Name & Surname: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Say It With Pictures

Interpreting figures of speech in context

About 40 minutes Level ★★★☆☆



What Is a Figure of Speech?

Literal language states exactly what something is. Figurative language creates **meaning** by comparing one thing to another thing or by describing it in an unreal way. Writers use it to paint a picture and show **feeling**.

- **Simile**: a comparison using like or as. Example: He runs like a cheetah.
- **Metaphor**: a comparison saying one thing is another thing. Example: The classroom was a beehive.
- **Personification**: giving human qualities to a nonhuman thing. Example: The wind whispered.
- **Hyperbole**: extreme exaggeration for effect, not meant to be true. Example: This bag weighs a ton.

TASK A

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Read the sentence in the middle. Use the context to answer each question in a full sentence.

Who?
Who or what is given human qualities?

What?
What human action is described?

Where?
Where does this happen?

The old school bus groaned awake on a cold morning.

When?
When does this happen?

Why?
Why did the writer use personification here?

How?
How do you know it is not literal?

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Rank Strong Pictures

Decide which lines create the clearest picture in your mind.

Key words

simile: a comparison using like or as

metaphor: a comparison that says one thing is another

personification: giving human actions or feelings to a thing

hyperbole: a big exaggeration for effect

context: the words around a line that show its meaning

✂ TASK B

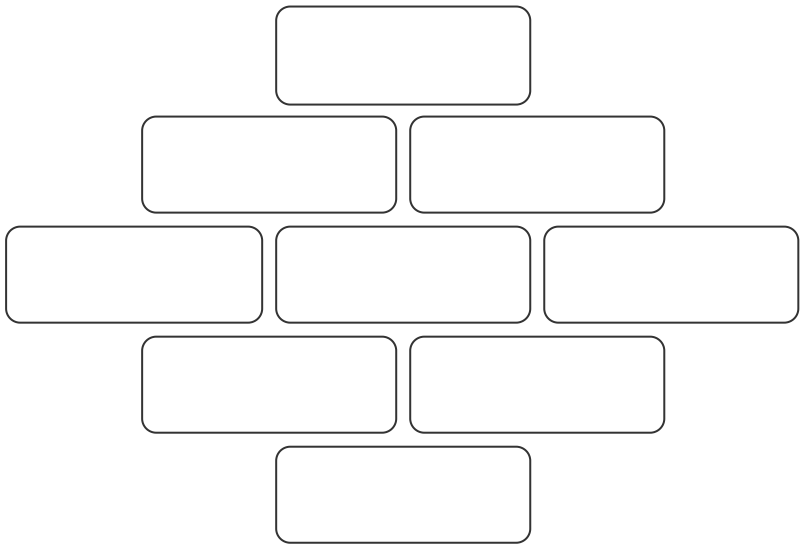
Cut out the cards. Rank them from strongest picture to weakest and glue them in a diamond shape.

Which line paints the strongest picture in your mind?

✂ Cut out the cards.

The wind whispered secrets through the trees.	My alarm clock screamed at me at 6 AM.	The rain danced on the gym roof.
He runs like a cheetah at recess.	The science room was a beehive before lunch.	My backpack weighed a ton after gym.
The test was very hard for many students.	Your own idea	Your own idea

▲ **Most important**



▼ **Least important**

Why did you put your top card at the top?

.....

.....

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Sort and Spot

Complete the table and find the one that does not belong.

TASK C

/5

Fill in each empty box. Use the meaning and the context clues to decide.

Sentence	Figure of Speech	What It Really Means
The stars winked at us.	personification	
He was as busy as a bee at lunch.		
I have told you a million times to sit down.	hyperbole	
The fog was a thick gray blanket.		The fog covered everything thickly.

TASK D

/3

Circle the odd one out in each row. Explain your choice in one sentence.

1. She smiled at her friend. | The sun smiled down. | The old car coughed and stopped. | The leaves danced.

   Why?

2. like a rocket | is a shining star | as brave as a lion | as cold as ice

   Why?

3. weighed a ton | told you a million times | cried a river | walked a mile to school

   Why?

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Explain the Meaning

Use context clues to explain what each figure really means.

TASK E

/3

Answer in 2-3 sentences. Include the clues that helped you decide.

1. **A story says: The tired windmill groaned all afternoon. What does groaned mean here, and why is it personification?**
   Groaned means... I know it is personification because...

2. **A student says: My math homework took a year to finish. The clock showed only 30 minutes. What is the figure of speech and what does it really mean?**
   The figure of speech is... It really means...

3. **A poem says: The hallway was a rushing river between classes. Is this literal? What picture does the writer want you to see?**
   This is not literal because... The writer wants me to see...

TASK F

Example done for you

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Match each sentence to its type. Write the number in the circle.

1	The classroom door yawned open.	◯	hyperbole
2	She is as quick as a flash.	◯	metaphor
3	The gym is a freezer in winter.	◯	literal sentence, no figure of speech
4	I am dying of laughter.	(1)	personification
5	The pencil rolled off the desk.	◯	simile

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Check Your Skills

Check what you know and sort examples by type.

TASK G

Example done for you

/4

Tick true or false. Think about the literal meaning first.

Statement	True	False
Personification gives human actions or feelings to a nonhuman thing.	✓	
The sentence The leaves whispered shows personification.		
Hyperbole is meant to be taken as exactly true.		
A simile must use like or as to make a comparison.		
To interpret a figure of speech, you should ignore the words around it.		

TASK H

Example done for you

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Color each box by group. Look for the human action or the exaggeration.

● **Personification**: color it blue or draw ●

▲ **Simile**: color it orange or draw ▲

■ **Hyperbole**: color it pink or draw ■

The sunflowers nodded hello ●	as light as a feather	weighed a ton	The phone begged for a charge
like two peas in a pod	told you a million times	The snow blanket tucked us in	slept like a log
could eat a horse			

How did I do?

Circle a face for each line.

I can explain what personification does in a sentence. ☹ 😐 ☺

I can tell simile, metaphor, hyperbole, and personification apart. ☹ 😐 ☺

I can interpret a figure of speech using context clues. ☹ 😐 ☺

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Answer sheet: Say It With Pictures

Task A

Who: The old school bus is given human qualities.
What: The human action is groaned awake, like a tired person waking up.
Where: The sentence does not say where; it only tells us it was a cold morning.
When: It happens on a cold morning.
Why: To show the bus engine made a loud, tired noise and felt old in the cold.
How: A bus cannot really groan or wake up, so it cannot be literally true.

Task B

Answers will vary.

Task C

The stars winked at us. | personification | The stars twinkled brightly.
He was as busy as a bee at lunch. | simile | He was very busy.
I have told you a million times to sit down. | hyperbole | I have told you many times to sit down.
The fog was a thick gray blanket. | metaphor | The fog covered everything thickly.

Task D

1. She smiled at her friend. (It is literal; a person can really smile, the others give human actions to things.)
2. is a shining star (It is a metaphor; the others are similes because they use like or as.)
3. walked a mile to school (It can be literally true; the others are impossible exaggerations.)

Task E

1. Groaned means it made a loud, creaking noise. It is personification because a windmill cannot feel tired or groan like a person.
2. The figure of speech is hyperbole. It really means the homework felt very long and boring, even though the context shows it was only 30 minutes.
3. This is not literal because a hallway cannot be a river. The writer wants me to see many students moving fast and crowded together, like rushing water.

Task F

1. The classroom door yawned open. → personification
2. She is as quick as a flash. → simile
3. The gym is a freezer in winter. → metaphor
4. I am dying of laughter. → hyperbole
5. The pencil rolled off the desk. → literal sentence, no figure of speech

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Task G

1. True
2. True
3. False
4. True
5. False

Task H

Personification (blue ●): The sunflowers nodded hello, The phone begged for a charge, The snow blanket tucked us in

Simile (orange ▲): as light as a feather, like two peas in a pod, slept like a log

Hyperbole (pink ■): weighed a ton, told you a million times, could eat a horse

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