

Figurative Language

More figures of speech that use comparison

In this lesson, we look at some other interesting figures of speech that use comparison to communicate our ideas and messages more effectively. We focus on personification, apostrophe, and extended and mixed metaphors. Effective and original examples of apostrophe, metaphors and personification will add to the effectiveness and impact of your writing.

Lesson Outcomes

By the end of this lesson, you should be able to:

- identify and discuss examples of personification, extended metaphor and apostrophe

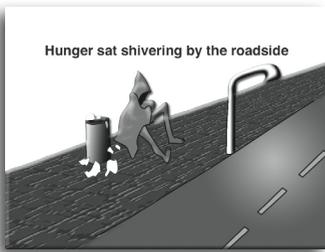
Curriculum Links

LO 4: Language

- use a range of figurative language such as idiom, idiomatic expressions and proverbs with developing appropriateness

Lesson notes

Personification gives human qualities to inanimate (non-living) objects or abstract ideas.



By using personification, we allow the reader to identify strongly with the idea being expressed. This happens because, as people, we are easily able to understand comparisons with human qualities.

Remember, as with all figurative language,

personification creates a mental picture that goes beyond the literal meaning of the words.

Tip!

It is important that you use the right way of referring to personification when answering exam or assignment questions. You should never refer to 'a personification', but always just to 'personification' or 'an example of personification'.

An extended or sustained metaphor is a metaphor that extends over more than just one line of a passage or a poem.

Example: *"Their relationship had always been stormy. After brief spells of sunshine, they were always cast into shadows of doubt and torrents of abuse. She longed to be in a calmer place."*

Here, the comparison between a couple's relationship and the weather is sustained for a couple of lines.

An analogy is created when a writer sustains a metaphor throughout an entire novel.

Example: *In the novel, Animal Farm, by George Orwell, the animals on the farm are compared to politicians who grab power and become corrupt. This comparison is sustained throughout the novel.*

A mixed metaphor is when incongruous or incompatible terms are used to describe something. It is usually confusing and can sometimes be very funny.

Example: *He urged us to put our shoulders to the wheel if we were going to pull our socks up.*

You cannot be doing these two things at once!

In your own writing, it is a good idea to confine each sentence to a single metaphor to avoid the possibility of using a mixed metaphor.

An apostrophe is when an inanimate object, a person who is no longer alive, or an abstract idea is spoken to as if it were a human being. It is addressed directly.

Example: *Shakespeare, I wish you could help me to understand your play!*

Tip!

Be careful that you don't confuse the figure of speech, 'apostrophe', with the punctuation mark, 'apostrophe'.

TASK

In Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, Romeo comes to the tomb where Juliet has been placed and says the following words:

*Thou detestable maw, thou womb of death,
Gorged with the dearest morsel of the earth,
Thus I enforce thy rotten jaws to open,
And in despite, I'll cram thee with more food.*

Name and discuss the figure of speech found in these words.