Language Techniques

Literary techniques are used in text to express artistic meaning through the use of language (e.g. hyperbole, metaphor).

Allegory	Story with a double meaning: one primary (on the surface) and one secondary.
Alliteration	Repetition of consonants at the start of words or in a sentence or phrase.
Cliché	An over-used, common expression.
Consonance	Repetition of consonants throughout a sentence or phrase.
Contrast	Paradox, antithesis, oxymoron, juxtaposition, contrast in description etc.
Didactic	Any text that instructs the reader or is obviously delivering a moral message.
Disjunction	A conjunction (e.g. 'but' or 'yet') that dramatically interrupts rhythm of sentence.
Ellipsis	A dramatic pause (…) creates tension or suggests words can't be spoken.
Emotive language	Words that stir the readers' emotions.
Enjambment	A poetic technique, when a sentence or phrase runs over more than one line (or stanza). This assists the flow of a poem.
Euphemism	Mild expression used to replace a harsh one.
Exclamation	Exclamatory sentence ending in "!" to convey high emotion.
Form	Purpose and features of a text influence its construction and will suggest its structure.
Figurative language & sound devices	metaphor, metonymy, hyperbole, simile, personification, assonance, alliteration, consonance, onomatopoeia, etc. These devices have a powerful impact as they work on our senses to strengthen the subject matter of the text.
Fractured/truncated sentences	Incomplete sentences used to increase tension or urgency, or reflect the way people speak to each other.
Gaps & silences	What is not said; whose voice isn't heard and whose voice dominates?
Humour	Incongruity, parody, satire, exaggeration, irony, puns etc. used to lighten the overall tone.
Icons	A single person, object or image that represents complex ideas and feelings.
Imagery	Vivid pictures created by words. Reader visualises character/setting clearly.
Imperative Voice	Forceful use of the verb at the start of sentence or phrase.

Intertextuality	A text makes a reference to other texts, may be explicit, implied or inferred.
Irony	Gap between what is said and what is meant.
Juxtaposition	Layering images/scenes to have a dramatic impact.
Level of usage of language	Slang, colloquial, informal or formal.
Linear	Sequential – in chronological order.
Metaphor	Comparison of 2 objects where one becomes another – adds further layers of meaning about object being compared.
Modality	The force the words are delivered at. High modality = forceful. Low modality = gentle.
Non-linear	Non-sequential narrative, events do not occur in chronological order
Onomatopoeia	A word that echoes the sound it represents. Reader hears what is happening.
Parody	Conscious imitation for a satiric purpose.
Person	First, second or third person.First person refers to the speaker himself or a group that includes the speaker (i.e., I, me, we and us).Second person refers to the speaker's audience (i.e., you).Third person refers to everybody else (e.g., he, him, she, her, it, they, them), including all other nouns (e.g. James, Swedish, fish, mice).
Personification	Human characteristic given to a non-human object. Inanimate objects take on a life.
perspective	A particular way of looking at individuals, issues, events, texts, facts etc.
Plosive consonants	Harsh sounds in a sentence or phrase.
Repetition	Of words or syntax (order of words) for emphasis or persuasion.
Representation	How a composer conveys meaning through textual features.
Satire	Composition which ridicules in a scornful & humorous way.
Setting	Location of a story – internal and external.
Sibilance	Repetition of 's' – can sounds melodious and sweet or cold and icy.
Simile	Comparison of 2 objects using 'like' or 'as'.
Symbolism	When an object represents one or more (often complex) ideas.
Syntax – sentence structure	Short, simple sentences or truncated sentences create tension, haste or urgency; compound or complex sentences are slower, often feature in formal texts.

Tense	Present, past, future (events are predicted).
Theme	Message or moral of a story – makes us ponder bigger issues in life.
Tone	The way composer or character feels – conveyed by word choice.
Word choice or Diction	Emotive, forceful, factual, descriptive, blunt, graphic, disturbing, informative etc. E.g. use of forceful verbs 'insist' & 'demand' can be very persuasive.