 Style Checklist

Meaning

* Read and understand the passage (break into parts, identify topic sentences, summarise if necessary.
* Determine intention - inform? persuade? describe?

Vocabulary: Answer these (mentally or otherwise)

* What evidence of educated word usage?
* Which class of words is used most? (For example, adjectives, nouns, abstract nouns and so on.)
* Is there much use of emotive language?
* Neologisms? Archaisms? Foreign words? Allusions? Anachronisms? Intertextual references?
* Jargon, Scientific - abbreviations, formulae?
* Colloquialisms? Slang? Obscenities? Dialect?
* Imperatives?

And of course, in each case – why?

Should lead to conclusions about audience, register, desired effect and so on.

Structure

Overall

* Linear? Non-Linear?

Sentences/Syntax

* Long? Short? Simple? Complex? Variety? - Why
* Omissions or inversions of normal word order?
* Punctuation – how is it used to what effect?
* Run on? Stream of Consciousness?
* Is there repetition? To what effect?
* Climax? Anti-climax?
* Is it logically developed?
* Use of quotations, dialogue, interior monologue?
* Active or passive?
* Rhetorical questions?

Paragraphs

* Short/long? Linked? Narrative/dialogue/both?
* Opening and closing?

Atmosphere

* One of tension? suspense? sorrow? reflection?

Tone

* Is it satirical? serious? angry? dogmatic? persuasive? humorous? balanced? objective? intimate?
* How does this show in choice of words, vocab and so on?
* Does the author’s personality intrude?
* Is it the author or another person?
* Does the tone suit the passage? Is it consistently used?
* Person - First? Third? Eye of God? Interior monologue?

Imagery, Figurative Language, Originality

Imagery is used to:

1. enable reader to visualise.
2. enable reader to associate with author’s reactions.
3. enhance a mood.
4. capture experience in a vivid/unusual way.
5. evoke an atmosphere.
6. suggest meanings or interpretations. Which of these are being aimed at? Metaphor, simile, personification.

Other Literary Devices – (See Techniques Table)

Alliteration 🡪 Exaggeration/Hyperbole

Assonance 🡪 Onomatopoeia

Contrast 🡪 Understatement

Repetition 🡪 Rhythm and so on.

- Which are used, how well and why?

Effectiveness - Assessed by looking at:

1. function
2. purpose
3. Appropriateness.

That is once you’ve looked at the bits - does the passage succeed in doing what it sets out to do, in an appropriate way?