

Figurative Language

Figurative Language is language that uses figure of speech such as hyperbole, simile, metaphor, personification, and symbolism or other forms of imagery. It is used to gain impact or help paint a picture for the reader.

Imagery – the use of words to create images or mental pictures.

As the last seconds ticked down, the fans gripped their chilled drinks in anticipation. After the clock hit zero, the yellow and black suits stormed the green beaten field. They cried in excitement and exhaustion while they hugged teammates.

Metaphor – a comparison between two objects.

Your eyes are stars twinkling in the moonlight.

Simile – a comparison between two objects using “like” or “as”.

Your eyes are like stars twinkling in the moonlight.

Hyperbole – an extreme exaggeration.

He ate tons of food at the party.

Personification – giving an inhuman thing human qualities.

The murderous eyes of the rifles stared at him.

Onomatopoeia – words that sound like their meaning.

Whoosh! He scored another two points for his team.

Symbol – something used in the text to represent something else.

In “The Sea Devil”, the plane symbolizes man’s mastery over nature.

Paradox – a contradiction that is also true.

"Some day you will be old enough to start reading fairy tales again." (C.S. Lewis to his godchild, Lucy Barfield, to whom he dedicated *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*)

Irony – use of words to express the opposite of the literal meaning - a difference between the actual and expected results of an event.

It is ironic that the man goes out to catch a fish and ends up getting caught by a fish.

Sarcasm – bitter or cutting speech meant to hurt feelings.

Upon seeing a bad accident, someone comments with little to no emotion, "Oh, how lovely!"

Satire – making fun of someone's faults or mistakes with the purpose of bringing about a change or at least meant to keep other people from developing the same faults or making the same mistakes.

Saturday Night Live
Scary Movie

Allusion – a reference to something in history or previous works of literature.

Christy didn't like to spend money. She was no Scrooge, but she seldom purchased anything except the bare necessities.

Alliteration – the repetition of, usually, the initial consonant sounds in two or more neighboring words or syllable.

The wild and woolly walrus waits and wonders when we'll walk by.

Assonance – a resemblance of sound in words or syllables.

Holy and stony
Fleet feet sweep by sleeping geese.

Idiom – the language peculiar to a group of people. Sayings that we know, but that don't necessarily make sense.

She sings at the top of her lungs.

It's raining cats and dogs.

Cliché – a word or phrase that has become overly familiar or commonplace.

No pain, no gain.

Pun – A play on words, sometimes on different senses of the same word and sometimes on the similar sense or sound of different words.

I wondered why the baseball kept getting bigger. Then it hit me.

Malapropism – a confused, comically inaccurate use of a long word or words. The term comes from the character Mrs. Malaprop (after the French *mal à propos*, 'inappropriately') in Sheridan's *The Rivals* (1775): her bungled attempts at learned speech include a reference to another character as 'the very pine apple of politeness', instead of 'pinnacle'.

No, a moo point. Yeah, it's like a cow's opinion. It just doesn't matter. It's moo." (moot)