Picture Words: Four Figures and Word Shades

Teacher		**Class**	Grade 5
Subject	ELA	**Topic**	Figurative language
Date		**Room**	
Lesson length	60 minutes	**Country**	United States

Students learn four kinds of picture words and how word strength changes meaning. They sort, act, and write wild lines about a school day.

Curriculum links

- Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings
- Understanding words and phrases, their relationships, and their nuances [1]

Learning objectives

- Students will identify simile, metaphor, personification, and hyperbole in sentences.
- Students will explain the real meaning of figurative phrases in plain words.
- Students will order close words by strength to show small differences in meaning.

Success criteria

- I can name the figure type and point to the clue words.
- I can say what a picture line really means in plain words.
- I can line up related words from weakest to strongest and explain the change.

What students already know

Show thumbs up or down: Could ‘I ran like a cheetah to class’ really happen? What clue tells you it paints a picture?

Key words

simile	a comparison that uses like or as to link two different things [7]
metaphor	saying one thing is another thing to show they are alike [7]
personification	giving human actions or feelings to a thing or animal [7]
hyperbole	a very big exaggeration that is not true and adds feeling [7]
literal	words that mean exactly what they say with no hidden picture [5]
nuance	a small change in strength or feeling between close words [1]

Materials

- four corner signs labeled Simile, Metaphor, Personification, Hyperbole
- sentence list from Slides 5 and 12
- clue cards for Figure Four Corners
- slides 2-7 and 9-12, projector and speakers
- word cards for Slide 10: Glanced, Stared, Glared

Before the lesson

- Print and post four corner signs and print clue cards and word cards
- Print Worksheet Task A page 1 for pairs
- Test Slide 6 Video clip 1 Generation Genius intro 0:00-1:14 with sound

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- Worksheet Task A (page 1), pencils, tape
- Clear pathways between desks for walking to corners and tape line space on wall

Lesson outline

0–8 min **Starter** 8 min · Whole class

Hook interest and recall the difference between plain words and picture words.

YOU DO

1. Welcome the class and say the game hook to preview the main activity.
2. Show Slide 2 mystery: A student says, 'I'm so hungry I could eat a horse!' What do they mean?
3. Think aloud with Slide 7 step: Ask: Could this really happen?
4. Show Slide 5 vote with My backpack weighs a ton, The alarm clock screamed at me, I ran like a cheetah to class and take a quick vote.

STUDENTS DO

1. Listen to the hook and look at Slide 2.
2. Turn and talk with a neighbor about what the horse line really means.
3. Vote on Slide 5 for which line makes the morning rush feel wildest.

Say: Run, think, choose. Which corner matches this figure? Today we are picture-word detectives. Plain words tell exactly what happened. Picture words paint a picture in your mind. Vote with your hand which morning line feels wildest.

Worked example: A student says, 'I'm so hungry I could eat a horse!' Step 1: Spot the impossible thing - eat a horse. Step 2: Ask: Could this really happen? No. Step 3: Say the real meaning plainly: Very hungry! Big exaggeration, not real eating.

Ask: Could we really eat a horse? What does the line really mean? (No, it cannot happen. It means very hungry, a big exaggeration not meant literally [7].) · How are plain words different from picture words? (Plain words simply mean what they say [5], picture words mean something other than what they normally do [5].)

Check understanding: Thumbs up if the sentence is picture words, flat hand if plain words. Reteach with The cat sat on the mat versus It's raining cats and dogs, which means it's raining very heavily [7], if many are unsure.

Support: Offer a two-choice card: really hungry or really ate a horse. **Stretch:** Ask why the writer chose the picture version and what feeling it adds.

Use: Slides 2, 5

8–20 min **Teaching** 12 min · Whole class

Teach the four figures and how to crack their real meaning.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 3 cards and name each type with its test.
2. Play Video clip 1 on Slide 6 and tell students to listen for plain vs picture words and spot any like or as.
3. Show Slide 7 steps and model them on one simile.
4. Share Slide 4 fact to build confidence.

STUDENTS DO

1. Chant the four tests and hold up fingers for like or as.
2. Watch and listen for one like or as example in the video.
3. Practice the steps aloud with the teacher example.

Say: A simile compares with like or as [6]. A metaphor describes something as if it is something else [6]. Personification gives human actions to things [7]. Hyperbole is extreme exaggeration not meant to be taken literally [7]. Spot the clue, ask if it could really happen, picture the feeling, then say it plainly.

Worked example: I ran like a cheetah to class. Step 1: Spot like. It is a simile that uses like to compare [6]. Step 2: Could I really be a cheetah? No. Step 3: Picture fast running. Real meaning: I ran very fast to class.

Ask: What words tell you a simile is comparing? (like or as, since a simile uses a connective such as like or as [4].) · How is a metaphor different from a simile? (A metaphor says one thing is another without like or as [7], it asserts that subject A is subject B [4].) · Your brain gets tricky phrases super fast. What does that tell us? (It understands figurative ideas as quickly as plain words, our brains figure out meaning right away [8].)

Check understanding: Mini whiteboards: write S, M, P, or H for The alarm clock screamed at me. Correct is personification. Reteach human action test if split.

Support: Give a clue card with like or as circled and sentence frames for the real meaning. **Stretch:** Have students rewrite the simile as a metaphor without changing the meaning.

Use: Slides 3, 4, 6, 7; Video clip 1 (0:00-1:14)

20–35 min **Main activity** 15 min · Groups

Identify simile, metaphor, personification, and hyperbole and explain the clues.

YOU DO

1. Post four corner signs and read aloud the sentence list from Slides 5 and 12.
2. Read one sentence at a time: My backpack weighs a ton, The alarm clock screamed at me, I ran like a cheetah to class, Her smile was as bright as the sun., The classroom was a zoo., I'm so hungry I could eat a horse!
3. Students walk to the corner they think fits, then one student from each corner defends the choice.
4. Confirm the type, underline the two things compared or the impossible part, and state the real meaning.

STUDENTS DO

1. Walk to Simile, Metaphor, Personification, or Hyperbole corner for each sentence.
2. Defend the choice by naming like, as, human action, is, or big exaggeration.
3. Note the real meaning in plain words on whiteboards.

Say: Listen, think, then walk to your corner. You must prove it. Name the clue words or the exaggeration that is not meant to be taken literally. Tell what the two parts share.

Worked example: The classroom was a zoo. It is a metaphor that says one thing is another [7]. Two things: classroom and zoo. They share noisy and chaotic, not real animals. Real meaning: the room was very noisy and wild.

Ask: My backpack weighs a ton - type and real meaning? (Hyperbole, an extreme exaggeration for effect [7], means the bag is very heavy, not 2,000 pounds [13].) · Her smile was as bright as the sun. - type and what is compared? (Simile with as [7], compares a smile to the sun to show warm and bright.)

Check understanding: Count corners each round. If a corner is split, model the test again and revote before moving on.

Support: Let students carry a clue card that lists the key test for each type, since a metaphor asserts that subject A is subject B [4]. **Stretch:** Ask students at the correct corner to improve the sentence to make the same type even clearer.

Use: Slides 5, 12

35–50 min **Word shades and writing** 15 min · Pairs

Show how word strength changes feeling and write own figures.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 10 cards: Glanced - Looked quickly for a second., Stared - Looked long and hard., Glared - Looked in an angry way.
2. Model lining them weakest to strongest and swapping them into The alarm clock screamed at me to feel the change.
3. Set Slide 9 task: Pick a boring moment, like lunch line, and write a simile, metaphor, personification, and hyperbole line.
4. Hand out Worksheet Task A and remind pairs to explain the clue in each simile.

STUDENTS DO

1. Arrange word cards in order and tape the line, explaining why one hits harder.
2. Write four wild lines about a school day, one for each type, starting with Worksheet Task A similes.
3. Underline clues and tell what is compared or exaggerated.

Say: Chilly is not freezing. Words have shades. Line up glanced, stared, and glared from weakest to strongest. Then use a strong shade to make your hyperbole or metaphor hit harder. A strong word changes the picture.

Worked example: Glanced means looked quickly for a second, stared means looked long and hard, glared means looked in an angry way. Order: glanced, stared, glared. Lunch line hyperbole: My lunch line wait lasted a million years means a very long wait, not real years.

Ask: How does swapping glanced to glared change the picture? (It changes strength and feeling from quick look to angry look, showing understanding of words, their relationships, and their nuances [1].) · How does imagery help your comic or line? (Imagery draws on the senses to create a mental picture that heightens understanding [4].)

Check understanding: Pairs tape lines and read one figure aloud. Listen for correct type and plain meaning; pull a small group to reorder three words with picture clues if needed.

Support: Start with only three familiar words and picture clues, to focus on general academic words and their relationships [1]. **Stretch:** Have students use the strongest word in a new hyperbole and the weakest word in a literal sentence about the same event.

Use: Slides 9, 10; Worksheet Task A

50–60 min **Plenary** 10 min · Whole class

Check understanding of figures and when exaggeration helps.

YOU DO

1. Lead Slide 11 think, pair, share: When does exaggeration help a story? When does it confuse?
2. Run Slide 12 quick quiz on Her smile was as bright as the sun. and The classroom was a zoo.
3. Link back to success lines and collect exit tickets.

STUDENTS DO

1. Think, pair, share on exaggeration help versus confusion.
2. Answer quiz questions and explain type and meaning.
3. Self-check against I can lines with fingers 1 to 3.

Say: Good writers move beyond literal meaning to build deeper meaning [5]. Exaggeration can intensify and emphasize a point [6], but too much can confuse. Tell your partner one time it helps and one time it hurts.

Worked example: Her smile was as bright as the sun. Type: simile - uses as to compare. Compared: smile and sun. Real meaning: her smile was warm and bright and easy to notice.

Ask: The classroom was a zoo. What type and meaning? (Metaphor, says room is a zoo, means noisy and chaotic, not real animals [7].) · When does hyperbole help and when does it confuse? (Helps to add humor or stress a feeling; confuses if reader takes it literally or misses the real meaning.)

Check understanding: Exit tickets plus hand signals. Revisit any type with less than 80 percent correct tomorrow with menu of comparisons.

Support: Provide sentence starters: This is ___ because ___. It really means ___. **Stretch:** Ask students to add one idiom and explain its real meaning in a footnote.

Use: Slides 11, 12

Common mistakes

Mistake	How to spot it	How to fix it
Calling any comparison a simile, even without like or as.	Student labels The classroom was a zoo. as simile.	Use the like-or-as test: a simile compares with like or as [6], a metaphor says one thing is another [7].
Taking hyperbole as true fact.	Student thinks My backpack weighs a ton means 2,000 pounds.	Ask Could this really happen? Hyperbole is not meant to be taken literally [7], it means very heavy.
Thinking personification means the thing really became a person.	Student says the alarm clock really screamed with a mouth.	Explain personification treats a thing as if it were a person to connect feelings [13], the clock sounded loud and harsh.

Support

- Clue cards with tests for like, as, is, human action, and big exaggeration.
- Sentence frames: This compares ___ to ___. It really means ___.
- Word bank with picture clues for glanced, stared, glared and sound words.

Stretch

- Rewrite each simile as a metaphor and each metaphor as a simile.
- Rank three hyperboles strongest to weakest and explain the nuance.
- Add a second sentence that shows the feeling created, not just the action.

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For the LSE or teaching assistant

Stay near corner game to guide clue-card group to correct corner, then support word ordering in pairs by pointing to Looked quickly, long and hard, angry way clues.

Check for understanding

Question	Answer
Her smile was as bright as the sun. What type and what is compared?	Simile; compares smile to sun to show bright and warm.
The classroom was a zoo. What type and what does it really mean?	Metaphor; means noisy and chaotic room, not real animals.
Put Glanced, Stared, Glared weakest to strongest and tell the difference.	Glanced, Stared, Glared; from quick look to long hard look to angry look.

Homework

Find one picture-word line at home, copy it, and write its real meaning in one plain sentence.

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