

Figurative Language Notes



Figurative language is a tool that an author uses to help the reader visualize (or see) what is happening in a story or poem. Some common types of figurative language are: simile, metaphor, alliteration, hyperbole, onomatopoeia, and idiom.

- **simile** is a comparison using like or as. It usually compares two dissimilar objects.
 - For example: *His feet were as big as boats.* We are comparing the size of feet to boats.
- **metaphor** states that one thing is something else. It is a comparison, but it does NOT use like or as to make the comparison.
 - For example: *Her hair is silk.* The sentence is comparing (or stating) that hair is silk.
- **alliteration** is the repetition of initial sounds in two or more neighboring words or syllables.
 - For example:
 - Angela Abigail Applewhite ate anchovies and artichokes.
 - Bertha Bartholomew blew big, blue bubbles.
 - Clever Clifford Cutter clumsily closed the closet clasps.
- **hyperbole** is a type of figurative language. It is often confused with a simile or a metaphor because it often compares two objects. The difference is a hyperbole is an exaggeration.
 - For example: *His feet were as big as a barge. It looks like a simile. It is comparing foot size to the size of a barge. Everyone knows that a barge is approximately 700 feet long. Imagine getting a pair of shoes that big!*
- **onomatopoeia** is the imitation of natural sounds in word form. These words help us form mental pictures about the things, people, or places that are described. Sometimes the word names a thing or action by copying the sound.
 - For example: *Bong! Hiss! Buzz!*
- **idioms** are expressions that do not equate to their individual parts; you cannot define them literally.
 - For example: *a heart of gold, green with envy, to eat your heart out, to have a green thumb*
- **Personification** is giving an object, idea, or animal human characteristics
 - For example: *the M & M men (a candy object) have arms, legs, faces, and can talk.*