

THE HUNGER GAMES

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE



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FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE IN THE HUNGER GAMES

NAME: _____

Author Suzanne Collins uses **figurative language** in her novel *The Hunger Games*. Figurative language is writing or speech that is not meant to be taken literally. These “figures of speech” include similes, metaphors, personification, and hyperbole. They add interest and color and make the language more exciting and interesting.

simile: A comparison of two things (that may or not be alike) using the words like or as. *She is as quick as a fox.*

metaphor: A comparison of two unlike things without using like or as. *The sun was a furnace.*

personification: A type of metaphor in which non-human things or ideas possess human qualities or actions. *The wind whistled throughout the night.*

hyperbole: An obvious and deliberate exaggeration (to emphasize something or for humorous purposes). *I ate a million pieces of cake today.*

➤➤**Read the examples of figurative language from chapters 1-4 below. For each one:**

- **Identify** whether it is an example of:

A. simile

B. metaphor

C. personification

D. hyperbole

- **Underline** the words that identify it as such. (For simile and metaphor, underline the two things being compared. For personification, underline the non-human thing and its human quality or action. For hyperbole, underline the word or words which identify the exaggeration.)

Example:

A (p. 3) "Prim's face is as fresh as a raindrop, as lovely as the primrose for which she was named."

A - simile; there are two similes: Prim's face as fresh as a raindrop and Prim's face as lovely as primrose.

_____ 1. (p. 5) "...I always take a moment to listen carefully for the hum that means the fence is live. Right now, it's silent as a stone."

_____ 2. (p. 6) "So I learned to hold my tongue..." (this quote continued in #3)

_____ 3. (p. 6) "...and turn my features into an indifferent mask so that no one could ever read my thoughts."

_____ 4. (p. 6) "A thicket of berry bushes protects it from unwanted eyes."

_____ 5. (p. 16) "Attendance is mandatory unless you are on death's door."

_____ 6. (p. 16) "The camera crews, perched like buzzards on rooftops, only add to the effect."

Continued...

_____ 7. (p. 18) “He tells the history of Panem, the country that rose up out of the ashes of a place that was once called North America.”

_____ 8. (p. 18) “He lists the disasters, the droughts, the storms, the fires, the encroaching seas that swallowed up so much of the land...”

_____ 9. (p. 19) “...right now District 12 is the laughingstock of Panem, and he knows it.”

_____ 10. (p. 21) “That’s how I feel now...totally stunned as the name bounces around the inside of my skull.”

_____ 11. (p. 27) “The community home would crush her like a bug.”

_____ 12. (p. 27) “But the money ran out and we were slowly starving to death.”

➔Digging Deeper: Finding Meaning in Similes & Metaphors

Identify the simile or metaphor in each of these examples by underlining it. Then write its meaning. Remember that figurative language is not meant to be taken literally.

Example: (p. 37) “We always wait to trade with him when his witch of a wife isn’t around because he’s so much nicer.”

The baker’s wife is not actually a witch, but she is not very nice.

13. (p. 44) “‘At least you two have decent manners,’ says Effie as we’re finishing the main course. ‘The pair last year ate everything with their hands like a couple of savages.’”

14. (p. 46) “‘You know your mentor is your lifeline to the world in these Games.’”

15. (p. 51) “The woods became our savior, and each day I went a bit farther into its arms.”

16. (p. 52) “...I was washing up in a pond when I noticed the plants growing around me. Tall with leaves like arrowheads.”

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE IN THE HUNGER GAMES

NAME: _____

ANSWER KEY - These items are taken from chapters 1-4.

A. simile

B. metaphor

C. personification

D. hyperbole

- A 1. (p. 5) "...I always take a moment to listen carefully for the hum that means the fence is live. Right now, **it's silent as a stone.**"
- D 2. (p. 6) "So I learned to **hold my tongue...**" (this quote continued in #3)
- B 3. (p. 6) "...and turn **my features into an indifferent mask** so that no one could ever read my thoughts."
- C 4. (p. 6) "A thicket of **berry bushes protects it** from unwanted eyes."
- D 5. (p. 16) "Attendance is mandatory unless **you are on death's door.**"
- A 6. (p. 16) "The **camera crews, perched like buzzards** on rooftops, only add to the effect."
- C 7. (p. 18) "He tells the history of Panem, the **country that rose up out of the ashes** of a place that was once called North America."
- C 8. (p. 18) "He lists the disasters, the droughts, the storms, the fires, the encroaching **seas that swallowed up** so much of the land...."
- B 9. (p. 19) "...right now **District 12 is the laughingstock** of Panem, and he knows it."
- C 10. (p. 21) "That's how I feel now...totally stunned as **the name bounces around** the inside of my skull."
- A / D 11. (p. 27) "The community **home would crush her like a bug.**" Two possibilities: A, simile: *home crush her like a bug*; and D, hyperbole: *home crush her.*
- A 12. (p. 27) "But the money ran out and **we were slowly starving to death.**"

Meaning in Similes and Metaphors

13. (p. 44) "'At least you two have decent manners,' says Effie as we're finishing the main course. '**The pair** last year ate everything with their hands **like a couple of savages.**'"

The pair of tributes last year are being compared to savages because they ate with their hands. (Simile)

14. (p. 46) "'You know **your mentor is your lifeline** to the world in these Games.'" **Their mentor (Haymitch) could be the difference between whether they live or die in the arena because he (or she) advises them, lines up their sponsors, and determines when they receive their gifts in the arena, therefore, their mentor is a lifeline. (Metaphor)**

ANSWERS, continued...

15. (p. 51) “The woods became our savior, and each day I went a bit farther into its arms.” **The woods became their savior--something that saved their life, prevented their death. Because Katniss was able to hunt & gather their food, and because food is essential for life, the woods represented their survival. (Metaphor) The metaphor also continues into the personification of the woods (“...I went a bit farther into its arms.”), as if the woods became that nurturing figure that Katniss so desperately needed at that time in her life (since her father’s death and her mother’s depression).**

16. (p. 52) “...I was washing up in a pond when I noticed the plants growing around me. Tall with leaves like arrowheads.” **The plants she noticed looked like arrowheads because of the shape of their leaves.**

More Practice Answers - These items are from chapters 5-6.

- (S) M 1. “My legs, arms, torso, underarms, and parts of my eyebrows have been stripped of the stuff, leaving me like a plucked bird, ready for roasting.” (p. 61) **Simile**
- (S) M 2. “I’m glad now I have Peeta to clutch for balance his is so steady, solid as a rock.” (p. 70) **Simile**
- S (M) 3. “*He is luring you in to make you easy prey.*” (p. 72) **Metaphor**
- (S) M 4. “But that’s a dark and creaky thing that moves like a snail....” (p. 73) **Simile**
- S (M) 5. “The walls of this elevator are made of crystal so that you can watch people on the ground floor shrink to ants as you shoot up into the air.” (p. 73) **Metaphor**

IRONY: Written response Suggestion (Answers will vary)

“...I’ve done my best with what I have to work with. How Katniss sacrificed herself for her sister. How you’ve both successfully struggled to overcome the barbarism of your district.’

Barbarism? That’s ironic coming from a woman helping to prepare us for slaughter.”

What makes Effie’s statement “ironic” or hypocritical? Discuss how the Capitol citizens have become *desensitized* regarding the tributes and the Games.

Effie’s comparison of the district 12 citizens as barbarians is hypocritical (ironic) because it is the Capitol citizens who celebrate the Games (which is a barbaric event) each year. The district citizens have no choice and see how cruel it is. Perhaps the reason the Capitol citizens do not realize their hypocrisy is because they have become desensitized to the violent deaths of these children. It is not their own children, so they almost view the district citizens as actors in a reality TV show. The years of viewing have numbed them, stripped them of their emotions.

The following notes are possible discussion points regarding desensitization to bring up in class. However, they are my opinion, so feel free to disagree or disregard. I do not intend to offend anyone.

This desensitization theme goes very deep into our own world right now. This can be an opportunity to discuss current events, such as the war in Iraq. As U.S. citizens, many see the deaths of the Iraqi citizens as irrelevant to their own lives. Those who experience the violence and death day after day first hand are in danger of becoming numb to it--like background music you no longer realize is playing. Perhaps that is a survival technique used for soldiers, but it is this desensitization that may eventually be the demise of us.

U.S. citizens may also be desensitized to the violence of war because they have not experienced it in their own back yard (thankfully). If the war was on American soil, perhaps more would be done to negotiate peace. If the Capitol citizens had to have a reaping for their own children, they would think much, much differently of the Games.

There is a “generic” quiz over figurative language on the next two pages. This quiz is from the website: http://fictionwriting.about.com/library/PubQuiz/bl_language_quiz.htm You could use it as a pre-assessment of your students’ knowledge of figurative language before this activity (although synecdoche--#6--is not covered in my lesson).

Answers to quiz:

1. c
2. b
3. a
4. a
5. d
6. d
7. d
8. d
9. c
10. b

Figurative Language Quiz

_____ 1. What are the two most common figures of speech?

- a) Similes and personification
- b) Puns and metaphors
- c) Metaphors and similes
- d) Puns and personification

_____ 2. When Robert Burns wrote, "O my Luve's like a red, red rose," which figure of speech was he using?

- a) Metaphor
- b) Simile
- c) Hyperbole
- d) Understatement

_____ 3. "She was out like a light" is an example of

- a) Simile
- b) Metaphor
- c) Alliteration
- d) Synecdoche

_____ 4. True or false: Figurative language is very common in everyday speech.

- a) True
- b) False

_____ 5. Figurative language adds which of the following things to our writing when done well?

- a) Vividness
- b) Surprise
- c) Complication
- d) A and b

_____ 6. "All hands on deck" is an example of which figure of speech?

- a) Simile
- b) Metaphor
- c) Alliteration
- d) Synecdoche

Continued ➤➤

_____7. Which of the following is a synonym for figurative language?

- a) Figure of speech
- b) Metaphorical language
- c) Rhetorical figure
- d) All of the above

_____8. "The old mansion frowned down at us from the top of the hill" is an example of which figure of speech?

- a) Metaphor
- b) Pun
- c) Synecdoche
- d) Personification

_____9. Which of these things is not a figure of speech?

- a) Metaphor
- b) Simile
- c) Alliteration
- d) Synecdoche

_____10. True or False: A metaphor is a comparison between two things that uses the words "like" or "as."

- a) True
- b) False