

**Figurative language** uses words that **go beyond their literal<sub>2</sub> meaning**.

Authors use figurative language to make **stories more interesting**.

Type	Purpose	Example
<b>Simile</b>	To compare two unlike things that have something in common using like or as.	Day after day the sky turns from day to night <b>like a never-ending circle</b> .
<b>Personification</b>	To give human characteristics to an object, animal, or idea.	When the bright night takes over after the end of the day, and the <b>sun slowly hides her face</b> from view.
<b>Metaphor</b>	To compare two unlike things by saying one is the other.	The <b>stars are the lamps in the sky</b> , burning bright in the heavenly heights.
<b>Idioms</b>	To use a phrase that has a special meaning different from the literal meaning of the words	The sky is <b>raining cats and dogs</b> .
<b>Hyperbole</b>	To exaggerate a claim	Last night's hail stones were <b>as big as basketballs</b> .



Which sentence is an example of a simile? Explain.

- A The athlete ran like an gazelle.**
- B The athlete was fast.**

Which sentence is an example of a personification? Explain.

- A The blustery wind told me a storm was coming.**
- B The wind was strong.**

Which sentence is an example of a metaphor? Explain.

- A My brother is very smart.**
- B My brother is a walking computer.**

Which sentence is an example of an idiom? Explain.

- A The math test was easy to do.**
- B The math test was a piece of cake.**

Which sentence is an example of hyperbole? Explain.

- A The speaker talked for days.**
- B The speaker talked for a long time.**

In your own words, what is figurative language?

- 1 Read the passage, noting the underlined figurative language.
- 2 Interpret<sub>4</sub> the figurative meaning. (circle answers to questions)

**from Treasure Island** by Robert Louis Stevenson

From trunk to trunk the creature flitted like a deer, running man-like on two legs, but unlike any man that I had ever seen, stooping almost double as it ran. Yet a man it was! I could no longer be in doubt about that. ... "Who are you?" I asked.

"Ben Gunn," he answered, and his voice sounded hoarse and awkward, like a rusty lock. "I'm poor Ben Gunn, I am; and I haven't spoke with a Christian these three years."

**1. Text:** "flitted like a deer"

**Type of figurative language?**

- A simile B personification  
C metaphor D Idiom E Hyperbole

**Meaning:**

- A moved quickly  
B moved from tree to tree hiding and looking  
C trying to hide behind a tree

**2. Text:** "like a rusty lock"

**Type of figurative language?**

- A simile B personification  
C metaphor D Idiom E Hyperbole

**Meaning:**

- A brown and red covered in rust  
B rough and hard to open  
C unhappy and sad

**from Anne of Green Gables** by Lucy Maud Montgomery

"Oh, Mrs. Lynde, I am so extremely sorry," she said with a quiver in her voice. "I could never express all my sorrow, no, not if I used up a whole dictionary. You must just imagine it. I behaved terribly to you—and I've disgraced the dear friends, ... There was no mistaking her sincerity—it breathed in every tone of her voice. Both Marilla and Mrs. Lynde recognized its unmistakable ring. But the former understood in dismay that Anne was actually enjoying her valley of humiliation—"

**3. Text:** "not if I used up a whole dictionary"

**Type of figurative language?**

- A simile B personification  
C metaphor D Idiom E Hyperbole

**Meaning:**

- A talked fast  
B used a lot of words  
C stood on a dictionary

**4. Text:** "sincerity – it breathed ..."

**Type of figurative language?**

- A simile B personification  
C metaphor D Idiom E Hyperbole

**Meaning:**

- A she was breathing hard to apologize  
B sincerity was real as if breathing  
C her voice was raspy and sighing

- 1 Read the passage, noting the underlined figurative language.
- 2 Interpret<sub>4</sub> the figurative meaning. (circle answers to questions)

**from Anne of Green Gables** by Lucy Maud Montgomery

“Oh, Mrs. Lynde, I am so extremely sorry,” she said with a quiver in her voice. “I could never express all my sorrow, no, not if I used up a whole dictionary. You must just imagine it. I behaved terribly to you—and I’ve disgraced the dear friends, ... There was no mistaking her sincerity—it breathed in every tone of her voice. Both Marilla and Mrs. Lynde recognized its unmistakable ring. But the former understood in dismay that Anne was actually enjoying her valley of humiliation—

**5. Text:** “its unmistakable ring”

**Type of figurative language?**

- A simile B personification  
C metaphor D Idiom E Hyperbole

**Meaning:**

- A rings clear like a bell  
B as real as a diamond ring  
C she couldn’t make a mistake

**6. Text:** “her valley of humiliation...”

**Type of figurative language?**

- A simile B personification  
C metaphor D Idiom E Hyperbole

**Meaning:**

- A compares her apology to being down in a valley, feeling low  
B she is between high points  
C she is feeling humble

**Skill Closure**

- 1 Read the passage, noting the underlined figurative language.
- 2 Interpret the figurative meaning. (circle answers to questions)

from **Little Women** by Louisa May Alcott

Jo skipped up, and, sitting on the top step, affected to be searching for her book, but was really wondering how best to introduce the dangerous object of her visit. Mr. Laurence seemed to suspect that something was brewing in her mind; ... "I know he has been in mischief by the way he acted when he came home. I can't get a word from him; and when I threatened to shake the truth out of him he bolted upstairs, and locked himself into his room."

**1. Text:** "something was brewing in her mind."

**Type of figurative language?**

- A simile B personification  
C metaphor D Idiom E Hyperbole

**Meaning:**

- A compare her thinking to something slowly cooking  
B suggests she is hyped on coffee  
C her mind was a mess like a stew

**2. Text:** "shake the truth out of him."

**Type of figurative language?**

- A simile B personification  
C metaphor D Idiom E Hyperbole

**Meaning:**

- A he will beat him and shake him  
B truth can be gotten by violence  
C suggests he will keep persisting for the truth as if shaking him

**Concept Closure**

**Write an explanation.**

Explain what the author means with these examples of figurative language idioms from **Little Women**.

... she knew the irascible old gentleman **would never lift a finger** against his grandson, whatever he might say to the contrary. ... she wished she **had held her tongue**.

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**Summary Closure**

What did you learn today about determining the figurative meaning of words in stories?

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**Word Bank**

- ▶ figurative
- ▶ literal
- ▶ exact
- ▶ beyond
- ▶ simile
- ▶ metaphor
- ▶ personification
- ▶ idioms
- ▶ hyperbole

Read the passage. Note the underlined figurative language. Interpret the figurative meaning by answering the questions.

from **Little Women** by Louisa May Alcott

... Out with it, Jo, I won't be kept in the dark." ... Jo would have gladly run away, if she could, but she was perched aloft on the steps, and he stood at the foot, a lion in the path, so she had to stay and brave it out.

**1. Text:** "kept in the dark."

**Type of figurative language?**

- A simile B personification  
C metaphor D Idiom E Hyperbole

**Meaning:**

- A he will be put in a dark room  
B he will not know what happened  
C he believes silence is better than talking about it.

**2. Text:** "a lion in the path."

**Type of figurative language?**

- A simile B personification  
C metaphor D Idiom E Hyperbole

**Meaning:**

- A the man was mean as a lion  
B the man was talking loudly or roaring like a lion  
C the man was in her way like a dangerous lion



## Listening

Listen to part of Emily at Sunrise read aloud.  
Interpret the meaning of the figurative language.

Figurative Language	Type	Meaning
Man is a mere insect		
Veil covering the unseen world		
Only faith, ... can push aside that curtain		



## Reading

**Read the text.** Note the underlined figurative language. Answer the questions.

**From Delphi** by James Baldwin

On and on the two birds went like shooting stars rushing to meet each other; and Jupiter and all his mighty company sat amid the clouds and watched their flight. Nearer and nearer they came, but they swerved not to the right nor to the left. Nearer and nearer-and then with a crash like the meeting of two ships at sea, the eagles came together in mid-air and fell dead to the ground.

"Who asked where is the center of the world?" said Jupiter. "The spot where the two eagles lie-that is the center of the world."

**1. Text:** "like shooting stars"

**Type of figurative language?**

- A simile B personification  
C metaphor D Idiom E Hyperbole

**Meaning:**

- A the birds fly fast  
B The birds move across the sky like stars  
C the birds are stars of this story

**2. Text:** "like the meeting of two ships at sea"

**Type of figurative language?**

- A simile B personification  
C metaphor D Idiom E Hyperbole

**Meaning:**

- A compare crashing birds in air to crashing ships at sea  
B the crash is loud like at sea  
C it's hard to believe in all that air or sea that two things could crash



Writing

**Write an explanation.** Identify and explain the meaning of each type of figurative language.

***From The Selfish Giant*** by Oscar Wilde

Only in the garden of the Selfish Giant it was still winter. The birds did not care to sing in it as there were no children, and the trees forgot to blossom. ... The Snow covered up the grass with her great white cloak, and the Frost painted all the trees silver. Then they invited the North Wind to stay with them, ... and then the Hail ran round and round the garden as fast as he could go. He was dressed in grey, and his breath was like ice. ... Then the Hail stopped dancing over his head, and the North Wind ceased roaring. ... And the trees were so glad to have the children back again that they had covered themselves with blossoms, and were waving their arms gently above the children's heads.

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