

# chapter 11

## Using Language

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### Denotative Meaning

Literal or dictionary meaning  
of word or phrase

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### Connotative Meaning

Meaning suggested by  
associations or emotions  
triggered by word or phrase

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## Language Use Guidelines



- Accurately
- Clearly
- Vividly
- Appropriately

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## Abstract Words

Refer to general concepts,  
qualities, attributes

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## Concrete Words

Refer to  
tangible  
objects



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## Abstract vs. Concrete

Physical activity

Abstract

Sports

Golf

Professional golf

Tiger Woods



Concrete

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## Imagery

Creates mental images of  
objects, actions, ideas



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## Creating Imagery



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**Simile**

- Comparison
- Introduced with "like" or "as"

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**Simile**

**"Air pollution is eating away at the monuments in Washington, D.C., like a giant Alka-Seltzer tablet."**

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**Metaphor**

- Comparison
- Not introduced with "like" or "as"

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## Metaphor

**“America’s cities are the windows through which the world looks at American society.”**

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## Rhythm

**Pattern of sound created by choice, arrangement of words**

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## Exploiting Rhythm of Language



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## Parallelism

Similar arrangement of pair or series of related words, phrases, sentences

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## Parallelism

“Rich and poor, intelligent and ignorant, wise and foolish, virtuous and vicious, man and woman—it is ever the same, each soul must depend wholly on itself.”

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## Repetition

- Reiterating same word or set of words
- At beginning or end of successive clauses, sentences

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## Repetition

**"If not now, when? If not us, who? If not together, how?"**

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## Alliteration

**Repeating initial consonant in close or adjoining words**

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## Alliteration

**"Our colleges, our communities, our country should challenge hatred wherever we find it."**

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**Antithesis**

**Juxtaposition of contrasting ideas, usually in parallel structure**

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**Antithesis**

**"Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country."**

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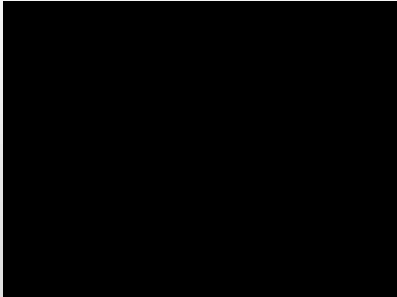
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**Using Imagery & Rhythm**



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## Using Language Appropriately



- Occasion
- Audience
- Topic
- Speaker

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## Inclusive Language

Does not stereotype, demean on basis of gender, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, etc.

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## Using Inclusive Language

- Avoid generic "he"
- Avoid use of "man" when referring to both men & women



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## Using Inclusive Language

- Avoid stereotyping jobs, social roles by gender
- Use names groups use to identify themselves

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## Avoid the Generic "He"

Ineffective: **Whenever a surgeon walks into the operating room, he risks being sued for malpractice.**



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## Avoid the Generic "He"

More Effective: **Whenever a surgeon walks into the operating room, she or he risks being sued for malpractice.**

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## Avoid Generic "Man"

Ineffective: **If a large comet struck the earth, it could destroy all of mankind.**



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## Avoid Generic "Man"

More Effective: **If a large comet struck the earth, it could destroy all human life.**

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## Avoid Stereotyping

Ineffective: **Being a small businessman in the current economic climate is not easy.**



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## Avoid Stereotyping

More Effective: **Being a small business person in the current economic climate is not easy.**

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## Use Group Self-Identifiers

Ineffective: **The Paralympics show what handicapped people can accomplish in the athletic arena.**



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## Use Group Self-Identifiers

More Effective: **The Paralympics show what people with disabilities can accomplish in the athletic arena.**

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