

Figurative Language — Define • Example • Effect

Simile • Metaphor • Extended Metaphor • Personification • Symbol • Allusion • Oxymoron • Paradox

Simile
Definition: comparison using ‘like’ or ‘as’.
Example: ‘Her grin was *like* sunrise over wet streets.’
Effect: makes an abstract feeling concrete and visual.

Metaphor
Definition: direct comparison (X = Y).
Example: ‘Hope is a thin *wire* across winter.’
Effect: compresses meaning; invites layered interpretation.

Extended Metaphor
Definition: a metaphor developed over lines/stanzas.
Example: a journey image carried through a poem.
Effect: creates cohesion; sustains theme or argument.

Personification
Definition: human qualities given to non■human things.
Example: ‘The wind *shouldered* the door.’
Effect: builds mood; animates setting and objects.

Symbol
Definition: object/image stands for a larger idea.
Example: a *green light* for longing/ambition.
Effect: adds depth; links scenes via motif.

Allusion
Definition: reference to well■known text/event/person.
Example: ‘a Sisyphean task’.
Effect: borrows resonance; invites comparison.

Oxymoron
Definition: two apparently contradictory terms together.
Example: ‘deafening silence’.
Effect: captures tension or complexity in a phrase.

Paradox
Definition: a seeming contradiction that reveals a truth.
Example: ‘I must be cruel only to be kind.’
Effect: provokes thought; reframes the theme.

Imagery (Sensory)
Definition: language appealing to senses (sight/sound/smell/taste/touch).
Example: ‘citrus light, the hiss of the kettle’.
Effect: immerses the reader; makes moments vivid.

Tip: After naming a device, always add *what it achieves* for theme or character.