

Figurative Language

Figurative language is used in all types of creative writing, but is particularly important in poetry. When a writer uses figurative language he is making a comparison between two things that would ordinarily not be thought of together.

Figurative language is generally divided into three kinds of *figures of speech*: Simile, Metaphor, and Personification.

Simile: A comparison between two unlike things using a connective word such as like, as, resembles, or than.

Example: He is as smart as a whip. This is a simile because two unlike things (he and a whip) are being compared to each other, using the connective word *as*.

Metaphor: Like similes, metaphors compare two unlike things. However, metaphors do not use a connective word in the comparison. When a writer creates a metaphor he is actually stating that something is something else.

Example: He is a rock. This is a metaphor because two unlike things are being directly compared without using a connective word. This is a good technique for a writer to use when a strong comparison is needed.

Personification: A kind of metaphor in which a nonhuman thing or quality is talked about as if it were human.

Example: The tree *reached* for the sky.

This is personification because the tree is described as possessing the human ability of "reaching."