

# Syntactical Terms

## Student Resource

**SYNTAX** is the arrangement of words and the order of grammatical elements in a sentence.

**OMISSION**, techniques of:

- **Asyndeton**: the deliberate **omission** of conjunctions in a series of related words, phrases, or clauses
  - “See no evil, hear no evil,  speak no evil.”—proverb
- **Ellipsis**: the deliberate **omission** of a word or words that are readily implied by the context
  - “To err is human; to forgive, divine.” —Alexander Pope
  - “Wise men talk because they have something to say; fools,  because they have to say something.”—Plato
  - “Prosperity is a great teacher; adversity  a greater .” —William Hazlitt

**REPETITION**, techniques of:

- **Anadiplosis**: the **repetition** of a prominent (usually the final) word of a phrase, clause, line, or stanza at the beginning of the next
  - “Pleasure might cause her read, reading might make her know./ Knowledge might pity win, and pity grace obtain.” —Philip Sidney
  - “But if possibility of evil be to exclude good, no good ever can be done.” —Samuel Johnson
  - “Fear leads to anger. Anger leads to hate. Hate leads to suffering.”—Yoda (*This is also an example of parallelism.*)
- **Anaphora**: the **repetition** of the same word or expression at the beginning of successive phrases, clauses, sentences, or lines for rhetorical or poetic effect
  - “The true nature of man, his true good, true virtue, and true religion are things which cannot be known separately.” — Blaise Pascal
  - “To think on death it is a misery;/ To think on life it is a vanity;/ To think on the world verily it is;/ To think that here man hath no perfect bliss.” —Henry Peacham
- **Epanalepsis**: the **repetition**, placed at the end of a sentence, line, clause, or phrase, of the word or words at the beginning of the same sentence, line, clause or phrase
  - “Weep no more, woeful shepherds, weep no more.” —John Milton
  - “Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.”—Phillippians 4:4
- **Epistrophe**: the **repetition** of the same word or group of words at the ends of successive phrases or clauses
  - “When I was a child, I used to speak as a child, think as a child, reason as a child.” —1 Corinthians 13:11
  - “government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth.” — Abraham Lincoln
  - “Where affections bear rule, there reason is subdued, honesty is subdued, good will is subdued, and all things else that withstand evil, for ever are subdued.” —Thomas Wilson

- **Polysyndeton:** the **repetition** of conjunctions within a sentence for special emphasis.
  - “**And** God made the beast of the earth after his kind, **and** cattle after their kind, **and** every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: **and** God saw that it was good.” —Genesis 1:24–25
  - “[Football] still demands those attributes of courage **and** stamina **and** coordinated efficiency. . . .” —Vince Lombardi

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### ***BALANCE AND CONTRAST (OR REVERSAL):***

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- **Antimetabole:** a sentence strategy in which the arrangement of ideas in the second phrase or clause is a reversal of the first (**using the same words**) (**a-b-b-a**)
  - “Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home<sup>a</sup> in the body<sup>b</sup> we are absent from the Lord—for we walk by faith, not by sight—we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body<sup>b</sup> and to be at home<sup>a</sup> with the Lord.” —2 Corinthians 5:6–8
  - “Ask not what your country<sup>a</sup> can do for you<sup>b</sup>—ask what you<sup>b</sup> can do for your country<sup>a</sup>.” —John F. Kennedy
- **Antithesis:** a contrast of ideas or words in a balanced or parallel construction (**a-b-a-b**)
  - “I did not come to<sup>a</sup> abolish<sup>b</sup>, but to<sup>a</sup> fulfill<sup>b</sup>.” —Matthew 5:17b
  - “To err<sup>a</sup> is human<sup>b</sup>; to forgive<sup>a</sup>, divine<sup>b</sup>.” —Alexander Pope

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### **PARALLEL STRUCTURE**

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- **Parallelism:** a similarity in the way parts of a sentence or sentences are put together (grammatical or structural)
  - “[T]he torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans, born in this century, tempered by war, disciplined by a hard and bitter peace, proud of our ancient heritage.” —John F. Kennedy
  - “Be one of the few, the proud, the Marines.” —United States Marine Corps advertisement (*Note that this sentence also contains ellipsis as it leaves out “Be one of” in front of the second two nouns.*)

Note: Online flashcards for definitions and examples of syntactical terms are available at:

<http://quizlet.com/5093081/syntactical-terms-flash-cards/>