculous, etc. I’ve also used more **antithesis**! |
| **Alliteration, plosives, fricatives, sibilance** | *From surviving in a* ***d****esert of* ***d****espair*, they now live in an oa**s**i**s** of happine**ss**. | These sounds add emphasis; in this case, the **alliteration** of **plosive** sounds reinforces the people’s harsh existence whereas the **sibilance** emphasises their newfound happiness. |
| **Comparatives / superlatives** | *They now have a* ***better*** *life and a* ***better*** *future* ***/*** *They now have the* ***best*** *possible life and the* ***best*** *possible future.* | Used to draw comparisons with something else / what came before, usually to demonstrate how something works well, e.g. a charity. |
| **Repetition** | *They now have a* ***better*** *life and a* ***better*** *future.* | Used to reinforce whatever argument is being made. Often not as obvious as this example – look for repetition of a word within a paragraph or subsequent paragraphs. Why do you think that word is being repeated? Does it have positive or negative **connotations**? |
| **Rhetorical questions** | *What’s the point of giving charity donations to corrupt politicians****?*** | Often worded so that their argument makes sense and/or you have to agree. Sometimes the writer answers their own question, which can be to ensure the right response from the reader, for humorous reasons, to demonstrate their knowledge, etc. This is called **hypophora**. *What’s the point of giving charity donations to corrupt politicians?* ***There is no point.*** |
| **Irony and/or sarcasm** | *Giving charity donations to corrupt politicians makes sense.* | They mean the opposite – often worded to make opposing views seem ridiculous. There’s also a **sarcastic** tone here. |
| **Humour** | *Although everyone likes to diss politicians, I’ve always felt that they should* ***serve two terms: one in office and one in prison****.* | Makes the reader smile and gets them onside / more likely to favour your argument. |
| **Colloquial (chatty) / informal language** | *Although everyone likes to* ***diss*** *politicians,* ***I’ve*** *always felt that they should serve two terms: one in office and one in prison.* | Again, gets the reader onside as you haven’t distanced yourself with **formal language**. However, it could be used for other reasons – e.g. to poke fun at someone – it depends on the article. |
| **Adverbs that assume agreement** | ***Obviously****, you can see that the current system doesn’t work.* | Suggests that your argument is ‘obviously’ the right one. |
| **Opinions disguised as facts** | *The system is corrupt.* | This is the point of an argument: to convince people your opinion is correct. These opinions often follow **facts** and/or **statistics** and/or **jargon**, e.g. *Last year’s investigation revealed that 80% of the judges were being bribed to exonerate criminals. The system is corrupt.* |
| **Connectives** | *…****therefore*** *you must act quickly.* | To emphasise cause and effect and sometimes, as in this case, to lead onto what the article wants you to do. |