The D-I-D-L-S Packet

DICTION

The author's choice of words and their connotations (See handout.)

What words appear to have been chosen specifically for their effects?
What effect do these words have on your mood as the reader?
What do they seem to indicate about the author's tone?

IMAGERY

The use of descriptions that appeal to sensory experience

What images are especially vivid? To what sense do these appeal?
What effect do these images have on your mood as a reader?
What do they seem to indicate about the author's tone?

DETAILS

Facts included or those omitted

What details has the author specifically included?
What details has the author apparently left out?
(NOTE: This is only for analysis. <u>Do not</u> write about these omitted details in an essay.)
What effect do these included and excluded details have on your mood as a reader?
What do these included and excluded details seem to indicate about the author's tone?

LANGUAGE

**Characteristics of the body of words use
(slang, jargon, scholarly language, etc.)**

How could the language be described?
How does the language affect your mood as a reader?
What does the language seem to indicate about the author's tone?

SYNTAX

The way the sentences are constructed (See extended handout.)

Are the sentences simple, compound, declarative, varied, etc.?
How do these structures affect your mood as a reader?
What do these structures seem to indicate about the author's tone?

Literary Analysis

TONE: Author's attitude toward the subject, toward himself, or toward the audience.

DIDLS: **D**iction, **I**magery, **D**etails, **L**anguage, and **S**yntax. Use *diction* to find tone. Use *imagery, details, language* and *syntax* to support tone.

DICTION: Adjectives, nouns, verbs, adverbs, negative words, positive words, synonyms, contrast.

Look at the words that jump out at you - Evaluate *only those words* to find tone

Also look at:

Colloquial (Slang)	**Concrete** (Specific)
Old-Fashioned	**Abstract** (General or Conceptual)
Informal (Conversational)	**Euphonious** (Pleasant Sounding)
Formal (Literary)	**Cacophonous** (Harsh sounding)
Connotative (Suggestive meaning)	**Monosyllabic** (One syllable)
Denotative (Exact meaning)	**Polysyllabic** (More than one syllable)

Describe diction (choice of words) by considering the following:
1. Words can be *monosyllabic* (one syllable in length) or *polysyllabic* (more than one syllable in length). The higher the ratio of polysyllabic words, the more difficult the content.
2. Words can be mainly *colloquial* (slang), *informal* (conversational), *formal* (literary) or *old-fashioned*.
3. Words can be mainly *denotative* (containing an exact meaning, e.g., dress) or *connotative* (containing suggested meaning, e.g., gown)
4. Words can be *concrete* (specific) or *abstract* (general or conceptual).
5. Words can *euphonious* (pleasant sounding, e.g., languid, murmur) or *cacophonous* (harsh sound, e.g., raucous, croak).

IMAGERY: Creates a vivid picture and appeals to the senses

Alliteration	repetition of consonant sounds at the start of a word	The giggling girl gave gum.
Assonance	repetition of vowel sounds in the middle of a word	Moths cough and drop wings.
Consonance	repetition of consonant sounds in the middle of a word	The man has kin in Spain.
Onomatopoeia	writing sounds as words	The clock went tick tock.
Simile	a direct comparison of unlike things using like or as	Her hair is like a rat's nest.
Metaphor	a direct comparison of unlike things	The man's suit is a rainbow.
Hyperbole	a deliberate exaggeration for effect	I'd die for a piece of candy.
Understatement	represents something as less than it is	A million dollars is okay.
Personification	attributing human qualities to inhuman objects	The teapot cried for water.
Metonymy	word exchanged for another closely associated with it	Uncle Sam wants you!
Pun	play on words – Uses words with multiple meanings	Shoes menders mend soles.
Symbol	something that represents/stands for something else	the American Flag
Analogy	comparing two things that have at least one thing in common	A similar thing happened…
Oxymoron	Use or words seemingly in contradiction to each other	bittersweet chocolate

DETAILS: specifics the author includes about facts – his opinion

LANGUAGE: Words that describe the entire body of words in a text – not isolated bits of diction

Artificial	false	**Literal**	apparent, word for word
Bombastic	pompous, ostentatious	**Moralistic**	puritanical, righteous
Colloquial	vernacular	**Obscure**	unclear
Concrete	actual, specific, particular	**Obtuse**	dull-witted, undiscerning
Connotative	alludes to; suggestive	**Ordinary**	everyday, common
Cultured	cultivated, refined, finished	**Pedantic**	didactic, scholastic, bookish
Detached	cut-off, removed, separated	**Plain**	clear, obvious
Emotional	expressive of emotions	**Poetic**	lyric, melodious, romantic
Esoteric	understood by a chosen few	**Precise**	exact, accurate, decisive
Euphemistic	insincere, affected	**Pretentious**	pompous, gaudy, inflated
Exact	verbatim, precise	**Provincial**	rural, rustic, unpolished
Figurative	serving as illustration	**Scholarly**	intellectual, academic
Formal	academic, conventional	**Sensuous**	passionate, luscious
Grotesque	hideous, deformed	**Simple**	clear, intelligible
Homespun	folksy, homey, native, rustic	**Slang**	lingo, colloquialism
Idiomatic	Peculiar, vernacular	**Symbolic**	representative, metaphorical
Insipid	uninteresting, tame, dull	**Trite**	common, banal, stereotyped
Jargon	vocabulary for a profession	**Informal**	casual, relaxed, unofficial
Learned	educated, experienced	**Vulgar**	coarse, indecent, tasteless

Rhetorical Devices -- The use of language that creates a literary effect – enhance and support

Rhetorical Question	food for thought; create satire/sarcasm; pose dilemma
Euphemism	substituting a milder or less offensive sounding word(s)
Aphorism	universal commends, sayings, proverbs – convey major point
Repetition	also called refrain; repeated word, sentence or phrase
Restatement	main point said in another way
Irony	Either verbal or situational – good for revealing attitude
Allusion	refers to something universally known
Paradox	a statement that can be true and false at the same time

SYNTAX:

Consider the following patterns and structures:
Does the sentence length fit the subject matter?
Why is the sentence length effective?
What variety of sentence lengths are present?
Sentence beginnings – Variety or Pattern?
Arrangement of ideas in sentences
Arrangement of ideas in paragraph – Pattern?

Construction of sentences to convey attitude

Declarative	assertive – A statement
Imperative	authoritative - Command
Interrogative	asks a question
Simple Sentence	one subject and one verb
Loose Sentence	details after the subject and verb – happening now
Periodic Sentence	details before the subject and verb – reflection on a past event
Juxtaposition	normally unassociated ideas, words or phrases placed next together
Parallelism	show equal ideas; for emphasis; for rhythm
Repetition	words, sounds, and ideas used more than once – rhythm/emphasis
Rhetorical Question	a question that expects no answer

Punctuation is included in syntax

Ellipses: a trailing off; equally etc.; going off into a dreamlike state

Dash: interruption of a thought; an interjection of a thought into another

Semicolon: parallel ideas; equal ideas; a piling up of detail

Colon: a list; a definition or explanation; a result
Italics: for emphasis
Capitalization: for emphasis
Exclamation Point: for emphasis; for emotion

SHIFTS IN TONE: Attitude change about topic/Attitude about topic is different than the attitude toward subject

      Key Words (but, nevertheless, however, although)
      Changes in the line length
      Paragraph Divisions
      Punctuation (dashes, periods, colons)
      Sharp contrasts in diction

SYNTAX (SENTENCE STRUCTURE)

Describe the sentence structure by considering the following:
1. Examine the sentence length. Are the sentences *telegraphic* (shorter than 5 words in length), *short* (approximately 5 words in length), *medium* (approximately 18 words in length), or *long and involved* (30 or more words in length)? Does the sentence length fit the subject matter? What variety of lengths is present? Why is the sentence length effective?
2. Examine sentence beginnings. Is there a good variety or does a patterning emerge?
3. Examine the arrangement of ideas in a sentence. Are they set out in a special way for a purpose?
4. Examine the arrangement of ideas in a paragraph. Is there evidence of any pattern or structure?
5. Examine the sentence patterns. Some elements to consider are listed below:
   a. A *declarative (assertive) sentence* makes a statement: e.g., The king is sick.
   b. An *imperative sentence* gives a command: e.g., Stand up.
   c. An *interrogative sentence* asks a question: e.g., Is the king sick?
   d. An *exclamatory sentence* makes an exclamation: e.g., The king is dead!
   e. A *simple sentence* contains one subject and one verb: e.g., The singer bowed to her adoring audience.
   f. A *compound sentence* contains two independent clauses joined by a coordinate conjunction (and, but, or) or by a semicolon: e.g., The singer bowed to the audience, but she sang no encores.
   g. A *complex sentence* contains an independent clause and one or more subordinate clauses: e.g., You said that you would tell the truth.
   h. A *compound-complex sentence* contains two or more principal clauses and one or more subordinate clauses: e.g., The singer bowed while the audience applauded, but she sang no encores.
   I. A *loose sentence* makes complete sense if brought to a close before the actual ending: e.g., We reached Edmonton/that morning/after a turbulent flight/and some exciting experiences.
   j. A *periodic sentence* makes sense only when the end of the sentence is reached: e.g., That morning, after a turbulent flight and some exciting experiences, we reached Edmonton.
   k. In a *balanced sentence*, the phrases or clauses balance each other by virtue or their likeness of structure, meaning, or length: e.g., He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters.
   l. *Natural order of a sentence* involves constructing a sentence so the subject comes before the predicate: e.g., Oranges grow in California.
   m. *Inverted order of a sentence (sentence inversion)* involves constructing a sentence so that the predicate comes before the subject: e.g., In California grow oranges. This is a device in which normal sentence patterns are reverse to create an emphatic or rhythmic effect.
   n. *Split order of a sentence* divides the predicate into two parts with the subject coming in the middle: e.g., In California oranges grow.
   o. *Juxtaposition* is a poetic and rhetorical device in which normally unassociated ideas, words, or phrases are placed next to one another creating an effect of surprise and wit: e.g., "The apparition of these faces in the crowd:/ Petals on a wet, black bough" ("In a Station of the Metro" by Ezra Pound)
   p. *Parallel structure (parallelism)* refers to a grammatical or structural similarity between sentences or parts of a sentence. It involves an arrangement of words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs so that elements of equal importance are equally developed and similarly phrased: e.g., He was walking, running, and jumping for joy.
   q. *Repetition* is a device in which words, sounds, and ideas are used more than once to enhance rhythm and create emphasis: e.g., "…government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth" ("Address at Gettysburg" by Abraham Lincoln)
   r. A *rhetorical question* is a question that expects no answer. It is used to draw attention to a point that is generally stronger than a direct statement: e.g., If Mr. Ferchoff is always fair, as you have said, why did he refuse to listen to Mrs. Baldwin's arguments?