



## Most Common Figures of Speech • page 1 of 2

A figure of speech is an expression in which the words are not used in their literal sense.

1. Metaphor-a term or phrase that suggests that one thing is something that it is literally not.
  - This bedroom is a prison.
  - He listened with a stone face.
  - He has a heart of gold.
  - Your love is an ocean.
2. Simile-a phrase that likens one thing to another (usually achieved by the use of the word *like* or *as*.)
  - She sings like an angel.
  - It is as clear as a bell.
3. Personification-a phrase that is used when non-human objects are given human traits.
  - Every morning my alarm clock springs to life.
  - It was a pity that the storm attacked the town with great rage.
  - Be careful when you talk around here; even the walls have ears.
  - Time has an annoying habit of creeping up on you.
4. Hyperbole-an exaggeration or extravagant statement used for effect.
  - I have a million problems.
  - We won a ton of cash.
  - I'll die if I don't finish this paper.
5. Idiom-commonly used expression whose meaning does not relate to the literal meaning of its words.
  - Be careful not to miss the boat.
  - This is the last straw.
  - You can't pull the wool over my eyes.
6. Euphemism-use of agreeable or inoffensive words to replace rude or offensive ones.
  - He kicked the bucket.
  - We are letting you go.
  - He has lost his marbles.
7. Alliteration-the repetition of an initial consonant sound.
  - She sees sheep sleeping.
  - Hannah's home has heat hopefully.
  - Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.



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8. Irony-the use of words to convey the opposite of their literal meaning.
  - I saw a fish drowning.
  - The water vendor died of thirst.
  - The teacher failed the test.
  
9. Pun-a play on words.
  - When it rains, it pours.
  - Without geometry, life is pointless.
  
10. Oxymoron-contradictory terms appear side by side.
  - Pretty ugly
  - Great Depression
  - Random order