

CONTEMPORARY ORNAMENTATION

Not all ornamentation was created during the period of antiquity. Advancements in typography and in literacy have provided the means for more types of ornamentation; some forms even transcend the need for words and letters.

WORD-LEVEL ORNAMENTATION

Now, there are word forms and play, which do not apply to any of the registers mentioned previously. They are:

EXAGGERATION

Exaggeration is the use of language to make people, places, or things seem much larger or much more important than they really are.

EX:

"I understand that he is just a Chihuahua. But, your dog's teeth were so sharp that he nearly ate my foot off. "

That 16oz coffee was gigantic!

The volcano, a Titan, stood at 2000 feet.

AFFECTATION

Affectation is the deliberate use of language to elicit a solely negative, intimidated, or surprised response.

EX:

He is one stupid son of a b---h!
That a--hole cut me off!
He's a m-therf--ker.

VERSUS

He is one inconsiderate person.

EUPHEMISMS

Euphemisms are expressions which are deliberately formed to be inoffensive to others.

COMMON EUPHEMISMS

Used Car = Pre-Owned Car

Old people = Senior Citizens

Teenager = Young Adult

Die = Pass On

To Pee = Urinate

To Crap = Defecate
To Have Sex = To Consummate

SENTENCE-LEVEL ORNAMENTATION

LISTING

Listing is a common ornament. Basically, a list is something to help evoke thoughts in the reader and stimulate them intellectually. Many forms of poetry and fiction use lists to bridge different parts of the work. Also, essays use lists to make points and control the pace of the reader (or the speed of reading).

EX: War is tough, and regardless of how you look at war, one can be assured of murder, rape, pillaging, burning, hatred, revenge, and all of the evils of man.

Notice how the list is used to add another dimension to this very simple idea: War is tough on people.

INTERTEXT/ALLUSION

While there are different forms of intertext, the simple definition is anything, which reminds the reader of something else (almost identical to the idea of literary allusion). The idea comes from several different linguists and language theorists who have suggested that everything that we say has been (for the most part) said before.

That said, when we change a passage and adapt it to serve our message rhetorically and/or creatively, we use intertext (and we do not necessarily need a citation).

You are familiar with the open credits of Star Wars, right? A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away... If we use components of the line yet change it to service our own textual needs, then we use intertext.

EX:

A long time ago, in a galaxy far away, we did not have a battle over foreign oil.

Notice how the two ideas create interest, a different tone (sarcasm), and even a stronger emphasis on the point.

EX:

Thou shalt not steal thy girlfriend's boyfriend.

Notice how the phrasing of this line is borrowed from the traditional Christian commandments of the Old Testament (e.g., Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, etc.). Even the meaning of the phrasing is borrowed to fit a more contemporary audience.

HIGHLIGHTED TEXT

In more informal forms of writing, highlighting of the text may be used in order for an author to give emphasis to words, sentences, passages, etc. He/she may use italicization, underlining, capitalization, or bolding of characters in order to make ideas, phrases, etc. stand apart from regular text. We regard highlighted text as different from "HEADINGS" since highlighted text often appears in the middle of a paragraph or sentence.

EX:

When President George W. Bush offered a tax break, he really offered us a tax break.

Waterboarding is one of the most extreme forms of extracting information from captured terrorists.

Typically, writers will highlight words, which demand a good understanding of the word/phrase. The example above emphasizes that understanding the nature of "waterboarding" is essential to the rest of the document.

On the Internet, a person may use highlighting to emphasis a scream or a very important statement.

EX:

Lisa better not visit MY HOUSE. Otherwise, she will be in BIG TROUBLE.

EMOTICONS

Emoticons (also called smileys) are facial expressions formed by using typographic punctuation symbols. Emoticons may be horizontal in orientation or vertical in orientation.

Some computer encoding languages (such as unicode, etc.) have specific keystrokes (or keyboard shortcuts... i.e., a combination or sequence of keys) for generating emoticons. Likewise, many cellular devices and computers have special keystrokes to generate emoticons.

EX: (Horizontal)

:)
: (
:)
: -)
: p
: - (
8-)
: - |
: - o

: -]
: - {)

EX: (Vertical)

- _ -

—

The use of emoticons in formal communication is usually unfavorable. However, in more informal text-based communication, emoticons may be useful in showing different emotions and even non-typical tones (such as sarcasm). In cases such as these, typically the emoticon appears after the clause.

EX:

You are such a loser, Gary! :)

I can't believe your parents just bought you a car. : P

DIMENSIONALITY

The dimensionality of the text may be changed for effect.

Beveling (makes pixels not perpendicular to others) allowing a text to seem to “come out” of the document.

Embossing (crease pixels in the image) allowing the text to seem to “pull away” from the document.