

Getting at Authors' Style

Excerpt from *Life of Pi* (Ch. 7)

It was my luck to have a few good teachers in my youth, men and women who came into my dark head and lit a match. One of these was Mr. Satish Kumar, my biology teacher at Petit Seminaire and an active Communist who was always hoping Tamil Nadu would stop electing movie stars and go the way of Kerala. He had a most peculiar appearance. The top of his head was bald and pointy, yet he had the most impressive jowls I have ever seen, and his narrow shoulders gave way to a massive stomach that looked like the base of a mountain, except that the mountain stood in thin air, for it stopped abruptly and disappeared horizontally into his pants. It's a mystery to me how his stick-like legs supported the weight above them, but they did, though they moved in surprising ways at times, as if his knees could bend in any direction. His construction was geometric: he looked like two triangles, a small one and a larger one, balanced on two parallel lines. But organic, quite warty actually, and with sprigs of black hair sticking out of his ears. And friendly. His smile seemed to take up the whole base of his triangular head.

Excerpt from *Life of Pi* (Ch. 8)

Father led us to the lions and leopards.

"Once there was a madman in Australia who was a black belt in karate. He wanted to prove himself against the lions. He lost. Badly. The keepers found only half his body in the morning."

"Yes, Father."

The Himalayan bears and the sloth bears.

"One strike of the claws from these cuddly creatures and your innards will be scooped out and splattered all over the ground."

"Yes, Father."

The hippos.

"With those soft, flabby mouths of theirs they'll crush your body to a bloody pulp. On land they can outrun you."

"Yes, Father."

The hyenas.

"The strongest jaws in nature. Don't think that they're cowardly or that they only eat carrion. They're not and they don't! They'll start eating you while you're still alive."

"Yes, Father."

The orang-utans.

"As strong as ten men. They'll break your bones as if they were twigs. I know some of them were once pets and you played with them when they were small. But now they're grown-up and wild and unpredictable."

"Yes, Father."

The ostrich.

"Looks flustered and silly, doesn't it? Listen up: it's one of the most dangerous animals in the zoo. Just one kick and your back is broken or your torso is crushed."

"Yes, Father."

The spotted deer.

"So pretty, aren't they? If the male feels he has to, he'll charge you and those short little antlers will pierce you like daggers."

"Yes, Father."

How does
the author use:

Give some examples here:

Sensory Images?	
Figurative Language? Similes, Metaphors, Personification, Idioms, Hyperbole	
Vivid Verbs?	
Amazing Adjectives?	
Difficult Vocabulary?	
Short Sentences? Long Sentences?	
Symbolism?	
Parallelism?	
Allusions?	