

Shakespeare's Rhetoric

wherein the fine art of persuasive speaking is revealed

Onomatopoeia: (pew!) a word that contains the sound quality of what it describes. Examples: whisper, lisp, bang, zip, splash.
What other examples can you think of?

Metaphor: a direct comparison of two or more things, people, etc. using the word "is." Example: "It is the east, and Juliet is the sun."
Make up a couple of your own.

Simile: like metaphor, a comparison, only using "like" or "as."
Example: "My love is like a red, red rose..."
Your turn.

Alliteration: a grouping of words that share the same beginning letter (often used by Shakespeare to exaggerate, or for comic effect).
"the blind bow-boy's butt-shaft" She sells sea-shells by the seashore
Can you create a couple?

Antithesis: this device uses opposites in comparison with one another. These often end up as catch-phrases because they're so easy to remember, as when J.F.K. quipped, "ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country."
"When the going gets tough, the tough get going."

Oxymoron: a pairing of exact opposites. We all have our favorites, like jumbo shrimp, cafeteria food . . . Shakespeare uses them to great effect in Romeo and Juliet

Romeo: Why then O brawling love, O loving hate,
O anything of nothing first create;
O heavy lightness, serious vanity,
Misshapen chaos of well seeming forms,
Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health,
Still waking sleep that is not what it is.

Juliet: O serpent heart hid with a flow'ring face!
Did ever dragon keep so fair a cave?
Beautiful tyrant, fiend angelical!
Dove-feathered raven, wolfish-ravening lamb!

What are some of your favorites?

Puns: a.k.a. groaners. General word play, twisting the sense of words.
How do you spot a dogwood tree? By its bark.
As one frog said to another, "Time's fun when you're having flies."