

Analysis of Literary Devices in “Kubla Khan”

Literary devices such as similes, [personification](#), and [irony](#) are very important elements of any literary text. These devices bring richness and clarity to the text. In addition, the use of literary devices makes the text life like so that a reader can use imagination like “Kubla Khan.” Here is the analysis of some literary devices used in this poem.

- 1) Simile:** [Simile](#) is a [figure of speech](#) in which two things with different qualities are compared to present a vivid description of an [object](#) or a person. There is one simile used in the poem in line 21 such as “huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail.” The fragments have been compared to pieces of hailstorm to show their impacts.
- 2) Personification:** [Personification](#) is attribution of human qualities to an inanimate object. Coleridge has used personification in the first [stanza](#) where he states, “as if this earth in fast thick pant was breathing,” comparing the earth to a breathing human being. He also has personified rocks in line 23 as “the dancing rocks.” Dancing is a human characteristic, but the poet has attributed this quality to rocks.
- 3) Metaphor:** There are two metaphors in the poem. First is used in the twelfth line where it is “deep romantic chasm.” Here the “deep romantic chasm” represents the creativity and deep imagination of the poet. Second is used in the last stanza such as “woman wailing for her demon-lover.” Here “wait” metaphorically represents the desire for love.
- 4) Synecdoche:** [Synecdoche](#) is a literary device in which a part of something represents the whole. Coleridge has used synecdoche in line 19 such as “A mighty fountain momentarily was forced” where the fountain has been used for the waterfall or the streamlet that is coming out of a gorge with force.
- 5) Assonance:** [Assonance](#) is a [repetition](#) of the vowel sounds in the same line such as the sounds of /e/ in “deep delight”, “A stately pleasure-dome decree” and /a/ sound in “Through caverns measureless to man.”
- 6) Consonance:** [Consonance](#) is the repetition of consonant sounds such as /d/ sound in “deep delight”, /t/ in “fast thick pants breathing” and /f/ sound in “from the fountain.”

7) **Apostrophe:** **Apostrophe** is a device used to call somebody or something from afar. Here the poet has used an apostrophe to warn someone “Beware! Beware!” which means that he is calling some anonymous person to be on the alert.

9) **Alliteration:** **Alliteration** is the repetition of the same consonant sounds in the same lines of **verse** such as the use of /s/ sound in “**sympathy** and song.”

The analysis shows that Coleridge’s use of literary devices has helped him present a complete and luxurious picture of the palace of Kubla Khan and the beauty in that realm.

Analysis of Poetic Devices in “Kubla Khan”

Although most of the poetic devices share the same qualities with literary devices, there are some which can only be used in poetry. The analysis of some of the poetic devices is given below.

1) **Stanza:** The poem is structured in two parts and four stanzas. The poet has applied the mix of tetrameter and **pentameter** to these undefined stanzas.

2) **Rhyme Scheme:** As the poem does not follow any organized structure, hence the **rhyme scheme** varies from stanza to stanza.

3) **Rhyming Iambic Meter:** It means that meter has no regular feet in each line. There are four or five meters in some lines such as the first two lines are in tetrameter, but lines 8 and 9 are in pentameter.

4) **Repetition:** There is a repetition of the **phrase** “pleasure doom” that enhances the musical quality of the poem.

5) **Refrain:** The lines that are repeated at some distance in the poems are called refrain. The words “caverns measureless to man” are repeated and used as a refrain in lines 4 and 29 with the same words.

This analysis shows that the poet has made skillful use of refrains, meter, and stanza forms to reach his goal to describe a dream.

Quotations for Usage from “Kubla Khan”

1. The given lines could be quoted when teaching about supernatural objects. Such incidents often make people cry and scream out of fear.

“And all who heard should see them there,

And all should cry, Beware! Beware!”

2. These two lines could be used in speech to tell about some past adventure or expedition to some wonderland.

“It was a miracle of rare device,

A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!”

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