

Similes



A **simile** is a phrase or sentence which **compares** an object or person with something else, to make a description more relatable to the reader. Key words to use are **like** and **as**.

Example:



The corridor was as dark as night.

Some well-known similes are:

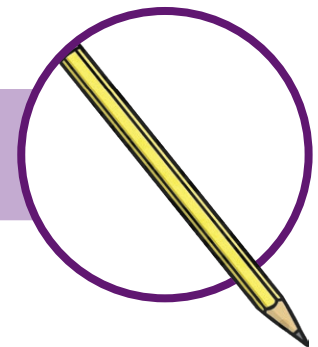
as brave as a lion



as fast as lightning



as sharp as a pencil



like a raging bull



with the speed of a...



Metaphors



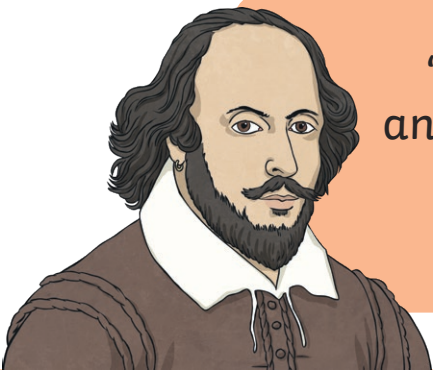
A **metaphor** is a phrase or sentence in which the author creates an image in the reader's mind by saying that a person or object **is** something else.

Key words to use are **was** and **were**.

Example:

The poisoned light dripped off everything it touched.

Some famous metaphors are:



'All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players. They have their exits and their entrances.'

William Shakespeare, 'As You Like It'

'The road was a ribbon of moonlight over the purple moor[.]'

Alfred Noyes, 'The Highwayman'

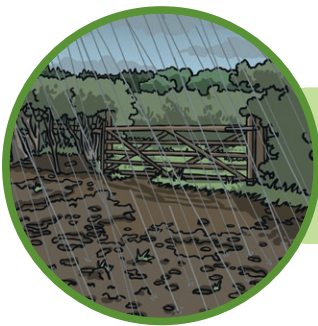


Personification



Personification usually involves an author describing a non-living object with verbs and adjectives that make it seem as though it is alive.

Example:



Fresh rain tapped its fingertips on the roof.

Some well-known examples of personification are:

The trees **whispered** in the wind.



The flames **licked** the sides of the walls.

Even the walls seemed like they were **listening**.



Pathetic Fallacy



Pathetic fallacy is everywhere, though you might not notice it often! It happens when a writer makes the weather or setting match the mood of the story. Have you noticed how it is often raining in movies during the saddest moments?

Example:



The inside of the cottage glowed with warmth and bright colours.

Can you match this weather to the most appropriate atmosphere?

sunshine

mystery

mist

anger

heavy rain

happiness

thunderstorm

sadness

Oxymoron



Oxymoron is created by putting together two or more words which don't usually belong together but create an interesting mental image for the reader. They are often words with very different, even opposite, meanings.

Example:

There was a **deafening** silence.



He was **perfectly horrid**.

The chocolate was **awfully** tasty.



A famous example of oxymoron is:

'Parting is such sweet sorrow.'
William Shakespeare, 'Romeo and Juliet'



Onomatopoeia



Onomatopoeia is a common form of figurative language, in which an author creates a sound for the reader by using a word which physically makes the required sound when read.

Example:

The wolf threw him into a dank cell and **clanged** the door shut.



crash
cackle
click
chirp
bang

rumble
slap
smash
roar
whisper
murmur

thump
knock
tap
drip
patter

How many examples of onomatopoeia can you think of?

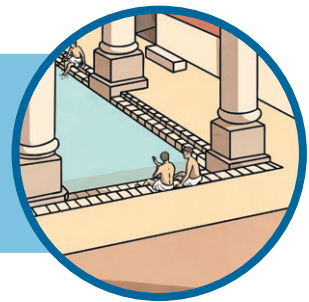
Alliteration



Alliteration is a well-known device in which the author puts together two or more words with the same first letter. The words do not have to be right next to one another. This helps to create a pleasant sound when the words are read and adds to the atmosphere.

Example:

Marble pillars supported **cool**, shaded balconies and **clear, crystalline** pools filled stone basins.



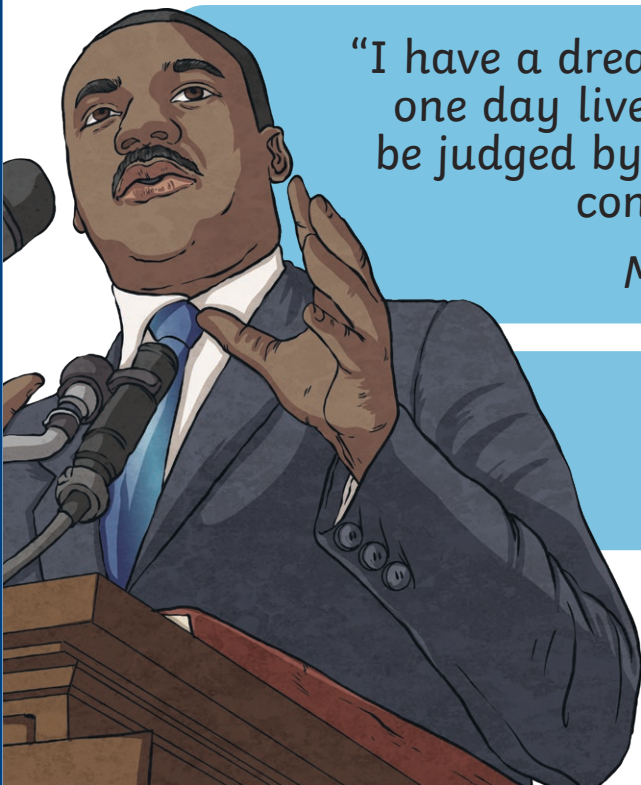
These 'C' sounds are crisp and clean and remind the reader of cold water.

A famous alliterative phrase is:

"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character."

Martin Luther King, Jr.

These 'C' sounds are hard and strong and help the speaker to sound determined and confident.



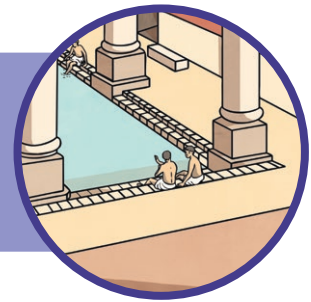
Assonance



Assonance is a useful device in which the author puts together words which have similar **vowel sounds**. The words do not need to be right next to one another. This helps to create a sound when read that supports the atmosphere.

Example:

Marble pillars supported **cool**, shaded balconies and clear, crystalline **pools** filled stone basins.



These 'oo' sounds make the sentence relaxing and calm.

Can you think of another 'oo' word that could be added to the sentence?



beautiful



smooth



blue



unusual



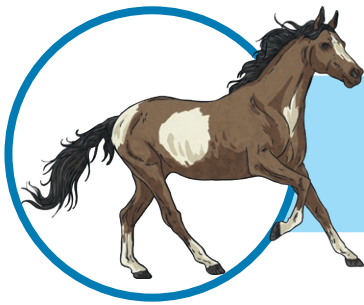
room

Hyperbole



A **hyperbole** is a phrase or sentence which uses **exaggeration** to emphasise a point. It is often used to make something sound much more dramatic than it really is.

Example:

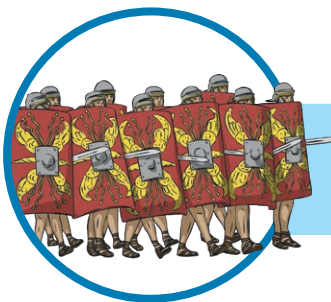


“I’m so hungry I could eat a horse!”

This is not meant to be taken literally – this person could not actually eat a horse – but it emphasises how hungry they are.

Some more examples of hyperbole are:

“This is the worst day of my life!”



“There’s enough food in the cupboard to feed an entire army!”

“I love you to the moon and back!”



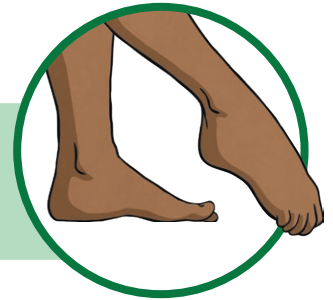
Idiom



An **idiom** is a phrase that, when used as an expression, has a well-known meaning.

Example:

She got cold feet.



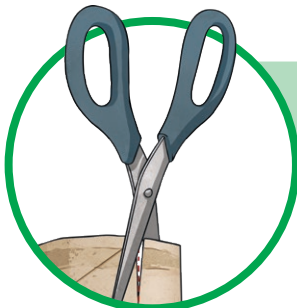
This doesn't mean that the person literally has cold feet. When used in this way, the generally accepted meaning is that the person decided not to continue with something because they had doubts about it.

There are lots of idioms in the English language.

How many do you recognise below?

Do you know what they mean?

To have bitten off more than you can chew.



To cut corners.

The best of both worlds.



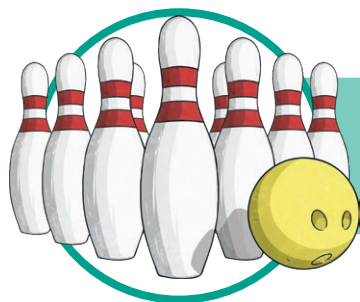
Under the weather.

Puns



A **pun** is a play on words, used in a humorous way. **Puns** take advantage of the fact that a word or phrase can have different possible meanings or that two words can sound the same but mean different things.

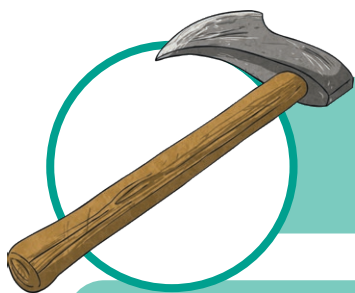
Example:



After hours of waiting for the bowling alley to open, we finally **got the ball rolling**.

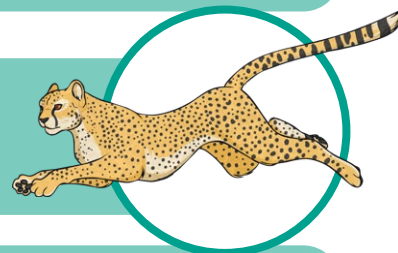
Here, 'got the ball rolling' is a play on words because, as an expression, it means to get something started. However, as the sentence also refers to a bowling alley, it is a humorous play on the action of bowling as well.

Here are some more examples of **puns**.
Can you explain how they work?



Did you hear about the lumberjack who couldn't hack it? They gave him the axe.

Jungle animals are very fair.
Cheetahs are always spotted.



Why is it so wet in England? Because many kings and queens have reigned there.

Spoonerisms



A **spoonerism** is when a speaker mixes up the beginning sounds or letters from one word with those from another word in their sentence. Often, this is done accidentally but the results can be quite funny!

Example:



belly jeans (jelly beans)

They are named after a British man called Reverend William Archibald Spooner, who used to do this quite often.

Some more examples of spoonerisms are



I hit my bunny phone.
(I hit my funny bone.)

flutter by
(butterfly)



He delivered a blushing crow.
(He delivered a crushing blow.)

brunday sunch
(Sunday brunch)



She has very mad banners.
(She has very bad manners.)

Juxtaposition



Juxtaposition is when two contrasting things are placed together side by side in order to highlight their differences. It is often used as a literary device to create themes, develop characterisation, add suspense or invite readers to compare and contrast.

Example:



Making a **mountain** out of a **molehill**.

This is a famous proverb. It juxtaposes size by comparing a mountain, which is enormous, to a molehill, which is very small. It means to blow a problem way out of proportion by making it seem much worse than it actually is.

Some more examples of juxtaposition:

You can't teach an **old** dog **new** tricks.



All's fair in **love** and **war**.



Better **late** than **never**.



When the **cat's** away, the **mice** will play.



Allusion



An allusion is used by writers to add famous quotes from books, mythology, life events or poetry into their writing. It alludes to these things but does not elaborate on them. It helps the reader to discover new ideas or literature within the body of a text. It creates a visual image for the reader to highlight the meaning within the text.

Example:

Some well-known allusions are:



“Chocolate cake is my **achilles heel**”

- ‘Achilles heel’ comes from Greek Mythology. Achilles was a hero and his ankle was said to be his one weakness.
- Chocolate cake is referred to as a weakness.

“He is such a **Scrooge!**” He never pays for tickets.



- Scrooge is a fictional character from Charles Dickens’ famous novel, ‘A Christmas Carol’. He was a miser who would not spend his money.
- ‘He’ is being referred to as a miser.