**Worksheet on President Obama Satire (p.41 of the Anthology)**

This text appeared in *Private Eye*, the satirical magazine which pokes fun at politicians and other powerful figures such as those in the media.

The humour of this piece depends upon a recognition of the ways in which the grand, formal techniques used in serious speeches to address and inspire large audiences are undermined by juxtaposing moments of informality and family intimacy. Hence Craig Brown humorously imagines a conversation between Obama and his young daughter about the flavour of an ice-cream delivered in the style of a formal speech, which is the mode that most of the world see Obama using much of the time.

In order to begin to analyse the text, then, we need to understand some of the key features of formal speeches. Many of these are rooted in the rules of ancient **rhetoric** developed in the classical civilizations of Greece and Rome.

Don’t forget that speeches are essentially written, highly crafted texts and show evidence of that, although they are meant to be spoken ultimately and there will be evidence of this too.

Using the grid below, try to find some examples in the speech of the following features:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Feature** | **Effect** | **Example** |
| Simple present tenseThe convention of humilityRule of 3/ triadic structure/ triplingFormal lexis and phrasesPersonal pronounsBiblical echoesPoetic inversion of order of words in sentence; embedding of clauses and phrasesManipulated sentence lengthRepetitionParallel phrasingMetaphor and symbolismDeictic references | Creates effect of poise and formality; signals that audience is being addressed in that moment.Ancient rule of rhetoric that the speaker needs to announce their humble status.Makes memorable; shows control and authorityGrandeur of register, authority of the speaker as inspirational figurePersonal vision/ inclusivity/ direct addressReinforces sense of moral vision, learning, audience recognitionShows control of the speakerShort sentences create impact and reflect pausing in speech; long sentences show control of speakerMemorableMemorableMemorable; authority of speaker; vivid imagesAcknowledges spoken context |  |