

## 8 Rhetoric: Narrative Means in a Novel - Answer Key

Text: Don DeLillo, *Falling Man*, from: Peter Freese, *New York*, Viewfinder Topics (München: Langenscheidt, 2011), pp. 59ff.

### B TASKS

#### Alliteration

definition:

- the repetition of sounds at the start of a word

examples:

- near night (l. 2)
- people running past (ll. 3/4)
- seismic tides of smoke (l. 14)

function:

- catchy phrases which underline the words of the narrator
- the words help to describe the catastrophic situation
- they unite the words through a kind of repetition

#### Assonance

definition:

- the repetition of a vowel sound (though not a rhyme)

examples:

- rubble/ mud (l. 3)
- buckling rumble (l. 11)

function:

- these assonances serve to give a sense of continuity or fluidity to the words of the text
- the repetition of sounds contributes to the “musicality” of the situation: the reader has the feeling he can hear what’s going on

## Metaphor

definition:

- a comparison of two unlike things, not using “like” or “as”

examples:

- smoke and ash came rolling down the streets and turning corners
- seismic tides of smoke

function:

- two unlike things (ash in fact can't roll/ the attacks were not a natural catastrophe like an earthquake) come together that actually have something in common
- a metaphor suggests the analogy between ideas which helps the reader to understand what's going on

## Onomatopoeia

definition:

- a word whose sounds seem to imitate the sounds they describe

examples:

- roar (l. 11), busting (l. 13), flashing (l. 15), smashed (l. 25), scratching (l. 26)

function:

- readers get the feeling that they hear and feel the sounds and effects of the catastrophe

side note:

- onomatopoeia might require care in translation!

## Oxymoron

definition:

- statement with two parts which seem contradictory

examples:

- burning air (l. 45) - visual oxymoron

function:

- an oxymoron causes the reader to think
- it also calls attention to the situation described

**Personification**

definition

- treating abstractions or inanimate objects as human

examples:

- That was him coming down, the north tower (ll. 94 f.).

function:

- a personification gives human qualities to the thing, giving it life
- readers are able to relate to what is happening more easily

*(Daniela Pröls)*