

FIGURES OF SPEECH

We use figures of speech in "figurative language" to add colour and interest, and to awaken the imagination.

Figurative language is everywhere, from classical works like Shakespeare or the Bible, to everyday speech, pop music and television commercials. It makes the reader or listener use their imagination and understand much more than the plain words.

Figurative language is the opposite of literal language.

Literal language means exactly what it says.

Figurative language means something different to (and usually more than) what it says on the surface:

EXAMPLE-

- He ran fast. (**literal**)
- He ran like the wind. (**figurative**)
Here "like the wind" is a figure of speech (in this case, a simile).

In some respects, they are the foundation of communication.

Figures of Speech are a set of tools essential for all writers.

Conveying a complex idea can be virtually impossible without an IMAGE or analogy.

FIGURES of SPEECH serve two roles:

(A) DECORATION:

We all love to decorate our home.

What would your home be like without them?

They give beauty and variety to what we wish to show

Same way- 'Figures of Speech' are decorations we use for our writing.

Without them our writing would be boring.

(B) CLARITY:

A complex subject can best be conveyed imaginatively and captivatingly

The purpose of learning Figures of Speech is to make you aware, as writers, of the power and degrees of choice you have when using it in English.

Commonly used FIGURES OF SPEECH:

1. SIMILE-

A Simile shows a likeness or comparison between two objects or events.

A simile is usually introduced with the words- like, as, as.....so.

Examples:

- I. She is as pretty as a picture.
- II. The story was as dull as ditch water.
- III. He is as sober as a judge.

2. METAPHOR-

A Metaphor is like a simile. Two objects are compared, without the words 'as or like'. It is an implied simile.

Examples:

- I. He was a lion in the battlefield
- II. Variety is the spice of life
- III. She was a tower of strength in their trouble.

Difference between Metaphor and Simile:

Both similes and metaphors link one thing to another. A simile usually uses "as" or "like". A metaphor is a condensed simile, a shortcut to meaning, which omits "as" or "like." A metaphor creates a relationship directly and leaves more to the imagination.

With simile A is like B.

With metaphor A is B.

Simile	Metaphor
Your eyes are like the sun.	You are my sunshine.
He eats like a pig.	He is a pig.

CAUTION: THE METAPHOR needs to be used carefully.

THEREFORE, do not get too far-fetched; otherwise, the images you conjure up may be confusing or foolish.

Do not OVERUSE or sustain beyond the point of interest.

Avoid MIXED METAPHORS "He put his foot down with a firm hand".

3. PERSONIFICATION-

In Personification non-living objects, abstract ideas or qualities are spoken of as persons or human-beings.

Examples:

- I. Necessity knows no law.
- II. Hope springs eternal
- III. Let the floods clap their hands.
- IV. I kissed the hand of death.

NOTE-

We frequently use personification - whether we know it or not - when we describe

- a promising morning
- a treacherous sea
- a thankless task

4. APOSTROPHE-

An Apostrophe is a development of personification in which the writer addresses absent or inanimate objects, concept or ideas as if they were alive and could reply.

Examples:

- I. "Fair daffodils, we weep to see you haste away so soon".
- II. "O wind, where have you been?"
- III. Lead, Kindly light, amid the encircling gloom.

5. OXYMORON-

An Oxymoron is when two terms or words are used together in a sentence but they seem to contradict each-other. Oxymoron is a statement which, on the surface, seems to contradict itself - a kind of crisp contradiction. An oxymoron is a figure of speech that deliberately uses two differing ideas. This contradiction creates a paradoxical image in the reader or listener's mind that generates a new concept or meaning for the whole.

Examples:

- I. Life is bitter sweet.
- II. He is the wisest fool of them all.
- III. He was condemned to a living death.

☺☺☺☺☺☺☺☺☺ SOMETHING TO SMILE ☺☺☺☺☺☺☺☺☺
*Ever noticed that it's **simply impossible** to find **seriously funny** oxymoron? The **only choice** is to ask one of those **paid volunteers** at the library – the ones in the **long-sleeved T-shirts** – for an **original copy** of some **obviously obscure** documents that were **found missing** amongst some paperwork **almost exactly** one hundred years ago.*

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6. ANTITHESIS-

In Antithesis, one word or idea is set in direct contrast against another, for emphasis. It is a combination of two words, phrases, clauses, or sentences contrasted in meaning to offer a highlight to contrasting ideas. Antithesis occurs when you place two different or opposite ideas near each other.

Examples:

- I. United we stand, divided we fall.
- II. To err is human, to forgive is divine.
- III. We look for light, but all is darkness.

7. PUN-

Pun is a word or phrase used in two different senses. It is usually used in plays where one word has two different meanings and is used to create humor. Pun is a play of words – either their different meanings or upon two different words sounding the same.

Humorous use of a word to suggest different meanings or of words of the same sound and different meanings create humor and interest while reading also.

Examples:

- I. A bicycle can't stand on its own because it is two **tired**.
- II. A boy swallowed some coins and was taken to a hospital. His grandmother phoned to ask how he was, a nurse said, 'No **change** yet.'
- III. Truly, Sir, all that I live by is with the awl; I meddle with no tradesman's matters, nor women's matters, but with **awl**.
- IV. Is life worth living? That depends on the **liver**
- V. **A trade, sir, that, I hope, I may use with a safe conscience**; which is, indeed, sir, a mender of bad **soles**.

8. IRONY

Irony is when one thing is said which means the exact opposite. With irony the words used suggest the OPPOSITE of their literal meaning. The effect of irony, however, can depend upon the tone of voice and the context. It is humorous or lightly sarcastic mode of speech. Words are used here to convey a meaning contrary to their literal meaning.

NOTE: AN IRONIC remark implies a double / dual view of things:

- a. a literal meaning, and
- b. a different intention

Irony can be used to create amusement - unlike Sarcasm. When used to taunt or ridicule, Irony is called Sarcasm.

Examples:

- I. Here under leave of Brutus and the rest, for Brutus is an honourable man, so are they all, all honourable men.
- II. The fire station burned down last night.
- III. As soft as concrete
- IV. As clear as mud
- V. He was suspended for his little mishap.
- VI. The homeless survived in their cardboard palaces.

9. CLIMAX-

Climax is a figure of speech which rises in steps like a ladder from simple to more important.

Examples:

- I. He came, he saw, he conquered.
- II. He ran fast; He came first in the race; He was awarded a prize.

III. Lost, broken, wrecked and dead within an hour.

10. ANTICLIMAX-

It is an arrangement of words in order of decreasing importance. Often, it is used to ridicule.

Examples:

- I. The soldier fights for glory, and a shilling a day.
- II. She lost her husband, her children and her purse.
- III. He is a great philosopher, a member of parliament and plays golf well.

11. HYPERBOLE-

Hyperbole is an exaggeration and things are made to appear greater or lesser than they usually are. Hyperbole is a **literary device** often used in **poetry**, and is frequently encountered in casual speech. Occasionally, newspapers and other media use hyperbole when speaking of an accident, to increase the impact of the story.

No one imagines that a hyperbolic statement is to be taken literally. It can also be termed as **OVERSTATEMENT**. It may be used to evoke strong feelings or to create a strong impression, but is not meant to be taken literally.

Examples:

- I. The burglar ran as fast as lightning.
- II. The professor's ideas are as old as the hills.
- III. The troops were swifter than eagles and stronger than lions.
- IV. Her brain is the size of a pea.
- V. I have told you a million times not to lie!

12. ALLITERATION-

Alliteration is a series of words that begin with the same letter.

Alliteration consists of the repetition of a sound or of a letter at the beginning of two or more words.

Examples:

- I. Dirty dogs dig in the dirt.
- II. Cute cats cooking carrots.
- III. Some slimy snakes were slowly slithering.
- IV. Purple pandas painted pictures
- V. White whales waiting in the water.

12. ONOMATOPOEIA-

Onomatopoeia is a figure of speech where a word is used to represent a sound. When you name an action by imitating the sound associated with it, this is known as onomatopoeia. Examples of onomatopoeia are also commonly found in poems and nursery rhymes written for children. Onomatopoeic words produce strong images that can both delight and amuse kids when listening to their parents read poetry. Some examples of onomatopoeia poems for children are *Baa Baa Black Sheep* and *Old Macdonald had a farm-eea eea oo*

Examples:

Zip goes the jacket

"Zip" is an onomatopoeia word because it sounds like a jacket is zipping up.

"Zip" is an example of onomatopoeia because it sounds like what it is.

When you zip up a zipper the sound the zipper makes sounds like a zipper. Here are other onomatopoeia words:

Boom, bang, slash, slurp,
gurgle, meow, and woof

EXERCISE 1

Name the figures of speech in the following sentences:

1. To gossip is fault, to libel is a crime, to slander is a sin.
2. O mischief, thou art swift

To enter in the thoughts of desperate men.

3. They speak like saints and act like devils.
4. How could he be a king, a soldier and a peon?
5. How high, his highness holds his haughty head.
6. What avail me, all my Kingdoms?
7. Hasten slowly.
8. Not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more.
9. Life is a dream.
10. The old, sick dog was put to sleep.
11. She was as proud as a peacock.
12. It crackled and growled and roared and howled.
13. He was conspicuous by his absence.
14. More haste, less speed.
15. The troops were swifter than eagles and stronger than lions.
16. She dropped the pail and turned deathly pale.
17. While her mother did fret and her father did fume,

And her bridegroom stood, dangling his bonnet and plume.

EXERCISE 2

Select the correct alternative

1. When the Almighty scattered the kings in the land, it was like snow fallen on Zalmon.
a) Metaphor b) Hyperbole c) Personification d) Simile
2. Her conscious tail her joy declared.
a) Metaphor b) Hyperbole c) Apostrophe d) Personification
3. Speech is silver, silence is golden.
a) Metaphor b) Personification c) Antithesis d) Irony
4. Let the rivers clap their hands, let the mountains sing together for joy; let them sing before the Lord, for he comes to judge the earth.....
a) Metaphor b) Personification c) Apostrophe d) Simile
5. I am so hungry, I could eat a horse.
a) Metaphor b) Irony c) Climax d) Hyperbole
6. The road was a ribbon of moonlight, over the purple moor.
a) Metaphor b) Personification c) Irony d) Pun
7. Oh judgment! Thou hast fled to brutish hearts. And men have lost their reason.
a) Metaphor b) Apostrophe c) Hyperbole d) Simile
8. She is won! We are gone! , over bank bush and scar.
a) Apostrophe b) Climax c) Anticlimax d) Pun

FIND ALL THE FIGURES OF SPEECH IN YOUR FAVORITE SONG AND WRITE IN THE SPACE BESIDE:

Ooooooooooooooooooooohh
You're a good soldier Choosing your battles
Pick yourself up And dust yourself off
Get back in the saddle

You're on the front line Everyone's watching
You know it's serious We are getting closer

This isn't over
The pressure is on You feel it
But you got it all
Believe it

When you fall get up, oh oh If you fall get up, eh eh
Tsamina mina zangalewa Cuz this is Africa
Tsamina mina, eh eh Waka waka, eh eh
Tsamina mina zangalewa
Its time for Africa

Listen to your God This is our motto
Your time to shine Don't wait in line
Y vamos por todo
People are raising Their expectations
Go on and feed them This is your moment
No hesitations

Today's your day I feel it
You paved the way Believe it
When you fall get up, oh oh If you fall get up, eh eh
Tsamina mina zangalewa Cuz this is Africa
Tsamina mina, eh eh Waka waka, eh eh
Tsamina mina zangalewa
Its time for Africa