

Painting with Words: The Art of Figurative Language

Learning objective: To identify and analyse the effect of similes, metaphors, and personification in a descriptive text.

Read the passage carefully, noting how the author uses descriptive language to bring the scene to life. Answer the questions in full sentences, using evidence from the text where possible.

As the sun began to set, Zara the zebra stood at the edge of the ancient forest. The sky was a bruised plum, streaked with ribbons of burning orange. Above, the trees were silent sentinels, standing guard over the secrets of the woods. Zara watched as the wind began to whisper through the leaves, telling tales of long ago. She felt as light as a feather, her hooves barely touching the grass. The forest floor was a soft, velvet carpet beneath her feet. Zara knew this place was magical. Every shadow danced like a playful spirit in the fading light, and the moon, a silver coin in the sky, prepared to take its shift. She loved how the world transformed when the sun retreated; the landscape was no longer just trees and grass, but a gallery of dreams waiting to be explored. Zara took a deep breath, ready to paint her own story upon the canvas of the evening.

Word bank: Simile · Metaphor · Personification · Figurative · Vivid · Imagery

1. Identify one simile used to describe how Zara feels or how the shadows move. (2 marks)
(2 marks)

2. What metaphor does the author use to describe the appearance of the moon? (2 marks)
(2 marks)

3. Why might the author have described the trees as 'silent sentinels'? What does this tell us about their role? (3 marks) (3 marks)

4. Explain why the author chose the phrase 'the wind began to whisper'. What effect does this have on the mood of the passage? (3 marks) (3 marks)

5. Do you think the author successfully makes the forest seem like a magical place? Justify your answer using at least two examples from the text. (3 marks) (3 marks)

Draw: Draw the forest scene as described by Zara. Include the 'bruised plum' sky, the silver coin moon, and the trees standing like sentinels.



Extension challenge: Write a short paragraph of your own (4-6 sentences) describing a thunderstorm. You must include one metaphor, one simile, and one example of personification. Label each figurative device you have used.