Life is a curious thing. It offers an abundance of experiences and opportunities, yet each individual has a different perspective. In Anita Desai’s *Fasting, Feasting*, the exchange student from India, Arun, is perplexed by the tradition his American family is determined to keep of going to the beach. His adventure is described by the detailed imagery, light humor, and abrupt syntax to create a comical situation. Figurative language adds a new level of excitement to the story.

The scene comes to life as Arun notes Melanie is “dressed in her bathing suit with a big shirt drawn over shoulders.” The employment of these minute details make the story believable, even relatable. The imagery of Mrs. Patton’s “radiant, lipsticked smile” connotes a confident and all-American mother who is eagerly awaiting the beach. However, while he is anticipating the event, Arun “finds the hair on the back of his neck begin to prickle.” The palms of his hands are becoming puffy and damp.” This imagery cannot be mistaken of anything but extremes nervousness and a fear for the unknown.

Desai also uses humor to characterize this infamous trek to the beach. Although the weekends normally marked by the welcoming absence of school or a job,” Arun cannot plead work” to his chagrin. He even begin frantically grasping for “excurses” to not go. On the heels of enthusiastic Mrs. Patton, both Melanie and Arun “try to lag behind her.” Unfortunately and comically, Melanie “can lag even better” than Arun who prefers the town’s “post office” to the “grasses stirring with insidious life” in the paths to the beach...

The sparse and concise sentences create an uncomfortable atmosphere of the unknown, for this is exactly how Arun feels. The statement, “It is Saturday.” Shows Arun’s dejection over the fact that he must do something as pleasurable as going to the beach. Similar syntax follows through the rest of the passage, such as :IT is an awkward problem,” or “But there are not birds to be see, not animals. : Although the reader gets a sense of detachment while reading the passage, it is necessary to experience the same emotions and thought process of Arun. This type of stream-of-consciousness writing allows for figurative language, which otherwise might sound too flowery or out of place.

The similes and metaphors describe Arun’s trepidant journey as he experiences the wide life around him. The cicadas sound as if “the sun is playing on their sinews” as if they were small harps suspended in the trees.” This beautiful and dream-like musical quality frightens Arun. He is absolutely beyond his comfort level.

His entire journey is characterized through the use of images, with, economical sentences, and beautiful metaphors. Ata deeper level, Arun experiences American with his foreign perspective from India.

This passage describes a tip to the beach. When using my literary devices to analyze this paper I would have to say that the authors ideas are not very organized. I think she did a great job detailing her ideas but not organizing the. The organization of the paper is right on. She writes in the chronological order of how the day took place. I believe that the voice could have been a lot stronger. In m opinion, the authors word choice was excellent! The paper was also very fluent.

From what the author writes I get the feeling that Arun does not like where they live or the beach. It think he would much rather live in the city.

In the excerpt from Anita Desai’s *Fasting, Feasting* the exchange student Arun is unsettled and troubled by the novel experience of going to the beach. Literary techniques, like point of view, reveal Arun’s angst in exploring the outside realm of nature with his host family. His sense of uncomfortable disorientation heightens as he struggles to reconcile American customs with the vast expanse of an out-of-town experience.

The passage adopts a third-person limited viewpoint which fluctuates at points to reveal Arun’s nervousness and position of awkwardness. The simple diction of the first paragraph immediately reveals that Arun is out of
place. He “cannot plead work” as she could back in India, because it is a weekend and thus, the eternal conflict manifests itself. The poor exchange student has yet to acclimate himself with his America family. Negative connotations in the first paragraph are rife, from “despondent” to “wildly,” Arun frantically attempts to “find excuses,” amplifying his desire not to leave home.

The repetition of “no” reveals the emphatic nature of Mrs. Patton. Her ultimatum progresses the plot onwards toward the beach.

As they prepare the supplies and set off, Mrs. Patton exudes an almost comical air of ebullience. The vivid imagery of her “animated prance galvanizing her dwindled shanks” offers some comic relief to this uncomfortable situation. Key adverbs, like “silently,” indicate the tension and are still festering within Arun. The Indian student’s discomfort is heightened at his confusion about how to avoid being “close together” to Melanie. These subtle actions indicate a nervous tension between the two characters, a tension that traces its roots back to Indian customs of propriety. The rhetorical question, “But who is to follow whom,” shifts the perspective to that of Arun. He admits that it is an awkward problem, a “and his overburdened conscience debates whether he should help “carry those baskets” to preclude the awkwardness of walking with Melanie.

As the group continues on, the contrast drawn between Mrs. Patton and Arun becomes obvious. As she goes “confidently forwards” and begins singing, Arun, juxtaposed with her natural actions, appears even more out of place. Approaching the woods, the group is greeted by a vast array of imagery. The visual imagery of “soft pine needles,: combined with the auditory “thrumming” of cicadas and “bird shrieks” clashes with Arun’s concept of tranquility. Paradoxically, this cacophony of sounds has no roots, as “no birds” are “to be seen, nor animals.”

Arun is overwhelmed by these present circumstances. Tactile imagery reveals that Arun’s “hair on the back of his neck” begins to prickle and his palms become “puffy and damp.” Arun is disoriented by this experience, and the fear is heightened when he raises a rhetorical question; “Why must people live in the vicinity of such benighted wilderness and become a part of it?” The perspective once again shifts to that of first-person, portraying Arun’s reasoning and preference. He feels at home in town and enjoys its quaint offerings, like “its post office” and “its shops.” The author then contrasts the homely image with a metaphor of the untamed wilderness, an alliterative “creeping curtain of insidious green.” The deadly diction of “insidious,” “poisonous,” and “pale” reveal indirectly that Arun is thoroughly not enjoying this experience. Rather than relaxing, he has been dislocated from a place of comfort and forced to enjoy the pernicious wilderness.

Sample P

In the passage taken from Fasting, Feasting, by Anita Desai, Desai uses literary devices such as speech and point of view to characterize Arun’s experience in a negative way.

The speech Desai uses in the passage contains many negative words to describe the woods and the creatures in them, such as, “shrill” and “shrieks hoarsely,” and “creeping curtain of insidious green.” The speech used in the passage gives the reader the idea that Arun does not want to go to the beach and that he has a negative attitude towards the forest that the travel through to get to the beach.

Right away, it is apparent that Arun does not wish to go to the beach because he “cannot plead work,” and he “starts wildly to find excuses. “ After Ms. Patton insists on Arun going, it is implied that Arun is forced to accompany them to the beach when he “must go back upstairs and collect his towel and swimming trunks.”

When Mrs. Patton, Melanie and Arun leave to go to the beach, the tone of the passage continues to be negative. When Melanie and Arun “follow silently” and “try to find a way to walk that will not compel them to be side by side or in any way close together,” the reader gets the idea that the two do not want anything to do with each other. The speech used in the passage continues to be pesamistic throughout the passage when the three are traveling through the forest. Descriptions of the animals in the forest such as, “A bird shrieks hoarsely,” and “that ugly, jarring note,” indicate an unpleasant atmosphere in the forest.

Towards the end of the passage, the tone and speech become more nervous and fearful. Arun is “sweating” and his palms become “puffy and damp.” This shows that his experience in the woods is scary and shows his fear of the forest.

The passage is written in a third person point of view. This point of view gives the reader and outsiders opinion and view of Arun and his experience in the forest.

The speech and point of view of the passage create a negative and pesamistic view of Arun’s experience of going to the beach.
In the excerpt from *Fasting, Feasting* by Anita Desai, the writer uses a variety of techniques to detail Arun’s inner emotions and sentiments regarding his experience. Through the use of alternating diction, speech, and point of view, the author aptly expresses to the audience Arun’s perception of the events. Due to the newness of the situation, Arun’s uneasy air does not shock the audience; however, the characterization of such uncomfortableness through Desai’s words allows the reader a deeper understanding of the character.

In the first paragraph, the matter-of-fact type diction allows the reader to quickly establish the setting of the passage. By claiming that “Arun cannot plead work,” Desai already shows the character as unwilling to participate in the activity; he is trying to find an exit strategy. However, as the text progresses, the diction becomes more expressive and imagery becomes a key component in the text. Mrs. Patton’s animated, prance “[that] galvanizes her dwindled shanks” shows the reader the excitement that the American family feels: an emotion that is intensified by Arun’s obvious indifference and awkwardness. The two children follow “silently,” making an uneasy trek to the beach. However, in the last paragraph the diction once again becomes more intense. The heavy visual and auditory imagery that the author uses aids the reader in connecting with Arun’s deeper emotions. Beyond his outward uncomfortableness, the “thrumming of cicadas: in the “benighted wilderness: creates a more permanent unsettled feeling in Arun. The repetition of the word, “insidious” its uses as a contrast to the buildings in the town also serve to highlight Arun’s deeper emotion of disgust or outright disbelief of the situation.

Similarly, by creating some sort of dialogue in the passage. Desai allows the reader to easily characterizes the American Family and, thus, contrast it with Arun. At the beginning of the text, when Arun is trying to decline going to the beach, Mrs. Patton’s dialogue serves as blatant establishment of her role in the plot. As a host, she assumes her duty is to entertain, a task she sees as essential to Arun’s comfort. Ironically, however, Arun’s discomfort expands exponentially by repeated refusal (“No, no, no . . . oh, no.”) to accept Arun’s excuses. Later in the text when Arun hears Mrs. Patton singing the lyrics to “Summertime,” the words also serve to point out irony within Anita Desai’s text. By belting that “the living is eeh-zee . . . ,” Mrs. Patton is established as a character whose oblivion allows her to maintain bliss. Despite Arun’s obvious discomfort, the American host falsely perceived his denials as shyness, a polite gesture because he wished not to disturb them. Ironically, the living for Arun is not easy at all. Indeed in the final paragraph, he shows the audience his true emotions regarding the situation.

Throughout most of the text the point of view is third person limited, the author merely comments on the situation, allowing the audience to draw a conclusion or infer the deeper themes of the text. However, in the concluding paragraphs the point of view becomes third-person omniscient giving the reader an in-depth view of Arun's thought process. In line 46, the author asks a rhetorical question, a technique that represents Arun's thoughts on the issue. Because he is “sweating” and his hands are “puffy and damp,” the audience concludes that Arun is becoming increasingly unsettled, in yet the following rhetorical question actually allows the reader to pinpoint his unease, and the following sentences expound upon his beliefs.

Although the passage begins as a lighthearted account of a summertime event, the author uses several rhetorical strategies to quickly transform the text. Through the development of her diction Desai is able to show the various increasing levels of Arun’s unease, a feeling that culminates in a more heightened sense of disdain. The author also uses speech to characterize the American family, which serves as a foil to Arun, and to express irony. By shifting perception at the conclusion of the passage the author also summarizes the unease and helps the reader to gain deeper insight into the character’s mind.
When Arun is told to go along with Melanie and Mrs. Patton for a swim, they have to make their way through some woods. There is a lot of sound imagery— the shrilling of the cicadas and the shrieking of the birds. There is also imagery of houses with little gnome statues and washing lines nearby that the birds are fleeing from. Imagining him walking through all this adds to the reader’s understanding of Arun’s experience. Although the reader may actually enjoy wildlife experiences walking on old soft pine needles vicariously will help the reader understand why Arun’s neck hair is prickling and his palms are sweating in fear.

The metaphors that compare the birds to other things adds to the imagery. The cicadas are described as “small harps suspended on trees.” Harps are supposed to be very elegant instruments, so the fact that Arun is so fearful of them is quite comical. In contrast, the shrieks of birds are described as an “ugly jarring note that does not vary” which automatically puts an unpleasant noise in the reader’s mind.

Arun’s fear of the wildlife in the woods seems quite ironic because more than he is afraid of them, the birds should be afraid of him. In fact, the houses and laundry lines encroaching on the birds’ habitats probably cause them to fear humans, which gives Arun no reason to fear them. However, reading about all of Arun’s symptoms of fear just emphasizes his fear of such “benighted wilderness” by that much. This would all be a cultural difference, since he is from India and probably used to a completely different lifestyle.

The author’s description of the noises and visuals of the woods that Arun had to walk through allows us to experience his apparent uncomfortableness and uneasiness with him. The thought of unpleasant bird noises makes it easier for the reader to understand Arun’s puffy and damp hands, as if we were right next to him.

In this excerpt from *Fasting, Feasting*, Anita Desai depicts an uncomfortable afternoon experience of the Indian exchange student Arun as he is forced to spend the day with his American host family. From the beginning, Desai creates an uneasy atmosphere through her use of short, to the point sentences. She opens with “It is Saturday. Arun cannot plead work.” These matter-of-fact sentences show that Arun is in an uncomfortable situation with people he does not enjoy spending time with. In addition to varied syntax, Desai uses third-person limited point of view, limited speech, and vivid imagery to characterize Arun’s experience.

The limitation of speech in this passage portrays the relationship Arun has with his host family. Arun has been raised with Indian cultural values, which are juxtaposed with the seemingly disrespectful mode of operation in the Patton family. Arun obviously does not want to spend the day at the beach, but when he tries to find excuses, only Mrs. Patton speaks, saying “No, no, no . . .” “Rod and Daddy have gone sailing on Lake Wyola and we’re not going to sit here and wait for them to come home -- oh, no.” Mrs. Patton shows no regard for Arun’s opinions, and he is too polite to refuse to go. Mrs. Patton’s self-indulgent behavior is also revealed by her walking ahead, singing “Summertime,” as Arun lugs her beach equipment behind her.

The third-person limited point of view further illustrates Arun’s uncomfortable experience with the women of the Patton family. Though none of the two women’s thoughts are completely revealed, the reader has an insight into their feelings towards Arun through his thoughts and actions. When walking to the beach Arun and Melanie try not to walk close together, showing that Melanie must now have much more respect for Arun than Mrs. Patton does.

To add to the awkward, uncomfortable atmosphere, Desai employs vivid images of Arun’s surroundings and feelings. Arun sees things that seem like city-home components, such as washing lines and “a plastic gnome, finger to nose, enigmatically winking,” thrown in, out of place, with the surrounding woods. In addition to this surreal visual image, the reader is then given the tactile image of when Arun feels his “neck begin to prickle,” and when he sweats and his palms become “puffy and damp.” All of these images create a sense of uneasiness in the reader to help relate to how Arun is feeling.

Anita Desai uses third-person point of view, limited speech, and detailed imagery to characterize Arun’s uncomfortable day with an American family. The tone of the passage remains uneasy throughout, ending with Arun stumbling, having “to steady himself so as not to spill the contents of the basket,” creating a final sense of frustration in the reader.
Arun is an exchange student from India, and embarks on a journey to the beach with his American host family. The point of view is in the 3rd person but mainly focuses on the character Arun. Questions, perspective, and comments of Arun are displayed throughout the passage.

He’s going on a trip to the beach, but is reluctant to do so, “Starts wildly to find excuses.” Being an exchange student, Arun is probably nervous and unsure of the area around him. He asks “Why must people live in the vicinity of such benighted wilderness and becomes part of it,” as he walks through the hot forest. Perhaps questioning himself what he’s doing there. A metaphor is given in the final line “Nearly tripping on a root, he stumbles and has to steady himself so as not to spill the contents of the basket.” meaning keep your comments to yourself. It won’t look good to start criticizing the people you are around. He must withhold himself less he spills the beans that he doesn’t like the situation.

Arun however does enjoy some aspects of his new surrounding like the post offices, shopping mall. This shows that different isn’t always bad, it’s just different. Being an exchange student allows Arun to experience a different culture and learn from it.

In the passage, such devices as point of view and speech are seen to describe Arun’s experience with his new American family.

It is suggested that Arun is narrating the story but as if he were looking at himself and describing what he was feeling at that moment. It was a narration of how he was feeling in third person. This helped look deep within to how he was feeling at that exact moment as they were walking to the beach. When the hairs in the back of his head “begin to prickle” it shows that he was the one narrating because no one else would’ve known that but him. Even though he seems to be going along with the family plans, his point of view kicks in.

His disgust towards the whole trip is seen when he asks why people live that way. His true feelings are exposed as well as his hypocrisy.

The speech of the poem is that of a regular conversation because it takes you back and forth through Arun’s Thoughts. It is as though he were rambling on because after he expresses his true feelings about the trip, he randomly talks about how in tripped on a root.

The use of speech and pint of view shows how Arun really feels about what is going on with his American family. The characterization of his experience is well understood and noticeable as well as the random shifts in time through this beach experience.

The author use’s third person point of view as if someone else was viewing what Arun was doing. He use’s simile, metaphores, to describe Arun’s day at the beach.

The passage taken from the novel Fasting Feasting by Anita Desai is extremely interesting in it’s use of literary technique and diction. The passage uses a rhythm that makes the story seem very personal, as the author is physically talking to the reader. There is strong evidence of observation that is used to properly portray the characterization and setting of this passage. Arun obviously views what he experiences in a very important to the passage since the point is to highlight his experience.

Anita Desai makes the novel very to the point and easy to understand. Repetition is used a lot for emphasis on how Arun feels about what is around him. The author symbolically writes the novel in a way that Arun, being hew was a real person would understand. Although it is not a first person narrative, the entire passage comes from Arun’s point of view and the speech is made as a realism of his
experience. The purpose of enforcing the speech as a symbol of what Arun knows is to provide insight into how he felt in that world. The passage could have been written by Arun and it expresses his attitude to his new surroundings like his English, it is shaky but passionate.

The use of present tense in this novel’s passage serves two purposes. First as mentioned before, the simpleness of his English is reflected in the passage. Naturally, present tense is the easiest for most children to understand. More deep however, the present tense evokes a sense of involvement. He is not reflected upon what he died in the past, he is living it. His experience is happening as we read which takes the reader on the journey with Arun. His point of view is well-reflected since everything is “currently happening” and there is not time for him to change his opinion. Every emotion evoked was genuine.

Arun’s experience as a foreign in America is directly affected by Desai’s literary technique. His point of view is reflected by the present observations mentioned. His place in a new country is represented by the chosen speech, almost as everything was written from him.

Sample HH

Arun’s experience in going to the beach and walking through the path can be described as uncomfortable, unpleasant and enlightening for Arun.

The point of view of the narration is third person but there is vast knowledge of Arun’s own thoughts and feelings. Arun is already reluctant to go and there seems to be tension between Arun and Melanie. The narrator subtly reveals this with the rhetorical question “But who is to follow whom?” This also makes the experience Arun is facing more relatable by engaging the audience. The point of view is unique in that though it refers to Arun in third person, it is as though the thoughts are his own. “He ought to help carry those baskets anyway.” This statement is said through the opinion of Arun it seems. It is difficult to put a name on the point of view as well. The point of view, “it,” bounces back and forth from distant narration to almost direct quote from Arun himself. “Why must people live in the vicinity of such benighted wilderness and become a part of it?” This question is Arun’s own.

There is little dialogue in this excerpt, apart from the mother as she makes him join them to the beach and as she sings. But, there is "speech" within the narration. Like I mentioned before, the point of view of the narrator illuminates Arun’s own thoughts so in a sense, Arun is speaking himself. There is also speech within the animals. The cicadas “shril!” and the birds “shriek.” What the people lack in dialogue, the animals make up for in noise. The animal’s “speech” irritates Arun, causing him to further dislike wilderness.

The unique perspective and speech allows the reader to engage and understand Arun’s awkwardness and disdain for the wilderness. It also enlightens to Arun that he is content with the city, and that he prefers to be civilized.

Sample JJJJ

If we imagine this passage from Fasting, Feasting as a scene in a movie, it seems perfectly pleasant – a sweet, if somewhat garish, American mom taking her daughter and a guest down a forest trail to the beach. Yet from Arun’s limited omniscient point of view, every detail of the Patton’s lives and habitat is
hostile and offensive. With subtle sarcastic stabs at American habits and concrete criticism of the landscape, Desai’s narrative transforms the scene into a pointedly derisive satire.

On the most concrete level, the scene is set up as a negative experience. The opening sentences – “Arun cannot plead work; he is despondent . . .” – paint Arun as the victim of a deceptively innocent prison. His victimization continues in the second paragraph, where Mrs. Patton uses the words “no” or “not” nine times – an amusing nod to the perceived American obsession with emphasis and repetition, as if it clarified anything. This also paints Mrs. Patton as unnecessarily assertive and impolite.

Desai’s diction also lends to the feeling of imprisonment and discomfort. Her use of the present tense gives the text an uncomfortable immediacy for the reader – it is going on now; there is no mediating distance. Desai also uses very formal diction in her narrative, carefully distinguishing between “who” and “whom” [a dying practice amongst American authors and one which shall be sorely missed] and never contracting negative phrases like ‘will not” into “won’t.” Each sentence is a simple unit unto itself – a subject, a verb and two adjectives, the second subtly more critical than the first. This exacting technique wearies the reader and puts him on edge – an excellent way of communicating Arun’s feelings to the reader without describing them outright.

In the final paragraph, Desai moves in for the kill, shifting to the outright criticism of the environment (a vehicle for Aurn’s mounting discomfort). The woods are filled with “shrilling” cicadas and “shrieking, jarring birds that make deafening noise but cannot be seen. The houses, too, are “intrusive” -- Desai describes with obvious contempt their tacky laundry lines and garden gnomes. After mentally railing against this “insidious” landscape, Arun trips – or is tripped – by a tree root which the reader, by now insensed by the offensive landscape, may well feel personally angry with. Desai’s subtle and highly symbolic depiction of a nightmarish afternoon out certainly transforms the reader’s vision of America.