

Technical Voice Analysis



Use this worksheet to identify elements of personal style or Voice in your own writing.

1. Pick a favorite scene or chapter from everything you've written, and write down why you like it.

Don't think too hard at this stage, just give your gut reaction. Are there turns of phrases you think are clever? Is it lyrical? Does the dialogue make you laugh? Do you like the balance between action and narrative?

2. What sentence structure(s) do you use most often? (Choose all that apply.)

☐ Simple Sentences: One independent clause and expresses a complete thought. *Example: The sun rose.*

☐ Compound Sentences: Two or more independent clauses connected by coordinating conjunctions (e.g., and, but, or) or semicolons. *Example: They gathered around the dinner table, sharing stories and laughter, but beneath the surface, tensions simmered.*

☐ Complex Sentences: One independent clause and at least one dependent (subordinate) clause. *Example: After she finished her homework, she went to the park.*

☐ Compound-Complex Sentences: Two or more independent clauses and at least one dependent clause. *Example: Noren practiced his spells, hoping to master the art of magic, but true power came not from the spells themselves but from understanding the ancient wisdom passed down by his ancestors.*

☐ Declarative Sentences: Makes a statement and ends with a period. *Example: The train arrived at noon.*

☐ Interrogative Sentences: Asks a question and ends with a question mark. *Example: "Are you coming to the party tonight?"*

☐ Imperative Sentences: Gives a command, request, or instruction and usually ends with a period or an exclamation mark. *Example: "Give me a call later."*

☐ Exclamatory Sentences: Conveys strong emotion and ends with an exclamation mark. *Example: She'd never seen such a beautiful sunset!*

☐ Rhetorical Questions: A question asked for effect or to make a point, but no answer is expected. *Example: Who doesn't love a good adventure?*

☐ Sentence Fragments: An incomplete sentence that may lack a subject or a verb but still conveys meaning. *Example: Whispers in the wind. Echoes of the past.*

☐ Run-on Sentences: Two or more independent clauses incorrectly joined together without proper punctuation. *Example: Emily sat by the window gazing at the raindrops falling gently on the glass she felt a sense of melancholy as memories from the past flooded her mind she wished she could turn back time and relive those moments yet she knew she had to embrace the present and move forward.*

Describe your sentence style. *For example: I use lots of short sentences and fragments during action scenes, but complex sentences and rhetorical questions with internal thoughts.*

3. Examine the language and tone you prefer. How does your writing sound?

We've listed some examples and descriptive adjectives and below. Circle or underline the one but feel free to describe your writing in your own words.

Casual:

"Dude, that party was epic! You should've been there!"

Poetic:

Her eyes, like stars in the velvety night sky, twinkled with secrets untold.

Playful:

Lucy's super-sleuthing skills were sharper than a ninja's katana.

Gothic:

Amidst the crumbling ruins, she heard the eerie whispers of restless spirits, haunting the desolate manor.

Serious:

Lord Hildderman's army crushed any signs of rebellion, leaving its citizens cowering in fear.

Satirical:

Mayor Bloom danced an evasive cha-cha with every pointed question the press tossed his way.

Formal:

The esteemed detective cordially greeted the distinguished guests before commencing his investigation.

Sarcastic:

"Bravo, genius! You managed to lock your keys inside the car again. Your talents never cease to amaze."

Wistful:

Was it only a decade ago they'd run through Nestor's Field with abandon, their hearts full, their joys careless?

Lyrical	Intimate	Raw	Haunting	Ironic	Hopeful
Witty	Cerebral	Sensuous	Conversational	Surprising	Wistful
Evocative	Eloquent	Edgy	Sophisticated	Nostalgic	Gloomy
Sparse	Whimsical	Curious	Playful	Bold	Authoritative
Funny	Insightful	Forceful	Suspenseful	Dreamlike	Confessional
Poetic	Crisp	Irreverent	Provocative	Dark	Pessimistic
Quirky	Vivid	Fluid	Smart	Contemplative	Cynical
Reflective	Enigmatic	Atmospheric	Cinematic	Unapologetic	Experimental

Describe your language style. *For example: I write edgy horror with a comedic twist. My characters kiss, cuss, and kill quite a bit, but there's humor in the carnage.*

4. Identify the themes you frequently explore.

Do you consistently write stories that explore similar themes or topics? Check the themes that often appear in your work or that matter most to you.

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Love and relationships | <input type="checkbox"/> Nature versus technology | <input type="checkbox"/> Artistic expression |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coming of age | <input type="checkbox"/> Faith and spirituality | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-sacrifice and heroism |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Identity and self-discovery | <input type="checkbox"/> Politics and government | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethics and moral dilemmas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family dynamics | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental health and illness | <input type="checkbox"/> Challenges of leadership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Betrayal and forgiveness | <input type="checkbox"/> Science and exploration | <input type="checkbox"/> Transformation and personal growth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Good versus evil | <input type="checkbox"/> Legacy and inheritance | <input type="checkbox"/> Forbidden desires |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Power and corruption | <input type="checkbox"/> Courage and bravery | <input type="checkbox"/> The search for meaning and purpose |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loss and grief | <input type="checkbox"/> Friendship and loyalty | <input type="checkbox"/> Adventure or exploration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dystopia and societal collapse | <input type="checkbox"/> Dreams and aspirations | <input type="checkbox"/> The role of fate and destiny |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Redemption and second chances | <input type="checkbox"/> Isolation and loneliness | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prejudice and discrimination | <input type="checkbox"/> Human mortality | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> War and conflict | <input type="checkbox"/> The pursuit of knowledge | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Survival and resilience | <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental issues | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

5. How do you tend to use description?

Choose any / all that apply. Put a star next to any techniques with which you might want to experiment.

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|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sparse: Provides essential information about the setting with minimal embellishment, focusing on delivering the necessary details. | <input type="checkbox"/> Atmospheric: Crafts descriptions that evoke specific emotions, using elements of the setting to amplify the intended mood and immerse readers in the story's emotional landscape. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sensory: Creates a vivid experience by incorporating sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and tactile sensations to immerse readers in the environment. | <input type="checkbox"/> High-Contrast: Draws attention to the differences between various aspects of the setting to emphasize conflicts, themes, or character dynamics within the narrative. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> POV: Describes the setting through the lens of the protagonist's perspective, emphasizing details that catch their attention and are relevant to their thoughts and feelings. | <input type="checkbox"/> Reflective: Uses the environment to reflect characters' personalities, habits, or behaviors, providing subtle cues that enhance character development. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Metaphorical: Employs descriptive language that uses comparisons, metaphors, and similes to create strong mental images and convey emotions through symbolism. | <input type="checkbox"/> Symbolic: Employs symbolic elements in the description to convey thematic or metaphoric meanings, allowing the setting to enhance the story's subtext. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Purple: Uses extravagant language that might distract from the plot, focusing instead on maintaining a balance between lush detail and readability. | <input type="checkbox"/> Contextual: Uses elements of the setting to hint at the past, offering insights into the world's history and context through visual cues and artifacts. |

6. What other literary devices do you tend to use?

Listed here are additional techniques / devices that can feature in a writer's narrative Voice. Check the ones that you use regularly. Put a star next to any that you might want to further explore.

Narrative Style and Structure:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Experimental or unconventional narrative techniques | <input type="checkbox"/> Use of foreshadowing to give hints about what might happen later in the story. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Playful use of language and phrasing | <input type="checkbox"/> Big, unexpected plot twists |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Breaking the fourth wall | <input type="checkbox"/> Worlds with epic scope and scale |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Short, punchy sentences that interrupt longer prose | <input type="checkbox"/> High intensity pacing and suspense |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cinematic approach to storytelling | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emphasis on rich and descriptive prose | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Using flashbacks to reveal past events | |

Symbolism and Depth:

- ☐ Use of symbolism in objects and settings woven throughout the story
- ☐ Baked-in social commentary or thematic exploration
- ☐ Allegorical stories with hidden meanings or life lessons
- ☐ Double meanings that readers may not pick up on at first
- ☐ Exploration of cultural symbolism, whether based on real or fictional cultures
- ☐ Physical plot events that mirror a character's internal struggles
- ☐ Use of metaphor to add color to your prose
- ☐ Exploration of dream sequences to symbolically represent characters' fears or desires
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Character and Voice:

- ☐ Large casts with shifting perspectives
- ☐ Preference of antiheroes instead of classic heroes
- ☐ Use of unreliable narrators
- ☐ Use of split narratives with different characters experiencing parallel events
- ☐ Distinct, unexpected character voices
- ☐ Dramatic character arcs that see vast transformation
- ☐ Clever dialogue and banter
- ☐ Morally ambiguous main characters
- ☐ In-depth character studies of intriguing or unexpected personalities
- ☐ Giving human qualities to things that aren't human, like animals or objects
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____