

Close Reading of Unfamiliar texts
Language Features

Writers use words to express ideas. Close reading is a skill that tests your ability to understand HOW writers have put their words together in a way that helps the reader to understand their ideas. So it is a combination of what the writer is saying, and how they are using words to say it.

Content + Purpose + Tone + Audience

Parts of Speech		
nouns	Naming words eg cat, pencil, door. Also kindness (abstract noun), and Methven (proper noun).	Clarity, precision
verbs	Doing words Eg run, shout, hide	We sense action, movement.
adjectives	Describing words Eg hot, slippery, blue	We can visualise and imagine a scene
Sound effects		
Alliteration	Repetition of consonant sounds at the start of words Eg tiptoe tensely across the tiles	Engages our sense of sound
Onomatopoeia	The sound of the word matches its meaning Eg whisper, crack	Engages our sense of sound
Assonance	Repetition of vowel sounds within words Eg mile high pile of tyres	Makes connections between words which enhances their importance
Rhyme	Repeated sounds at the end of words Eg the cat sat on the mat	Makes connections between words Assists with rhythm and flow
Figurative language		
Simile	Compares two things using either "like" or "as" Eg he eats like a pig	Helps the reader to visualise and imagine Highlights a quality that both things have in common
Metaphor	Compares two things in a way that says one thing is another Eg my piggy brother	Helps the reader to visualise and imagine Highlights a quality that both things have in common
Personification	A non-human object has human qualities	Adds character and personality

	Eg the classroom sighed and relaxed in peace after the bell	
pun	A play on words that can have two meanings Eg a fish swam into a wall - "Damn," he cried.	Adds humour; makes the writer appear friendly and relaxed
cliche	An overused phrase that has lost impact Eg my heart skipped a beat	Familiarity makes it reassuring; we just agree without thinking too much
symbol	An image or object that stands for an idea Eg dove = peace	Messages communicated by short-cuts; universal understanding
hyperbole	Exaggeration Eg the end of the world to describe a disappointment; everyone else has got one	We tend to assume that a proportion of the claim is true
Rhetorical question	A question where the answer is implied or supplied within the text	To give the appearance of thinking, but the writer is controlling the reader's response
Imperative	Command Eg Just do it.	Tells the reader what action to take.
Vocabulary		
jargon	Technical words on a specialist subject Eg ruck, maul, try	Makes the writer seem knowledgeable and reliable
colloquial	Informal Eg hi, kids	Gives the text a friendly, mates tone; increases trust in the narrator
connotations	The feelings underlying words Eg house / home; budget / savings plan; underweight / scrawny; assertive v bossy	Shows the writer's attitude on the topic
repetition	Reusing same words or phrases or structures Eg Get fit. Get healthy. Get going.	Makes things seem to pile up and build to a climax.
listing	Several examples of the same type Eg When I get home I have to feed the cats, take out the rubbish, cook the dinner, do the dishes and walk the dog.	Implies that there is quite a lot (as if the writer could go on); suggests plenty; abundance