

Painting Pictures with Words: A Figurative Language Guide

Learning objective: To use similes, metaphors, and personification to create vivid imagery in descriptive writing.

Use this scaffold to build your own descriptive scene. Remember to show, not just tell, using the figurative language techniques we have practiced.

The ancient forest stood silent, its gnarled branches reaching out like skeletal fingers towards the velvet night sky.

Word bank: as swift as · like a... · the [noun] danced · a blanket of · shimmering · whispered · dreadfully · majestic · in the blink of an eye · on the other hand · consequently · furthermore

1. Introduction: Describe your setting using a metaphor. Start with: The landscape was a... (2 marks)

2. Character Action: Describe how your character moves using a simile. Start with: Moving through the space, [Character Name] was as [adjective] as a... (2 marks)

3. Personification: Choose an object in your scene and give it human traits. Start with: The [object] seemed to [human action] as if it were... (2 marks)

4. Sensory Detail: Describe a sound or smell using an adjective that evokes strong emotion. Start with: A [sound/smell] hung in the air, reminding me of... (2 marks)

5. Explain why using a metaphor might be more effective than simply using an adjective. Justify your answer with an example. (3 marks)

6. Compare and contrast: How does changing the personification in your third paragraph alter the mood of your entire story? (3 marks)

Extension challenge: Challenge: Rewrite a boring sentence, such as 'The cat sat on the mat', using one simile, one metaphor, and one example of personification. What might happen if you removed all the figurative language from your paragraph? Would the reader still feel the same emotions?