

Mastering Figurative Language with Zara the Zebra

Learning objective: To write a descriptive piece using similes, metaphors, and personification to enhance imagery.

Zara the Zebra sees the world as a canvas of patterns and colours. Use this scaffold to describe a vibrant setting, such as a bustling market or a hidden forest, by incorporating figurative language. Ensure you show, rather than tell, the reader what is happening.

The sun dipped below the horizon, painting the sky in strokes of bruised purple and molten gold.

Word bank: as swift as · the blanket of · danced across · shimmered like · a symphony of · whistled a melody · engulfed by · mirrored the · vividly · metaphorically

1. Setting the Scene: Start by describing the environment using a metaphor to compare the landscape to something else. For example: 'The forest was a velvet curtain hiding the secrets of the night.'... (2 marks)

2. Personification: Describe how the wind, trees, or water act like a person. Why did you choose these specific actions to create a mood?... (3 marks)

3. Similes and Sensory Details: Use two similes to describe a character or object moving through your setting. Explain why these comparisons help the reader visualise the action... (3 marks)

4. Comparative Analysis: Compare your use of a metaphor to your use of a simile. Which one do you believe creates a stronger impact on the reader, and why?... (4 marks)

5. Justification: Choose one piece of figurative language you included. Justify how this choice changes the 'atmosphere' of your writing compared to using literal, plain language... (3 marks)

6. Creative Extension: What might happen if your setting suddenly transformed? Rewrite one of your sentences using personification to describe this sudden change... (3 marks)

Extension challenge: Challenge: Write a short paragraph describing a storm without using the words 'rain', 'wind', or 'storm'. Instead, use three metaphors and one piece of personification to convey the intensity of the weather.