

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

The written text is an extract of a short story from a fiction book titled “To the lighthouse”. The writing is formal and aimed at adults and older teenagers who enjoy reading literature, with a function of entertaining, as it seeks to amuse its audience with the story of an abandoned house.

Its social purpose of entertaining its readers by describing the way in which the plants take over the deserted house is emphasised by an array of linguistic features. Firstly, the parallelism seen in “the trifling airs, nibbling, the clammy breaths, fumbling” (3) makes the story more memorable to its readers because of the unique use of adjective, noun and gerund is more likely to stick in their head than a common structure. This syntactic patterning also makes the physical setting more vivid and helps the readers imagine the house being abandoned and cold. Thirdly, the parallelism also emphasises the personification of “nibbling” (3) and “fumbling” (4). This parallelism, also seen in “waved” (11) and “tapping” (13), again makes the story more alive and aims to make the reader imagine the house coming to life even though it has been seemingly abandoned. The stylistic device of alliteration, employed in “thistle thrust” (6) and “strewn with straw” (7), helps to entertain the readers by providing enjoyment through the language’s sonorous qualities. Although the text is written, this alliteration encourages the audience to read it aloud or at least imagine it being read aloud which again forces it to become more memorable to the readers.

The register of this section is quite formal which aligns with the old age and targeted audience of the literary text. Although the author mostly uses the active voice to make the scene come alive through livening the actions of the plants and animals, the passive use is also employed in clauses such as “the house was deserted” (1) and “it was left” (1). This occurs at the beginning of the story to set up the context and appear as though the house is completely alone and isolated. This agentless passive also increases the formality and avoids providing unnecessary information such as the people that abandoned it since the author wants to draw the readers’ focus to what happens afterwards. The switch to the active voice after this first line and its contrast with the prior passive voice helps to engage the readers further by making the story, and the house, more alive by using the plants as subjects to their actions, and this also emphasises the moral of the story, to show that even after being left for dead, it is possible to come alive again. The nominalisation of verbs, shown in “tapping” (13) and “drumming” (14), also adds to the register and emphasises their onomatopoeic and personification qualities to again help the reader to imagine the house being brought to life by these plants. The author also uses some Latinate such as “triumphed” (4) and “idly” (5) as well as the archaic “wainscots” (9). These elevated lexemes increase the text’s formality and help to establish the book as worthy of its well-educated readers.

The text’s coherence and cohesion aids the readers in understanding and following the story. Firstly, its consistency, through the continual use of declarative sentence types, such as “the lawn waved with long grass” (11), and of lexemes in the nature domain including “dahlias” (11), “carnation” (12) and “briars” (14), increases the text’s coherence as readers are able to come to expect the conventions of a story about the wonder of nature and not be thrown off by surprise by inconsistent writing. Secondly, the logical ordering of the text also strengthens the coherence and thus increases the reader’s ability to understand what is happening because the author writes the events in the order they occur rather than jumping about. For example, the story begins with the house being “deserted” (1), and the “saucepan had rusted” (4) before the “thorned briars” (14) “made the whole room green in summer” (15). Thirdly, cataphoric referencing such as “it” (1) avoid unnecessary repetition of the lexeme “house” (1) as well as linking the beginning sentence with the simile that follows, thus increasing the text’s cohesion. Similarly, the repetition of “house” (1) also increases the

cohesion because it reinforces the topic of this section of text and emphasises where the scene takes place so that the readers are more easily able to imagine it in their head. Finally, collocations such as “long grass” (11) aid the cohesion and thus the coherence by adding to the predictability of the text and being faster for the readers to process.