

Consider Pace with Gregory A. Kompes

You need speed in the opening, middle, and climax of your story. Yet, you should also slow down from time to time, especially to pause for significance and to express characters' emotions, but those times will usually appear just before or after a joyride of skin-tightening speed.

Consider your pace choices: Action, Cliff Hangers, Dialogue, Prolonged Outcomes, Scene Cuts, A series of incidents in rapid succession, Short Chapters and Scenes (or Long Chapters & Scenes), Summary, Word Choice, and Sentence Structure.

Techniques to slow the pace:

1. Lengthen your sentences
2. Add descriptions
3. Include subplots
4. Use flashbacks and backstory
5. Add more introspection

Techniques to increase (speed up) the pace

1. Shorten your sentences
2. Use more dialog
3. Remove or limit secondary plots
4. Use cliffhangers
5. Increase the action

Literary Devices

Accumulation: a stylistic device that is defined as a list of words which embody similar abstract or physical qualities or meanings, with the intention to emphasize the common qualities that words hold. It is also an act of accumulating the scattered points.

I'm a modern man, digital and smoke-free;
a man for the millennium. A diversified, multi-cultural, post-modern deconstructionist;
politically, anatomically and ecologically incorrect. I've been uplinked and downloaded,
I've been inputted and outsourced. I know the upside of downsizing, I know the
downside of upgrading."

When Will Jesus Bring the Pork Chops by George Carlin

Amplification: a rhetorical device used to embellish a sentence or statement by adding further information. The objective is to increase readability and worth of the statement or sentence. Perfect for when a simple sentence is abrupt, and cannot convey the desired implications. Amplification makes structural additions, and gives further meanings by describing and repeating a certain statement or idea.

"Mr. and Mrs. Veneering were bran-new people in a bran-new house in a bran-new quarter of London. Everything about the Veneerings was spick and span new. All their furniture was new, all their friends were new, all their servants were new, their place was new, ... their harness was new, their horses were new, their pictures were new, they themselves were new, they were as newly-married as was lawfully compatible with their having a bran-new baby ..."

Our Mutual Friend (by Charles Dickens)

Digression: a departure from the main subject or narrative used to introduce a new topic, story, or information that interrupts the logical thought or the line of the argument/narrative. After a digression, the writer immediately returns to the original subject and continues as before.

“The land seemed to go on forever. Brown, flat, and unbroken except for the occasional clump of brush, it seemed to run down to the horizon without a single rise to make darkness and light. The wind was up. The sun appeared dimly through a pall of dust that swung in the sky like the haze over a city,”

The Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck

Extended Metaphor: a comparison between two unlike things that continue throughout a series of sentences in a paragraph, or even an entire chapter or even work.

“Bobby Holloway says my imagination is a three-hundred-ring circus. Currently I was in ring two hundred and ninety-nine, with elephants dancing and clowns cart wheeling and tigers leaping through rings of fire. The time had come to step back, leave the main tent, go buy some popcorn and a Coke, bliss out, cool down.”

Seize the Night by Dean Koontz

Asyndeton: omitting conjunctions between words, phrases, or clauses. In a list of items, asyndeton gives the effect of unpremeditated multiplicity, of an extemporaneous rather than a labored account.

“In books I find the dead as if they were alive; in books I foresee things to come; in books warlike affairs are set forth; from books come forth the laws of peace.”

Richard de Bury

Parataxis: phrases and clauses are placed one after another independently, without coordinating or subordinating them through the use of conjunctions to create a rapid sequence of thoughts.

“Twenty-two years old, weak, hot, frightened, not daring to acknowledge the fact that he didn’t know who or what he was . . . with no past, no language, no tribe, no source, no address book, no comb, no pencil, no clock, no pocket handkerchief, no rug, no bed, no can opener, no faded postcard, no soap, no key, no tobacco pouch, no soiled underwear and nothing nothing nothing to do . . . he was sure of one thing only: the unchecked monstrosity of his hands...”

Sula by Toni Morrison

Hypotaxis: subordination of one clause to another, or when the clauses are coordinated or subordinated to one another within sentences. A grammatical arrangement of constructs that work in the same way, but which play unequal roles in a sentence. It helps in defining the exact meaning of a clause

“One December morning near the end of the year when snow was falling moist and heavy for miles all around, so that the earth and the sky were indivisible, Mrs. Bridge emerged from her home and spread her umbrella.”

Mrs. Bridge by Evan S. Connell

Polysyndeton: a stylistic device in which several coordinating conjunctions are used in succession in order to achieve an artistic effect.

“Let the whitefolks have their money **and** power **and** segregation **and** sarcasm **and** big houses **and** schools **and** lawns like carpets, **and** books, **and** mostly–mostly–let them have their whiteness.”

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings by Maya Angelou

Zeugma (there are many forms): includes several similar rhetorical devices, all involving a grammatically correct linkage (or yoking together) of two or more parts of speech by another part of speech. Thus examples of zeugmatic usage would include one subject with two (or more) verbs, a verb with two (or more) direct objects, two (or more) subjects with one verb, and so forth. The main benefit of the linking is that it shows relationships between ideas and actions more clearly.

“When at Nightmare Abbey, he would condole with Mr. Glowry, drink Madeira with Scythrop, crack jokes with Mr. Hilary, hand Mrs. Hilary to the piano, take charge of her fan and gloves, and turn over her music with surprising dexterity, quote Revelations with Mr. Toobad, and lament the good old times of feudal darkness with the Transcendental Mr. Flosky.”

Thomas Love Peacock

Montage: “to mount” or associate things with each other. While mostly used in film making, in literature, it means a collection of images assembled to narrate a story or part of a story. Generally, a montage has five elements; quick cuts, absence of conversation or dialogue, narrative, music or background music, and supers.

“Quickly, as if she were recalled by something over there, she turned to her canvas. There it was—her picture. Yes, with all its greens and blues, its lines running up and across, its attempt at something. It would be hung in the attics, she thought; it would be destroyed. But what did that matter? she asked herself, taking up her brush again. She looked at the steps; they were empty; she looked at her canvas; it was blurred. With a sudden intensity, as if she saw it clear for a second, she drew a line there, in the centre. It was done; it was finished. Yes, she thought, laying down her brush in extreme fatigue, I have had my vision.”

To The Lighthouse by Virginia Woolf

Anacoluthon: the interruption within a sentence from one construction to another against the expected logical order of the sentence. (Modern stream of consciousness.)

“A plank that was dry was not disturbing the smell of burning and altogether there was the best kind of sitting there could never be all the edging that the largest chair was having...”

A Portrait of Mabel Dodge by Gertrude Stein

“... I could have brought him in his breakfast in bed with a bit of toast so long as I didnt do it on the knife for bad luck or if the woman was going her rounds with the watercress and something nice and tasty there are a few olives in the kitchen he might like I never could bear the look of them in Abrines I could do the criada the room looks all right since I changed it the other way you see something was telling me all the time I’d have to introduce myself not knowing me from Adam very funny wouldn’t it ...”

Ulysses by James Joyce

Anaphora: the repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of successive sentences, phrases, or clauses, allows to convey, emphasize, and reinforce meaning.

“Indifference elicits no response. Indifference is not a response. Indifference is not a beginning; it is an end. And, therefore, indifference is always the friend of the enemy, for it benefits the aggressor—never his victim, whose pain is magnified when he or she feels forgotten.”

Elie Wiesel

Diacope: “to cut into two.” This literary device is a repetition of a phrase or word, broken up by other intervening words. For instance, a very popular example of diacope is in William Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, “to be, or not to be!”

“**You held me down**, but I got up”

You hear my voice, **you hear** that sound ...

You held me down, but I got up

Get ready 'cause I've had enough

I see it all, I see it now”

The Roar by Katy Perry

For hundreds of literary devices, visit: LiteraryDevices.com