Style guide for GCSE Aeneid 2

Many stylistic devices have the effect of **emphasising** a point. Always consider **WHY** a word/phrase is being emphasised – discuss the context and the meaning. You will get ONE example of each. Your job is to find others. These examples are in no order of importance.

In order to avoid repeatedly using the words ‘emphasise’ + ‘emphatic’ [!] try a couple of the following:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| accentuateindicatestresspoint outunderlinereiteratere-emphasise!highlight | pinpointput in the foregroundspotlight dwell on make the point make clearmake much ofreinforce/ amplify |

Polyptoton

In inflected languages (such as Latin) polyptoton is the same word being repeated but appearing each time in a different case/verb form.

Other than the function of emphasising ideas, the use of polyptoton as a rhetorical device adds (i) rhythm to a work as well as making it (ii) easier to remember.

It can be used of verbs, too.

***Judge*** *not, that ye be not* ***judged***  Gospel of Matthew 7:1

Aeneid 2 example

haec ubi **dicta** dedit, lacrimantem et multa volentem 2.790-1

**dicere** deseruit, tenuisque recessit in auras.

When thus Creusa **had spoken** (*lit*. ‘given these words’), she left me weeping and eager to **say** much, and drew back into thin air.

\*She has spoken but Aeneas cannot reply.

Alliteration

[The *Raven*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Raven)by [Edgar Allan Poe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edgar_Allan_Poe) has many examples of alliteration, including the following line: "And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain".

*Birches* (by Robert Frost)

They click upon themselves

As the breeze rises, and turn many-colored

As the stir cracks and crazes their enamel.

Aeneid 2 example

urbis uti captae casum convulsaque vidit 2,506-7

limina...

*When he saw the fall of the captured city and the doors torn off.*

The harshness of the C sound illustrates the violence done.

Anaphora

Anaphora (Greek: ἀναφορά, "carrying back, repeating") is a rhetorical device that consists of repeating a sequence of words at the beginnings of neighbouring clauses, thereby lending them emphasis.

Other than the function of emphasising ideas, the use of anaphora as a rhetorical device adds (i) rhythm to a work as well as making it (ii) more pleasurable to read and (iii) easier to remember.

Anaphora serves the purpose of delivering an artistic effect to a passage. It is also used to appeal to the emotions of the audience in order to persuade, inspire, motivate and encourage them. In Dr Martin Luther King Jr.'s famous "I Have a Dream" speech, he uses anaphora by repeating "I have a dream" eight times throughout the speech.[[1]](#footnote-1)

***It was*** *the best of times,* ***it was*** *the worst of times,* ***it was*** *the age of wisdom,* ***it was*** *the age of foolishness,* ***it was*** *the epoch of belief,* ***it was*** *the epoch of incredulity****, it was*** *the season of Light,* ***it was*** *the season of Darkness,* ***it was*** *the spring of hope,* ***it was*** *the winter of despair*

— Charles Dickens, A Tale of Two Cities

***We shall not*** *flag or fail.* ***We shall go*** *on to the end.* ***We shall******fight*** *in France,* ***we shall******fight*** *on the seas and oceans,* ***we shall fight*** *with growing confidence and growing strength in the air,* ***we shall*** *defend our island, whatever the cost may be,* ***we shall fight*** *on the beaches,* ***we shall fight*** *on the landing grounds,* ***we shall fight*** *in the fields and in the streets,* ***we shall fight*** *in the hills.* ***We shall*** *never surrender.*

— Winston Churchill, House of Commons, 4 June 1940

Aeneid 2 example

'at tibi ***pro*** scelere,' exclamat, ***'pro*** talibus ausis 2.535

di…

***In return for/as payment*** *for your wicked crime****, in return for/as payment*** *for such reckless deeds, may the gods..* {Priam speaking}

***unum*** et commune periclum,

***una*** salus ambobus erit. mihi parvus Iulus 2.709-710

*However things may fall, we two will have* ***one*** *common peril,* ***one*** *(common) salvation.*

{Aeneas speaking to his father}

Asyndeton

Asyndeton (from the Greek: ἀσύνδετον, "unconnected") is a figure of speech in which one or several conjunctions (e.g. AND, BUT, AND THEN...) are omitted from a series of related clauses.

Examples are *veni, vidi, vici* and its translation "I came, I saw, I conquered".

Its use can have the effect of speeding up the rhythm of a passage and making a single idea more memorable. Or making a statement punchy and forceful, bringing out e.g. emotion, anger.

"...and that government **of the people, by the people, for the people** shall not perish from the earth".

Abraham Lincoln, *Gettysburg Address[[2]](#footnote-2)*

Aeneid 2 example

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Juxtaposition

Placement of two words next to each other which highlights a CONTRAST. “Bitter sweet”. Writers employ the literary technique of juxtaposition in order to surprise their readers and evoke their interest, by means of developing a comparison between two dissimilar things by placing them side by side.

Aeneid 2 example

limina tectorum et medium in penetralibus hostem, 2.508

“When Priam saw …the foe in the heart of his home” ENEMY and HEART OF HOME next to each other.

Pleonasm

Pleonasm (from Greek πλέον pleon "**more, too much**") is the use of more words or parts of words than is necessary or sufficient for clear expression: examples are *black darkness, burning fire*, or *people's democracy*. In many ways it is almost the same as tautology, *saying the same thing*.

Pleonasm sometimes serves the same function as ‘repetition’—it can be used to reinforce an idea, contention or question, rendering writing clearer and easier to understand.

"I will be brief: your noble son is **mad**:

**Mad** call I it; for, to define true **madness**,

What is't but to be nothing else but **mad**?"

— *Hamlet* (Act 2, Scene 2)

"Let me tell you this, when social workers offer you, **free, gratis and for nothing**, something to hinder you from swooning, which with them is an obsession, it is useless to recoil ..."

—Samuel Beckett, *Molloy*.

Aeneid 2 example

limina tectorum et medium in penetralibus hostem, 2.508

“When Priam saw …the foe in the heart of his home”

MEDIUM & PENETRALIA double up. The *penetralia* was the innermost part of the palace so MEDIUM is perhaps not needed. All of this stresses that Pyrrhus (the enemy/foe) has reached a place where he should not have been able to get to.

Simile

A simile is a [figure of speech](https://literarydevices.net/figure-of-speech/) that makes a [comparison](https://literarydevices.net/comparison/), showing similarities between two different things. Unlike a [metaphor](https://literarydevices.net/metaphor/), a simile draws resemblance with the help of the words “like” or “as.” Therefore, it is a direct comparison. Always think how appropriate the simile is: what are the points of comparison, who is being compared to what etc?

Aeneid 2 example

hic Hecuba et natae nequiquam altaria circum,

praecipites atra ceu tempestate columbae,

condensae et divum amplexae simulacra sedebant. 2.515-7

Here, round the shrines, vainly sat Hecuba and her daughters, huddled together like doves swept before a black storm, and clasping the images of the gods.

The simile is very short, and quite complex. V. has trimmed the detail to a minimum (but might possibly have decided to expand the simile later, if he had lived to finish his work); the doves plunge down/sweep (*praecipites*), as the women rush to the altar; there they huddle (*condensae*). Doves = innocent; hawks/eagles (not mentioned but presumably chasing them) = evil.

Special choice of words (+ metaphor)

Aeneid 2 example

dixerat ille, et iam per moenia clarior ignis

auditur, propiusque aestus incendia volvunt. 2.705-6

*So Anchises spoke and now through the city more loudly the blaze is heard, and the flames roll their fiery flood closer and closer.*

Very striking phrase. It suggests a flood of heat from the conflagration. AESTUS means ‘heat’ but it often indicates ‘tide’ or ‘rough sea’. L&S dictionary describe as: *an undulating*, *boiling*, *waving; a waving*, *heaving*, *billowy motion; the periodical flux and reflux or ebb and flow of the sea, the tide.*

So we have the idea of heat rolling/ being rolled along like seawaves or the tide. Unstoppable.

Notice also that the sound of the fire is highlighted, too.

Chiasmus

*Chiasmus* (Latin term from Greek χίασμα, "crossing", from the Greek χιάζω, chiázō, "to shape like the letter Χ") is the figure of speech in which two or more clauses are related to each other through a reversal of structures in order to make a larger point.

Chiasmus was particularly popular in the literature of the ancient world, including Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, where it was used to articulate the balance of order within the text.

The elements of simple chiasmus are often labelled in the form A B B A, where the letters correspond to grammar, words, or meaning. For example John F. Kennedy said, "ask not what your country can do for you — ask what you can do for your country".

*Chiasmus* derives its effectiveness from its symmetrical structure and serves to emphasise (that word again!) a point. It may also give a line a pleasing rhythm.

A good example is the aphorism:

 *quod cibus est aliis, aliis est venenum*,

"What is food to some, to others is poison."

The pattern is: **noun, verb, pronoun; pronoun, verb, noun.**

The neatness of this aphorism makes it memorable (as in the JFK phrase above).

Aeneid 2 example

manu tenet et premit hasta . 2.530

Pyrrhus almost “holds him in his hand and presses on him with his spear.”

CHIASMUS here highlights almost catching him **by hand and by spear**.

nunc omnes terrent aurae, sonus excitat omnis 2.728

now every breeze terrifies me, every sound startles me,

Hyperbaton

Hyperbaton is a figure of speech in which normally associated words are separated. The separation of connected words for emphasis or effect is possible to a much greater degree in highly inflected languages, where sentence meaning does not depend closely on word order. In Latin and ancient Greek, the effect of hyperbaton is usually to emphasize the **first** word.

"Bloody thou art; **bloody** will be thy **end**"

— William Shakespeare in Richard III, 4.4, 198.

*Bloody* is separated from *end* to stress how horrible the death will be.

Aeneid 2 example

concidit ac multo vitam cum sanguine fudit. 2.532

*Polites fell, and poured out his life in a stream of blood.*

Hyperbaton of multo. That’s A LOT of blood.

 dextraque coruscum

extulit ac lateri capulo tenus abdidit ensem.

“…While with the right Pyrrhus unsheathes his flashing sword and buried it to the hilt in his side.”

A very striking example, the 2 words widely separated. Hyperbaton of “flashing/glittering”: the sword has just been taken out from the scabbard and this is a menacing adjective.

Enjambment

The running-over of a sentence or phrase from one poetic line to the next, without terminal punctuation; the opposite of end-stopped. It can be used to suggest someone is rushing along/emotional/angry, that the action is fast; to highlight the word that begins the new line...

In reading, **the delay of meaning** creates a tension that is released when the word or phrase that completes the syntax is encountered.

William Carlos Williams’s “Between Walls” is one sentence broken into 10 *enjambed* lines:

 the back wings

 of the

 hospital where

 nothing

 will grow lie

 cinders

 in which shine

 the broken

 pieces of a green

 bottle

The start of *The Waste Land* by T.S. Eliot:

**April** is the cruellest month, breeding

**Lilacs** out of the dead land, mixing

**Memory** and desire...

Aeneid 2 example

porticibus longis fugit et vacua atria lustrat

saucius. 2.528-529

“Escaping from Pyrrhus, Polites, one of Priam’s sons, flees through spears, through foes, down the long colonnades and, wounded, traverses the empty courts.

\*This suddenly emphasises the fact that he is wounded and may not escape/ survive. The juddering effect of the placement of this word is noticeable. Enjambment is highlighted by being only one word in the next line before a new sentence. The surprise when we learn he is WOUNDED: ominous, is it fatal?

Rhythm

Rhythm may be:

fast/light (dactylic), denoting excitement, speed

*or*

slow/heavy/ponderous/gloomy (spondaic) denoting sadness, gloom, impressiveness, strain/effort etc.

**Your teachers will have pointed out to you relevant lives, as this does require knowledge of the meter of the line.**

Aeneid 2 examples

condensae et divum amplexae simulacra sedebant. 2.517

Hecuba and her daughters, *“huddled together … and clasping the images of the gods”.*

Lots of heavy syllables (spondees). The slow fear of the women, rising tension.

Sound

The sound of a line may enhance the meaning. It may even replicate the actual sound (*onomatopoeia*).

A poem by Australian poet Lee Emmett illustrates onomatopoeia words related to water:

*"water plops into pond*

*splish-splash downhill…”*

Alfred Lord Tennyson

*The moan of doves in immemorial elms,*

**And murmuring of innumerable bees.**

Aeneid 2 example

Lines 728-9 *sonus excitat omnis suspensum* have a lot of hissing S sounds (this includes the X sound); may suggest the dangerous sounds. [‘Every sound startles me, as I hesitate…’]

\*Think how an actor, reading out Virgil’s lives, might be given a chance to emphasise a particular sound.

1. Delivered on August 28, 1963: he calls for an end to racism in the United States. Delivered to over 250,000 civil rights supporters from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, Washington, the speech was a defining moment of the American Civil Rights Movement [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. It was delivered by Lincoln during the American Civil War, on the afternoon of Thursday, November 19, 1863, at the dedication of the Soldiers' National Cemetery in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)