

# Figuratively Speaking That Is

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Resources for the Adult Education Practitioner



**Webinar Handbook, April 3, 2019**

Institute for the Professional Development of Adult Educators

RESOURCES FOR THE ADULT EDUCATION PRACTITIONER

# Figuratively Speaking That Is

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## Guiding Questions

Think about the following guiding questions as you participate in today's session. Write down your thoughts and be prepared to share your ideas.

Slide(s)	Guiding Questions	My Thoughts
4	Think about what you want to take-away from this session.	
9	Why do you need to teach figurative language?	
10	What is the difference between literal and figurative language and figure of speech?	
15	Which was the most difficult cartoon for you to identify the figurative language device used? Why?	
17-18	What's one take-away that you think is important from the research?	
20-26	What are the four steps in teaching figures of speech?	
29-33	What is your favorite resource for teaching figurative language? Why?	
37	Share the one thing that you found most useful from this session.	

## College and Career Readiness Standards – Figurative Language

**CCR.RE.ABE.4:** Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone. *(Apply this standard to texts of appropriate complexity as outlined by Standard 10.)*

NRS Level 1	NRS Level 2	NRS Level 3	NRS Level 4
GE: 0.0–1.9	GE: 2.0–3.9	GE: 4.0–5.9	GE: 6.0–8.9
4.1. Ask and answer questions to help determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases in a text.	4.2. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a topic or subject area.	4.3. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a topic or subject area.  a) Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes.	4.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

## Common Types of Figurative Language

There are many, many types of figures of speech that can be involved in figurative language. Some of the most common are:

**Metaphor**: A figure of speech that makes a comparison between two unrelated things by stating that one thing is another thing, even though this isn't literally true. For example, the phrase "her lips are a blooming rose" obviously doesn't literally mean what it says—it's a metaphor that makes a comparison between the red beauty and promise of a blooming rose with that of the lips of the woman being described.

**Simile**: A simile, like a metaphor, makes a comparison between two unrelated things. However, instead of stating that one thing *is* another thing (as in metaphor), a simile states that one thing is *like* another thing. An example of a simile would be to say "they fought like cats and dogs."

**Oxymoron**: An oxymoron pairs contradictory words in order to express new or complex meanings. In the phrase "parting is such sweet sorrow" from *Romeo and Juliet*, "sweet sorrow" is an oxymoron that captures the complex and simultaneous feelings of pain and pleasure associated with passionate love.

**Hyperbole**: Hyperbole is an intentional exaggeration of the truth, used to emphasize the importance of something or to create a comic effect. An example of a hyperbole is to say that a backpack "weighs a ton." No backpack literally weighs a ton, but to say "my backpack weighs ten pounds" doesn't effectively communicate how burdensome a heavy backpack feels.

**Personification**: In personification, non-human things are described as having human attributes, as in the sentence, "The rain poured down on the wedding guests, indifferent to their plans." Describing the rain as "indifferent" is an example of personification, because rain can't be "indifferent," nor can it feel any other human emotion.

**Idiom**: An idiom is a phrase that, through general usage within a particular group or society, has gained a meaning that is different from the literal meaning of the words. The phrase "it's raining cats and dogs" is known to most Americans to mean that it's raining hard, but an English-speaking foreigner in the United States might find the phrase totally confusing.

**Onomatopoeia**: Onomatopoeia is a figure of speech in which words evoke the actual sound of the thing they refer to or describe. The "boom" of a firework exploding, the "tick tock" of a clock, and the "ding dong" of a doorbell are all examples of onomatopoeia.

**Alliteration**: In alliteration, the same sound repeats in a group of words, such as the "b" sound in: "Bob brought the box of bricks to the basement." Alliteration uses repetition to create a musical effect that helps phrases to stand out from the language around them.

**Assonance**: The repetition of vowel sounds repeat in nearby words, such as the "ee" sound: "the squeaky wheel gets the grease." Like alliteration, assonance uses repeated sounds to create a musical effect in which words echo one another.

**Imagery**: The use of figurative language to represent objects, actions, and ideas in such a way that it appeals to our physical senses. *"It was dark and dim in the forest" is an example where the words "dark" and "dim" are visual images. Imagery creates visual representations, such as mental pictures.*

**Irony**: A figure of speech in which words are used in such a way that their intended meaning is different from the actual meaning of the words. "What a great idea" may actually mean the idea is not great at all. Irony conveys the difference between how things seem and reality.

## The Elements of Figurative Language

Grammar is the structure of language. It includes the sounds, words, syntax, and semantics of language. Rhetoric is what people do with language. It includes the words that they select, how they structure phrases, and how they make things stand out and be noticed. Style is the pattern of choices that an individual makes when he/she writes. Figurative language is used purposefully to distort language to make the reader think about what the writer is trying to tell them. Figurative language is enjoyed by some people and disliked by others – usually those who just can't get past the literal meaning and use of words. These people often dislike poetry because they just can't "get" the meaning of the figurative language expressions that are used. Figurative language is not intended to be interpreted in a literal sense. Appealing to the imagination, figurative language provides new ways of looking at the world. Figurative language compares two things that are different in enough ways so that their similarities, when pointed out, are interesting, unique, and/or surprising.

Figurative language can be 1) thought provoking constructions or 2) clever manipulations. Those of the first type would include the more common kinds of figurative language that people know, including simile, metaphor, symbol, and irony. These can require some careful reading and, sometimes, study to get the point the writer is trying to make. The second kind of figurative language is more like the "pet tricks" made famous by David Letterman. They are cute and more immediately understood, but they have little lasting effect.

Remember, figurative language is a way to compare and contrast. When some language can't be taken literally, it forces people to compare what they have with what it might have been. Thus, we get two sets of meaning. Each form of figurative language approaches the comparison differently.

straight comparison	compare A and B
simile	A is like/as B
metaphor	A is B
symbol	A is represented by B
irony	A is not B

Adapted from English 201 – Figurative Language, Milwaukee Area Technical College.  
Retrieved from the World Wide Web at: <http://online.milwaukee.tec.wi.us/eng-201/figures.htm>.



## Figurative Language Match

1. Cut the cards apart.
2. Have students match the term with the correct definition and example.
3. Have students create their own examples to share.

<b>Alliteration</b>	Repeated consonant sounds occurring at the beginning of words or within words	Wide eyed and wondering, we waited for the others to awaken.
<b>Personification</b>	A figure of speech which gives the qualities of a person to an animal, an object, or an idea	The wind whispered softly through the trees.
<b>Onomatopoeia</b>	The use of words that mimic sounds	The explosion went BBOOOOOOMMMMMM MM!!
<b>Metaphor</b>	Two things are compared without using "like" or "as"	The children were busy bees.
<b>Simile</b>	A comparison between two relatively unlike things using the words "like" or "as"	She is as sweet as candy.

<b>Idiom</b>	A catchy phrase not meant to be taken literally or word for word	He's got a chip on his shoulder.
<b>Hyperbole</b>	An exaggerated statement used to heighten effect and emphasize a point	She's said so on several million occasions!
<b>Understatement</b>	The opposite of hyperbole, an expression with less strength than expected	This won't hurt a bit.
<b>Imagery</b>	Words that create visual representations/ mental pictures of ideas in our mind	The fresh and juicy orange is very cold and sweet.

## Matching Types of Figurative Language in Literary Passages

Print the following and then cut out the excerpts and literary devices. See if students can match the excerpt to the correct literary device.

<p><b>ALLITERATION</b> The repetition of similar sounds, usually consonants, in a group of words.</p>	<p><i>"Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before."</i> <i>The Raven – Edgar Allan Poe</i></p>
<p><b>IMAGERY</b> Words or phrases that create pictures or images in the reader's mind.</p>	<p>The day is over quietly spent, The sky is ablaze with colors you've sent, The bright oranges and reds The subtle blues, Harkens me to hear the news.  <i>Alicia Bechtel aka Chiari</i></p>
<p><b>METAPHOR</b> A figure of speech that makes a comparison between two things which are basically dissimilar</p>	<p><i>"Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player That struts and frets his hour upon the stage and then is heard no more. . ."</i>  <i>William Shakespeare</i></p>
<p><b>ONOMATOPOEIA</b> The use of a word whose sound in some degree imitates or suggests its meaning.</p>	<p><i>"The fire crackled and the popcorn popped."</i></p>
<p><b>OXYMORON</b> A figure of speech that combines opposite or contradictory ideas or terms.</p>	<p><i>"Sweet sorrow, wise fool, honest thief."</i></p>

<p><b>PERSONIFICATION</b></p> <p>Giving animals, objects, or ideas human characteristics such as emotion.</p>	<p><i>"The fog crept in on little cat feet."</i></p> <p><i>Carl Sandburg</i></p>
<p><b>SARCASM</b></p> <p>A form of sneering criticism in which disapproval is often expressed as ironic praise.</p>	<p><i>Jamison was walking away from the counter and suddenly dropped his lunch tray. A stranger at the next table looked up and said, "Well, that was really intelligent."</i></p>
<p><b>SIMILE</b></p> <p>A figure of speech comparing two essentially unlike things through the use of a specific word of comparison, such as like or as.</p>	<p><i>"Higher still and higher From the earth it springs Like a cloud of fire... To a Skylark – Percy Bysshe Shelley</i></p>
<p><b>SYMBOL</b></p> <p>Something that represents more than what it is in a literal sense.</p>	<p><i>"The American flag"</i></p>

## Figurative Language in Music and Poetry

Teach students common types of figurative language, such as metaphors, similes, onomatopoeia, etc., through the use of songs. Provide students with different types of lyrics from songs. Have the students identify the different types of figurative language used by each of the composers. The following is one example: "The River" by Garth Brooks.

### "The River" by Garth Brooks

You know a dream is like a river, ever changing as it flows.  
And a dreamer's just a vessel that must follow where it goes.  
Trying to learn from what's behind you and never knowing what's in store  
makes each day a constant battle just to stay between the shores.

And I will sail my vessel 'til the river runs dry.  
Like a bird upon the wind, these waters are my sky.  
I'll never reach my destination if I never try,  
So I will sail my vessel 'til the river runs dry.

Too many times we stand aside and let the water slip away.  
To what we put off 'til tomorrow has now become today.  
So don't you sit upon the shore and say you're satisfied.  
Choose to chance the rapids and dare to dance the tides.

Chorus-

There's bound to be rough waters, and I know I'll take some falls.  
With the good Lord as my captain, I can make it through them all.

Chorus-

*Poetic devices used in "The River" include: simile, metaphor, alliteration, hyperbole, couplet, personification.*

## Finding Figurative Language

Use this sheet to look for figurative language in different forms of media (newspapers, magazines, television, website articles, movies, songs, etc.)

Medium	Example	Device

## Figuratively Speaking

As you read through the text, look for examples of figurative language and write them in the organizer below. Then, think about what the phrase from the text means and why the author may have included it.

Example from Text	Type (circle one)	What does it mean?	Why did the author include it in the text?
	Simile      Personification Metaphor    Onomatopoeia Hyperbole    Imagery Idiom        Alliteration		
	Simile      Personification Metaphor    Onomatopoeia Hyperbole    Imagery Idiom        Alliteration		
	Simile      Personification Metaphor    Onomatopoeia Hyperbole    Imagery Idiom        Alliteration		
	Simile      Personification Metaphor    Onomatopoeia Hyperbole    Imagery Idiom        Alliteration		
	Simile      Personification Metaphor    Onomatopoeia Hyperbole    Imagery Idiom        Alliteration		

## Frayer Model – Figuratively Speaking!

Diagram a Frayer's Model for the identified term (simile, metaphor, personification, idiom, hyperbole, understatement). Place your term in the middle. In the top left corner, write your definition. In the bottom left corner, give 3 examples. In the right bottom corner, give 3 non-examples. In the top right corner, give an illustration of the term or one of your examples.

<b>Definition</b>	<b>Illustration</b>
<b>Term</b>	
<b>Example</b>	<b>Non-example</b>



**Figurative Language Learning Log**

Figurative Language Learning Log			
Figurative Language	Literal Meaning	Intended Meaning	Connection to Real Life

## Websites

### Figurative Language Videos

**Flocabulary. Figurative Language.** <https://www.flocabulary.com/unit/figurative-language/>

**Literary Devices in Pop Culture.**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=25&v=U\\_pxifB6Co](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=25&v=U_pxifB6Co)

**Figurative Language Rap**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y0kYzRU46Xs&feature=youtu.be>

### Figurative Language Worksheets

**E-Reading.** Figurative language overview and worksheets

<https://www.ereadingworksheets.com/figurative-language/>

<https://www.ereadingworksheets.com/figurative-language/figurative-language-activities/figurative-language-lesson/>

**Eye on Idioms.** Interactive tool from Read/Write/Think.

<http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/idioms/>

### Figurative Language Website Lessons in PowerPoint Presentation

**Figurative Language – Similes and Metaphors. CPALMS**

<http://www.cpalms.org/Public/PreviewResourceLesson/Preview/48971>

**Magical Musical Tour: Using lyrics to teach literary elements**

[https://www.mensaforkids.org/MFK2/assets/File/Teach/LessonPlans/Lesson\\_Magic\\_MusicTour.pdf](https://www.mensaforkids.org/MFK2/assets/File/Teach/LessonPlans/Lesson_Magic_MusicTour.pdf)

**Mrs. Thomas Figurative Language Game**

<https://jeopardylabs.com/play/mrsthomas-figurative-language-game>

**Figurative Language Games**




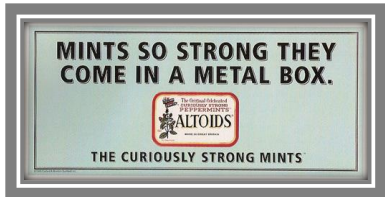



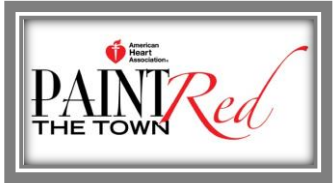
[https://ams.usd385.org/287579\\_4](https://ams.usd385.org/287579_4)

**Figurative Language in Nonfiction Texts**

[http://www.floridaipdae.org/dfiles/resources/lessons/ABE/Reading\\_Lesson\\_Plans/Figurative\\_Language\\_in\\_Informational\\_Text/Figurative\\_Language\\_in\\_Informational\\_Text.pdf](http://www.floridaipdae.org/dfiles/resources/lessons/ABE/Reading_Lesson_Plans/Figurative_Language_in_Informational_Text/Figurative_Language_in_Informational_Text.pdf)

**Florida IPDAE.** <http://www.floridaipdae.org/>

## Understanding Figurative Language

LITERAL LANGUAGE		FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE	
<b>Literally:</b> refers to the “literal” or dictionary definition of a word or words <i>Example: Travis is an extremely strong young man.</i>		<b>Figuratively:</b> refers to a figure of speech or an interpretation of the words as they are being used. You have to figure out the meaning of the words. <i>Example: Travis is as strong as an ox.</i>	
METAPHOR	SIMILE	PERSONIFICATION	HYPERBOLE
A metaphor is when you compare things that are essentially not alike.	A simile is similar to a metaphor. This difference is that a simile uses the words “like” or “as”.	Personification is when you give human-like qualities to something that is not human.	A hyperbole is an exaggeration. It is usually used in a humorous way.
<p><i>Print Media Example:</i></p>  <p><i>Think about this ...</i></p> <p>Why does this ad for Geico Insurance use the slogan “So easy a caveman can do it?”</p> <p>Do you think that a consumer needs special skills to apply for Geico Insurance?</p>	<p><i>Print Media Example:</i></p>  <p><i>Think about this ...</i></p> <p>Why does this car plate for Chevy trucks use the slogan “Like a Rock!” What is the intended association between a Chevy truck and a rock?</p>	<p><i>Print Media Example:</i></p>  <p><i>Think about this ...</i></p> <p>How are M &amp; M candies being portrayed here? Does it look like they are acting like human beings?</p>	<p><i>Print Media Example:</i></p>  <p><i>Think about this ...</i></p> <p>When you think about mints, do think about them as being physically strong? Why are these mints packaged in a metal box? What is your interpretation of this?</p>
SYMBOLISM	ONOMATOPOEIA	ALLITERATION	IDIOM
Symbolism occurs when you use a noun with a particular meaning to represent something different.	Onomatopoeia is you name an action by imitating the sound that is associated with it.	Alliteration is the repetition of the same sound at the beginning of words that are adjacent or closely connected.	An idiom is an expression that is used by a group of people that is understood only by common use.
<p><i>Print Media Example:</i></p>  <p><i>Think about this ...</i></p> <p>Why is champion boxer Oscar de la Hoya sporting the American flag with his milk mustache? What is the significance?</p>	<p><i>Print Media Example:</i></p>  <p><i>Think about this ...</i></p> <p>Why does the box of Rice Krispies always feature the words “snap”, “crackle”, and “pop?” What is the effect gained by using these words repeatedly?</p>	<p><i>Print Media Example:</i></p>  <p><i>Think about this ...</i></p> <p>Read the words “Coca-Cola Classic.” Do you hear the repetition of the /k/ sound? What is the effect gained by repeating this sound?</p>	<p><i>Print Media Example:</i></p>  <p><i>Think about this ...</i></p> <p>The expression “paint the town” means have a great night out on the town. What is the effect gained by using this idiom in this American Heart Association ad?</p>

