

Figures of Speech- Comparisons

Used to compare two objects in direct or indirect ways

Simile:

- A direct comparison
- Always contains the words 'as' or 'like'
- E.g. The paper is as light as a feather.
- The weight of the paper is being directly compared to the weight/lightness of a feather.
- E.g. Her eyes shone like stars in the night sky.
- The sparkle in her eyes is being directly compared to the way stars shine/sparkle at night.



Msizi's thoughts were floating like a balloon.

Metaphor:

- An indirect comparison
- Without the use of 'like' or 'as'
- The comparison is implied and not stated directly
- E.g. The ocean was a raging bull.
- The wildness of the ocean is being compared to the nature of an angry bull.
- E.g. The streetlight is my security guard.
- The light that the streetlight cast on the path gave the feeling of being safe, as if one had a security guard watching over you.

Personification:

- An indirect comparison
- Gives human qualities to inanimate objects or abstract ideas
- E.g. The lightning danced across the sky.
- E.g. Janice heard the last piece of cake calling her name.

Apostrophe:

- An inanimate object / a person who is no longer living/ an abstract idea spoken to as if it were human.
- E.g. "Car, please get me to work today."
- E.g. "Feet, don't fail me now."
- E.g. Twinkle, twinkle, little star, how I wonder what you are.

Figures of Speech- Sound Devices

Used to create rhythm or add life to writing



She sells seashells
on the seashore.

Alliteration:

- Repetition of consonant sounds at the beginning of words
- Highlights the expression of movement
- E.g. Janie read a **b**ook by the **b**abbling **b**rook.
- E.g. Erin **c**ooked **c**upcakes in the kitchen.
- E.g. The crowd **ch**eered when the **ch**ampion hit the **ch**allenger with a **ch**air.
- E.g. The **l**ion **l**icked his **l**ips.
- E.g. The **s**nake **s**lithered across the **s**andy **s**easide.

Onomatopoeia:

- Use of words to imitate and reproduce real-life sounds and actions
- The sound heightens the visual effect
- E.g. Both bees and buzzers **buzz**.
- E.g. The cash register popped open with a **ka-ching**.
- E.g. Nothing annoys me more than a **clicking** pen.
- E.g. The soda **fizzed** over the top of the glass.
- E.g. The hail **pattered** on the tin roof.

Assonance:

- Repetition of vowel sounds
- Short vowel sounds create a mood of speed, vitality, joy or suspense
- Long vowel sounds slow down the pace of the writing
- E.g. **Go slow over the road.** (long 'o' sound)
- E.g. **Try as I might, the kite did not fly.** (long 'i' sound)
- E.g. The **early bird** catches the **worm.** ('er' sound)

Rhyme:

- Depends on sound, not on the written word
- Used for effect
- E.g. "Once upon a midnight **dreary**,
while I pondered, weak and **weary**..."
- E.g. "In Dublin's fair **city**,
where the girls are so **pretty**..."

Figures of Speech- Contradictions

Appear to contain conflicting or opposing ideas

Antithesis:

- Compares or contradicts ideas or statements within a sentence
- E.g. “That’s one **small** step for man, one **giant** leap for mankind.”
- E.g. Let’s **agree** to **disagree**.

Irony:

- Implies the opposite of what is said
- The tone usually conveys the meaning
- E.g. There is a cockroach infestation in the pest control offices.
- E.g. A doctor visiting a doctor because he is unwell.

Oxymoron:

- Places two contradictory words next to each other
- Creates powerful word pictures
- E.g. The spy was told to **act naturally**
- E.g. The movie was **seriously funny**.
- E.g. He was **clearly confused** about where to go.



Sarcasm:

- One thing is said, but something else is intended or understood
- Used with the purpose of hurting, insulting or humiliating
- E.g. Looking at her son’s messy room: “Wow, you could win an award for cleanliness!”

Paradox:

- An absurd or contradictory statement which is found to be true
- An extended oxymoron (opposites in the same sentence but not next to each other)
- E.g. You can **save** money by **spending** it.
- E.g. To **shut down** your computer, first click ‘**start**’.

Satire:

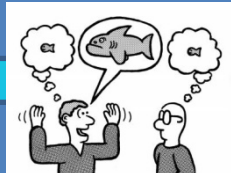
- Sharp wit, irony or sarcasm used to highlight, ridicule or expose human/social/political weaknesses
- Aim is to educate and entertain through humour
- E.g. Zapiro cartoons



Figures of Speech- Exaggeration & Understatement

Hyperbole:

- An over-exaggeration not meant to be taken literally
- Aims to create humour or to emphasise a point
- E.g. I could **eat a horse** for dinner!
- E.g. I like that car but it would cost me an **arm and a leg**.



Innuendo:

- A disapproving remark which hints at something, without stating it directly
- E.g. “I wish I was as confident as you to wear something so revealing.” (The person in question is actually showing too much skin.)

Litotes:

- Uses a negative and an opposite to understate what is intended
- E.g. I cannot disagree with your point. (I agree with you.)
- E.g. Kyle is not unlike his father. (Kyle and his father are alike.)

Climax:

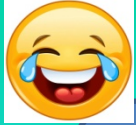
- A build-up of ascending ideas
- Reaches a peak – creating excitement and heightening tension
- E.g. Lois has performed in the Gauteng judo finals. He waits anxiously to hear the names of the winners. The announcer says, “ And the first place goes to...”

Euphemism:

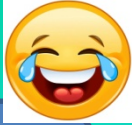
- Expresses an unpleasant or uncomfortable situation in a more sensitive/kind/tactful way
- It softens the blow/ protects feelings/ is politically correct
- E.g. Her father **passed away** two days ago. (He died.)

Anti-climax:

- A build-up of ideas
- Final statement is often flat and unexpected
- E.g. Tension builds in a horror movie as a young girl approaches a closed door. There is a scratching sound coming from behind the door. When she opens it, a cat comes out.



Figures of Speech- Others



Pun:

- A clever play on words, alike in sound but different in meaning
- Double meaning used to convey humour
- E.g. Geometry is so **pointless**.
- E.g. It's hard to **beat** scrambled eggs for breakfast!

Rhetorical questions:

- A question that expects no answer
- Used to make a point or strengthen an argument
- E.g. Teacher to student who is talkative: "Do you want to teach the class today?"

Malapropism:

- The unintentional use of incorrect, similar sounding words
- Using language above one's understanding in order to make an impression
- E.g. You need to be more **pacific**. (specific)
- E.g. For all **intensive** purposes... (for all intents and purposes)



Metonymy:

- Something associated with the object represents the object
- E.g. "suit" represents businessman
- E.g. "crown" represents monarch
- E.g. "pen" represents written word (The pen is mightier than the sword.)

Synecdoche:

- A part is used for a whole OR a whole is used for a part
- E.g. referring to a car as "wheels"
- E.g. referring to the alphabet as "ABCs"
- E.g. referring to gossip as a "wagging tongue"

Spoonerism:

- The mixing up of the initial sounds of spoken words
- E.g. "**Runny babbit lent** to **wunch** and heard the **saitress way**," "We have some lovely **sabbit rew**, our special for today."
- E.g. A well-**boiled icicle** (a well-oiled bicycle)