

Language and Style Introduction

Language and Style: Introduction

Spark

Authors and poets play with language to convey meaning, create tone, and establish mood. The ways they manipulate language define their style. Watch the video to link the idea of literary style to different forms of creative expression.

Video cannot be displayed on Print Preview

Literary Style Transcript

Activate Prior Knowledge

At this point in your life, you've probably done enough reading, either for school or pleasure, that you have an idea of the kinds of literary works you like to read. Our

reading preferences have a lot to do with the author's style and the language they use to express their ideas. An author's literary style means a lot more than whether they write poetry, short stories, or novels. The language and literary techniques an author uses makes their writing style unique. This is why, for example, you might think you dislike poetry until you read the works of a poet who uses language in a way that affects you in a profound way and really makes you connect with the poem.

Activity

Think about your experience reading poems and short stories. Complete this organizer with the titles and authors of literary texts you have read and either liked a lot or disliked. In a word or two, describe the style and language of each text. In a sentence or two, explain what you liked or did not like about the work and how the style and language influenced your feelings.

Three-Column Chart

Learning Coach Guide

This section will help you guide students through their learning.

Learning Goals

Throughout this unit, your student will read “The Raven,” a haunting poem by Edgar Allan Poe, and “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County,” a humorous short story by Mark Twain. Your student will also read a variety of other literary texts. As they read and respond to the texts, your student will be asked to analyze and evaluate complex ideas and to write about their observations and conclusions. There are 14 learning goals for this unit.

Spark

1. Explain that an author’s style is defined by the way they use language to express themselves and achieve certain effects.
2. Have your student watch the video, which applies the idea of literary style to other types of creative expression.
3. Tell your student that over the course of this unit, they will read works of literature and focus on how language helps the author of each work convey a style that characterizes the author’s writing.

Activate Prior Knowledge

1. Have your student read the section and, together, discuss the concepts of language and style and how they contribute to the way an author achieves a particular purpose as well as to the reader’s understanding and enjoyment of the text.
2. You may want to more closely examine the ideas of language and style by reviewing short passages from each unit text your student will read, for example:

From “The Raven:”

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,

Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore—

While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.
“‘Tis some visitor,” I muttered, “tapping at my chamber door—
Only this and nothing more.”

From “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County”:

He ketched a frog one day and took him home and said he’d cal’klated to edercate him; and so he never done nothing for three months but set in his back yard and learn that frog to jump. And you bet you he did learn him, too. He’d give him a little punch behind, and the next minute you’d see that frog whirling in the air like a doughnut see him turn one summerset, or maybe a couple, if he got a good start, he’d come down flat-footed and all right, like a cat.

Tell your student to pay attention to the rhythm and tone of each text as they read. Discuss how the texts were different in terms of language and style, and which one your student liked better.

- 3.** Give your student a copy of the 3-column chart graphic organizer and have them respond to the prompts by listing literary works they have read, describing the language in those works, and explaining what they did or did not like about them. Encourage your student to discuss the literary style of each author, considering how each author used language to convey tone and establish mood.

Three-Column Chart

Language and Style: Introduction

The Basics of Language and Style

To analyze an author's style, evaluate the predominant features of the language. Ask yourself questions like these as you read and record your answers in your Reading Log:

- Do I like this text? Is it easy or difficult for me to understand the language?
- What is most noticeable about the language?
- What specific literary techniques does the author use to convey meaning, and how effective do I find them?
- Have I read any other works that sound similar to this one?
- How would I characterize this author's style?
- Is this a style of text I enjoy reading? Would I enjoy reading other works by this author?
- In my opinion, what makes the author's style effective or not effective in conveying ideas in poignant ways?

To understand literary style, it's important to consider the historical and cultural context in which the works were written. The place and time in which an author writes and the social environment in which they live influences how they view the world and the language they use to convey meaning. The topics that interest us and the things we find amusing are largely based on culture as much as they are on historical setting. The works we create reflect our personal worldviews, which are colored by the experiences we have and the social milieu of the times.

How might the works of an American author living today be different from the works of a French author who lived in the 19th century? As you answer, consider how other forms of creative expression have changed over the course of history; fashion styles, for example, or movie styles.

Learning Coach Guide

This section will help you guide students through their learning.

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The Basics of Language and Style

- 1.** Explain to your student that an author's style is defined largely by the way they use language and employ literary techniques to express ideas. Have them read the opening paragraph and the list of bulleted questions. Suggest that they copy and keep the questions in their Reading Log to refer to as they read the unit texts.
- 2.** Continue with the second paragraph, pointing out that the language from a different era or culture may be difficult to understand at first. Remind them that looking for universal connections—how the narrators and/or characters think, feel, and act similarly to us—can clarify meaning and enhance their enjoyment of the text.
- 3.** Have your student read and respond to the question. For added support, encourage them to think about how their own personal styles have changed.

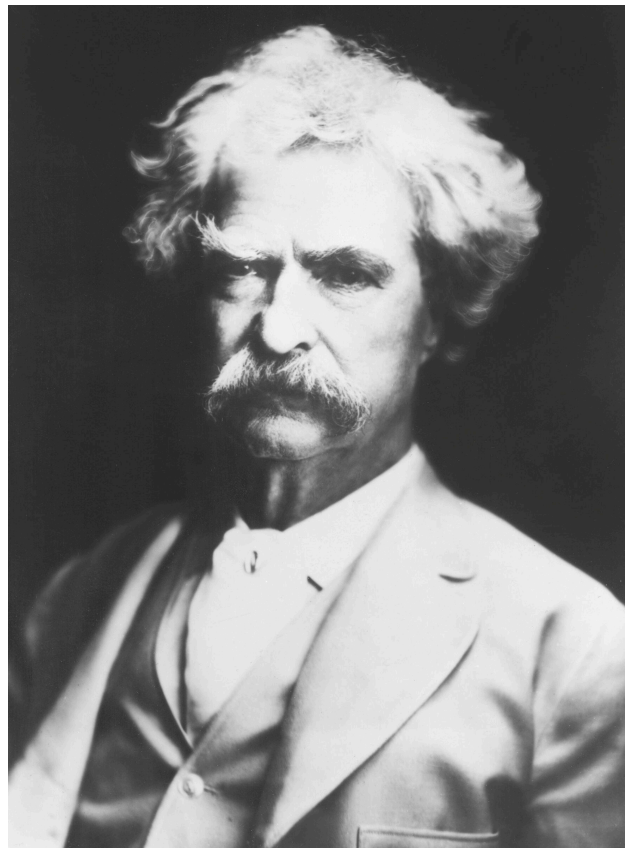
Previewing the Unit Texts: “The Raven” and “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County”

About the Authors



Authors Edgar Allan Poe

Source: Everett Historical. Shutterstock



Mark Twain

Source: 2733991. Shutterstock

Over the course of this unit, you will read two classic works from two of literature's most famous authors. The first, Edgar Allan Poe, is one of the best-known authors in American horror history, recognized primarily for writing poems and short stories that send tingles up your spine. Poe's works are macabre and psychologically dense, his style characterized by a masterful use of literary language to build suspense, elicit terror, and create a mood of darkness and despair. The themes in many of Poe's works are death and madness, the speakers tormented by thoughts and feelings that materialize as ghostly omens.

As prominent as the sensory language and imagery in Poe's writing is his use of literary sound devices such as alliteration, rhythm, rhyme, and assonance. These devices create the effect of a haunting melody, which contributes to the terror and the sensory experience of reading Poe's works.

Mark Twain is one of American's best-known authors in the humor genre, known primarily for his novels, his essays, and his short stories. Twain was a satirist; that is,

he used language and literary techniques to create humor by ridiculing people's idiosyncrasies and vices. "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County" is a classic example of Twain's satire, just as "The Raven" is a noteworthy example of Poe's horror.

Twain was a keen observer of character, and he had a knack for caricature—a cartoon-like portrait of a person that exaggerates predominant features, like a large nose or bushy eyebrows. That's what Twain's characters are like. Twain manipulates language to exaggerate prominent features of character to convey the humor of the human experience and amuse his readers.

About the Texts

First published in 1845, "The Raven" is arguably Edgar Allan Poe's most famous piece. Analyzing this poem helps you see just how effectively Poe manipulates language to create what might be described as "psychological horror"—the kind you can feel and imagine as if you were experiencing it yourself. The imagery and sensory language in this poem are so powerful, it feels as if you are in the room, or perhaps in the narrator's mind. The fact that the narrator relates the event as if he were telling it brings the reader closer to the experience described and contributes to the suspension of disbelief.

"The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County" is as characteristic of humor as "The Raven" is of horror. In fact, it's the piece that launched Twain to literary fame; he published it first in a newspaper in 1865, and it was an overnight success. It was republished in newspapers worldwide, and it established Twain as a talented humorist. This particular piece is a story within a story. It tells the story of the story of the jumping frog—who told the story, how that story was told, why it was told, and when and where it was told. It also clearly conveys the story's effect on the people who hear it. And, like all stories that have such an effect, the story continues to be told.

Humor and horror stories are as popular today as they were more than 100 years ago when Poe and Twain were active authors. Why do you think that is? Do you think the two authors would be as popular if they were writing today? Discuss your ideas with your Learning Coach.

Learning Coach Guide

This section will help you guide students through their learning.

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About the Authors

- 1.** Make sure that your student can access the texts. Supply your student with a graphic organizer that they can use as a Reading Log; or, if they prefer, they may jot down observations, questions, and evidence in their notebook as they read each text. Explain that they will record their opinions and impressions as well as answers to some specific questions about the texts. They may also record any ideas and questions that emerge from their reading to discuss with you.
- 2.** Ask your student to read the brief biographies of Edgar Allan Poe and Mark Twain. Explain that both of these authors lived in America, but in different parts of the country; they reached adulthood at different times and consequently had very different life experiences that colored their worldviews. Point out that the works of both authors are fiction, and therefore the language characterizes the narrator and characters and not the authors, *per se*. However, Poe's and Twain's personalities and outlooks are often clear in the *way* they portray their narrators and characters and the topics they choose to write about. Tell your student that to analyze an author's style, they should examine both the narration and the dialogue.

The Raven

Reading Log: The Raven

The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County

Reading Log: The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County

About the Texts

1. Point out that Poe is noted for writing chilling tales of terror. Whether they are poems or stories, they're the kind of stuff that gives you goosebumps, and they reveal the author's dark,

tormented thoughts. Twain, however, writes satire that is light and amusing. His works reveal his sense of humor.

- 2.** Have your student read this section and then respond to the question.

Previewing the Unit Texts: “The Raven” and “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County”

Pace and Prepare Yourself

Both designated texts for this unit are very short. (In fact, either or both can be read in a single sitting.) Like any assigned text, however, they should be read with understanding and finished in time to complete the Apply activities for the unit.

Since you will have about a week to a week and a half to read the texts, consider doing so more than once. (You will undoubtedly discover something new with each subsequent reading.) You might read both the poem and the short story today and on Reading Day, or you could read one on each of the two days. After that, consider revisiting each text every two or three lessons. That approach will let you examine them through what you learn in the unit. This is only a suggestion, however. Feel free to become familiar with the texts in any way that works for you and your schedule.

Days	How Much to Read
Day 1 (today)	One or both texts
Reading Day	One or both texts
Other days	Revisit the texts every two or three lessons

In the Apply activities that follow your reading, you will find questions that assess your understanding and your ability to analyze Poe’s and Twain’s use of language and style. You can prepare for these activities by thinking about some key questions as you read. As you finish each day’s reading, take notes in your Reading Log that offer potential answers to these questions:

- What literary techniques did Poe use that were particularly effective in conveying the terror of the narrator and evoking terror in the reader?
- What literary techniques did Twain use to convey the character of the storyteller and the humor of the jumping frog story?
- Why did Twain use dialect to characterize the storyteller, and what is its effect on the reader?

Begin Reading

“The Raven” tells a story from the perspective of a first-person narrator. “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County” actually has two first-person narrators: the man who tells the story of Jim Smiley and his jumping frog, and the narrator who tells about the man who told the story.

As you read both texts, look for language that helps characterize the narrators. Note the phrases and expressions the narrators use that convey aspects of character. Write your initial impressions of these narrators in your Reading Log before you continue reading.

The Raven

Reading Log: The Raven

The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County

Reading Log: The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County

Learning Coach Guide

This section will help you guide students through their learning.

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Pace and Prepare Yourself

1. Read the information in this section with your student. Review the chart and compare it to your calendar to help your student devise a reading schedule that will work for their needs.
2. Review the bulleted questions with your student. Explain that after they complete the texts, they will apply the skills they learn in this unit to “The Raven” and “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County.” The questions here will help them organize their thoughts as they read and prepare them for the analytical questions that they will encounter in Apply.

Begin Reading

1. Have your student read the first stanza of “The Raven” aloud. Discuss the language and its effect on the tone and mood of the text. Then, have your student read the first paragraph of “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County” to themselves. Tell your student that throughout the text, the language in “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County” will affect the tone and mood of the text just as profoundly as Poe’s language did in “The Raven” but in a very different way.
2. Have your student begin reading, making sure that they have their Reading Log available for note-taking. Remind them that they will have more reading time available throughout the period during which they cover the lessons of the unit.

Language and Style Reading Day

Unit Reading Information

In this unit, you will read "The Raven" and "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County" unless otherwise directed by your teacher.

Select the links to access the texts and reading logs.

The Raven

Reading Log: The Raven

The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County

Reading Log: The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County

Reading Day

Please use today's lesson to read from the designated text for this unit. Use your reading log to take notes based on the guidance in the unit introduction reading preview. Refer to the pacing guide to plan your reading time during the rest of the unit. In the final lesson of the unit, you will be asked to apply skills learned during the unit to analyze the designated text.

Figures of Speech

Unit Reading Information

In this unit, you will read "The Raven" and "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County" unless otherwise directed by your teacher.

Select the links to access the texts and reading logs.

The Raven

Reading Log: The Raven

The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County

Reading Log: The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County

Objective and Key Words

Objective

In this section, you will interpret hyperbole in context by describing its role in a literary text.

Key Words

- **tall tales** – folktales full of unbelievable and exaggerated events that are told as if they were true
 - **hyperbole** – a figure of speech that uses exaggeration to emphasize an idea or emotion
 - **legends** – old stories about possibly made-up historical figures and their amazing deeds
-

Figures of Speech: Hyperbole



Source: Rawpixel.com. Shutterstock

When writing literary texts, an author might use the device of hyperbole. Among its creative effects, this tool can paint a more vivid picture of a situation or bring in an element of humor. This figure of speech always includes exaggeration, raising the intensity of a moment often to ludicrous extremes.

Some examples of hyperbole:

- He was so hungry he could eat a horse.

- I've told you a million times not to do that.
- She slept like a rock last night.
- I am dying of laughter.
- It was so quiet, you could hear a pin drop.

None of the situations described above is truly possible in real life. No actual person could eat an entire horse or say something one million times. These figures of speech go so far beyond logic and reason that they are obviously untrue. That said, readers of hyperboles understand the author is not lying to them and are aware that the hyperboles are a purposeful exaggeration, used to create a funny or entertaining situation.

Texts from some literary genres are more likely to contain hyperboles than others. Tall tales and legends contain descriptions of exaggerated figures and their superhuman deeds. Humorous stories, also, will contain more hyperboles than usual in realistic fiction, using the contrast between what the reader expects to happen and an over-the-top outcome to create funny situations.

Read the passage below from a tall tale about Paul Bunyan, describing his pet blue ox, Babe.

Once in a while Babe would run away and be gone all day roaming all over the Northwestern country. His tracks were so far apart that it was impossible to follow him and so deep that a man falling into one could only be hauled out with difficulty and a long rope. Once a settler and his wife and baby fell into one of these tracks and the son got out when he was fifty-seven years old and reported the accident. These tracks today form the thousands of lakes in the "Land of the Sky-Blue Water."

Like Paul Bunyan himself, his pet ox is a creature out of a tall tale. The story begins with a description of actions that could be believable: Babe running away and roaming

the country. Hyperbole enters when the text describes Babe's tracks as "so deep that a man falling into one could only be hauled out with difficulty and a long rope." This image impresses upon the reader just how huge an animal Babe is, that Babe would leave such deep tracks.

Question 1

After the family falls into the tracks, what does the hyperbole "the son got out when he was fifty-seven years old and reported the accident" add to the text?

Reveal Answer

Sample answer: This hyperbole emphasizes how deep the track is, that it would take a baby almost an entire lifetime to climb out and tell others about the accident. Again, this exaggeration humorously communicates to the reader to describe just how large Babe is.

One consideration authors should keep in mind when including hyperbole in their writing is not to overdo their use. If everything in a text is exaggerated and larger-than-life, then nothing will stand out. The power of hyperbole often relies on how the hyperbole contrasts with the more normal text around it. Most times, such as more reality-based stories, hyperboles should be used with care.

Question 2

What are some reasons an author might use more or fewer hyperboles in a literary text?

Reveal Answer

Sample answer: In a more serious text, an author might use only a few hyperboles to create a singular exaggerated effect. In these cases, the intensity of the figurative language will stand out against the more expected flow of the rest of the narrative. In other cases, like a folktale or a humorous story, an author might use more hyperboles. In these cases, the characters and situations in these genres of

texts are often larger-than-life and fittingly described by the use of exciting or comic exaggeration.

Check-In

Read the passage below, paying attention to the use of hyperboles. Then, answer the questions.



Source: Naki Kouyioumtzis. Pearson Education Ltd

“Hello?” Alison answered her phone. “Hi! I am sorry I’m not there yet. I’ve been spending a few years waiting for the train to arrive this morning. Apparently, this route begins somewhere halfway around the globe.”

Question 1

How do you interpret the hyperboles in this passage? How do you know they are examples of hyperboles?

Reveal Answer

Sample answer: I interpret “spending a few years waiting for the train” to mean the woman is complaining about the long wait for the train. I interpret “this route begins halfway around the globe” to mean the train’s route is too long, and that is the

reason for the lateness. I can tell they are hyperboles because they both exaggerate the situation greatly. No one could spend several years waiting for a train, and clearly, the route does not start halfway around the globe, which is impossible.

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Question 2

How does the author creatively use hyperboles to develop the character of Alison?

Reveal Answer

Sample answer: The author has Alison use hyperboles as part of the way she speaks, as revealed through quoted dialogue. These hyperboles build up a picture of a person who uses humor in a good-natured way to deal with tough situations in her life, such as having to wait a very long time for her train to arrive.

Practice

Read the passage below, which is a selection from Mark Twain's *Life on the Mississippi*, an autobiography that tells about his life as the pilot of a steamboat on the Mississippi River. In this part of the book, the young Mark Twain has been listening to a group of experienced pilots discuss specific details of the banks of the river, and he is realizing just how much information he will have to learn about the banks of the river and what skills he will have to master to become a good pilot.

As you read, pay attention to the creative way Twain uses hyperboles in his writing. Then, complete the activity.

And so they went on talk-talk-talking. Meantime, the thing that was running in my mind was, 'Now if my ears hear aright, I have not only to get the names of all the towns and islands and bends, and so on, by heart, but I must even get up a warm personal acquaintanceship with every old snag and one-limbed cotton-wood and obscure wood pile that ornaments the banks of this river for twelve hundred miles; and more than that, I must actually know where these things are in the dark, unless these guests are gifted with eyes that can pierce through two miles of solid blackness; I wish the piloting business was in Jericho and I had never thought of it.'

Activity

Think about the topic of this passage. In your own words, interpret how and why Mark Twain used hyperboles creatively in this text. Be sure to identify examples of hyperboles, explain their meanings, and evaluate Twain's use of them to write this passage.

Reveal Answer

Sample answer: In this passage, Mark Twain uses hyperboles humorously to emphasize the depth of his younger self's feelings about how difficult it is going to be to become a pilot. For example, his younger self says he is going to have to "get up a warm personal acquaintanceship with every old snag and one-limbed cotton-wood and obscure wood pile that ornaments the banks of this river for twelve hundred miles." Of course, Twain could not memorize every twig on every tree along the bank for such a long distance, so this exaggeration draws attention to how hard he now thinks it will be to become a good pilot of a steamboat. In contrast to himself, he compares the other, experienced pilots, whom he says might be "gifted with eyes that can pierce through two miles of solid blackness." Again, these pilots have good eyes and are talented at their jobs, but obviously, they cannot see this far in the dark. By using this hyperbole, Twain is emphasizing the contrast between how good they are at being pilots and how bad he thinks he is at this job.

How Did I Do?

Assess your response to the Practice activity by completing this checklist. If necessary, go back and revise your work.

1. _____ I responded to each part of the prompt.
 2. _____ I interpreted hyperboles in context.
 3. _____ I evaluated Twain's use of hyperboles.
 4. _____ I included evidence to support my interpretation of the hyperboles and my evaluation of Twain's use of them.
 5. _____ I used correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
-

Objective and Key Words

Objective

In this section, you will interpret paradox in context by describing their role in a literary text.

Key Words

- **juxtaposition** – when two things such as characters, settings, or words are placed side by side to create a particular effect
 - **oxymoron** – a figure of speech created by placing two words with opposite or conflicting meanings next to each other to create an effect
 - **paradox** – a statement that contradicts itself
-

Figures of Speech: Paradox



Source: Denis Ismagilov. 123rf.com

Using the literary device of paradox allows an author to provoke readers to think in novel and unconventional ways, either to entertain readers or to get them to reflect more deeply on an important subject. Where an oxymoron uses juxtaposition to create a conflict between two words, a paradox goes farther and presents two contrasting statements or ideas to confound the reader's mind. An oxymoron can be figuratively

true, but never literally true, while a paradox can, when one contemplates it, prove to be true in a surprising and thought-provoking way. The purpose of the paradox is, in fact, often to guide the reader to understand a concept in a new way, once they have resolved what seemed wrong or impossible about the paradox and figured out how it makes sense on a deeper level.

Use the flashcards to see examples that come up often in daily life and conversation of common paradoxes and their meanings. Notice that on the surface, these statements seem absurd, but, when considered further, they reveal truths about life.



Paradox:
The louder
you are, the
less they
hear.

**Paradox: You
must spend
money to save
money.**

Paradox:
Less is
more.



Question 1

Evaluate the statement “Nobody goes to that restaurant anymore. It is too crowded.” Explain why this statement is or is not a paradox and interpret what it means.

Reveal Answer

Sample answer: This statement is a paradox because it presents contrasting ideas. On the one hand, nobody goes to that restaurant; on the other hand, the reason no one goes there is that it is too crowded. Therefore, the restaurant actually is full of people, just not the people that the speaker is referring to.

Question 2

Interpret the meaning of the paradox “the only constant is change.” Why might someone use this paradox?

Reveal Answer

Sample answer: Usually people define a constant as an unchanging situation. However, this paradox draws attention to the fact that often in life, the only

unchanging aspect is that things are always changing, developing or growing older, or fluctuating in some other way. Someone might use this paradox to encourage someone else to meet changes in life with a better attitude and not try to hang on to a current situation too strongly.

Figures of Speech: Paradox



Source: Rawpixel.com. Shutterstock

Authors of literary texts might use paradoxes for many reasons, including to amuse the reader, to inspire the reader to think in new ways, or to point to a larger theme or meaning in the text. Often, there can be more than one reason, with a paradox being both funny and meaningful. For example, a quote attributed to the author George Bernard Shaw reads, “Youth is wasted on the young.” Read literally, this seems contradictory, because young people are, by definition, the people experiencing youth, so it does not make sense to say that youth is wasted on them. When a reader pauses

and thinks further about this problem, though, the significance of what Shaw is really proposing becomes clear. It is only with age that a person gains the perspective needed to appreciate all the benefits of being young, so the full worth of youth is not truly valued until one is older.

Question 1

How would you evaluate the reason why Shaw uses a paradox to make his point?

Reveal Answer

Sample answer: By making his point with the use of paradox, Shaw has both emphasized the point by making a funny remark and engaged the reader's attention by making them work to figure out his deeper meaning. His use of the paradox is an effective way to be sure his audience pays attention to the more serious idea behind his seemingly flippant remark.

Paradoxes play a role in the works of authors of all genres of literary texts, from essays and plays to poems and short stories. Here is a paradox from Oscar Wilde's essay "The Decay of Lying." As you read this passage, consider what the paradox is, why it seems initially perplexing, and how in resolving it, the reader comes to understand a deeper concept about Vivian and her society.

Cyril: ... You don't mean to say that you seriously believe that Life imitates Art, that Life in fact is the mirror, and Art the reality?

Vivian: Certainly I do. Paradox though it may seem — and paradoxes are always dangerous things — it is none the less true that Life imitates art far more than Art imitates life. We have all seen in our own day in England how a certain curious and fascinating type of beauty, invented and emphasized by two imaginative painters, has so influenced Life that whenever one goes to a private view or to an artistic salon one sees, here the mystic eyes of Rosetti's dream,

the long ivory throat, the strange square-cut jaw, the loosened shadowy hair that he so ardently loved, there the sweet maidenhood of 'The Golden Stair,' the blossom-like mouth and weary loveliness of the 'Laus Amoris,' the passion-pale face of Andromeda, the thin hands and lithe beauty of the Vivian in 'Merlin's Dream.' And it has always been so. A great artist invents a type, and Life tries to copy it, to reproduce it in a popular form, like an enterprising publisher.

Question 2

How would you interpret the paradox in this passage? What larger point about people and their behavior is Wilde using this paradox to make?

Reveal Answer

Sample answer: The paradox in this passage is the statement Wilde makes through the voice of Vivian that "Life imitates Art far more than Art imitates life." At first, it does seem odd to think that Life could imitate Art, because surely artists copy from life to write or paint their works. If the reader is confused by this contradiction, Wilde helpfully has Vivian explain her thought, which is real-life people see examples of beauty provided by artists and then copy these examples in how they dress and present themselves. The larger point about people and their behavior that Wilde is pointing out with a paradox is that people often behave in artificial ways to present an appealing "reality" to those around them.

Here are some lines by Emily Dickinson from her poem "Success." As you read them, look for a paradox and think about what these lines are saying and the role the paradox plays in supporting a greater meaning.

Success is counted sweetest

By those who ne'er succeed.

To comprehend a nectar

Requires sorest need.

Question 3

How would you interpret the paradox from this poem? What role does this paradox play in the poem?

Reveal Answer

Sample answer: The paradox is “Success is counted sweetest / By those who ne’er succeed.” These lines are saying that a person must feel a real need for something—be it nectar or success—to appreciate obtaining that thing. Someone who never succeeds will appreciate finally succeeding much more than someone who has tasted a great deal of success before. By making the reader stop to ponder how someone who has never succeeded could be the one who values success the most, Dickinson draws the reader’s attention to her main point regarding who appreciates things in life the most.

When you come across a paradox in a literary text, you must interpret it in the context in which it is used, considering the role it plays in a text. Consider what message the author might be trying to convey with the paradox. Then, decide how interpreting the paradox helps you to think in a new way or understand a deeper meaning in the text.

Check-In

Read below William Wordsworth's poem "My heart leaps up when I behold." Then think about his use of paradox as you complete the activity.

Activity

Describe the paradox expressed in this poem. Interpret this paradox, explaining the role it plays in the poem and relating it to the subject or theme of the poem. Then evaluate why Wordsworth most likely used this paradox.

Reveal Answer

Sample answer: The paradox expressed in this poem is "The Child is the father of the Man." Normally, the child is the offspring of an adult such as a man. Typically, one would say, "The Man is the father of the Child." Wordsworth is creating a paradox by stating that the child could be the father of the man. In this paradox, Wordsworth is saying that his experiences in childhood formed the man he became, so seen from that angle, the child was in truth the father of the man. Wordsworth is writing about how he is as moved by nature and seeing a rainbow now, in his adulthood, as he was when he was a child. He is explaining how his affinity for nature began in childhood and has continued with him throughout his life, and how he hopes that it will stay with him through his old age. Wordsworth most likely used this paradox because the unlikeliness of this situation catches the reader's attention and makes them ponder how the experiences people have in childhood can, in fact, affect them for the rest of their lives. The paradox helps the reader see the world in a new way and come to a new understanding about how people develop over the course of their lifetimes.

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Practice

Read the two selections below. The first is Robert Frost’s poem “The Tuft of Flowers” and the second is an excerpt from Henry David Thoreau’s book *Walden*. Then complete the activity.

Activity

In short essay, interpret the paradoxes from each selection, compare their roles in these texts, and then evaluate why each author most likely used a paradox in this writing.

Reveal Answer

Sample answer: While both Robert Frost and Walt Whitman use paradoxes related to states of being, they have different preferences for whether to work with others or be alone. In his poem, Frost states that “Men work together . . . whether they work together or apart,” while in his writing, Thoreau claims that he “never found the companion that was so companionable as solitude.” Frost’s view is a paradox because it seems impossible that men can work together when they are apart, while Thoreau’s claim is a paradox because solitude means being alone, yet Thoreau is claiming that solitude is the most companionable companion, or the state most marked by being in the company of others. Resolving each paradox helps the reader understand better the point that each writer is making.

Frost’s paradox leads the reader to see his point, which is that knowing another mower had worked this area before him and left a tuft of flowers standing makes him feel united in his heart with this other worker, even though that worker is long gone and the poem’s speaker is literally alone as the only person in this area.

Earlier in the poem, Frost had expressed the idea that all people are always alone, even if they are physically in the same place with another person. Now, however, his view has changed, and he feels linked to the other mower by their shared work, even though they are physically separated.

Thoreau's paradox, in turn, helps the reader comprehend his point, which is that some people prefer the benefits of enjoying their own company and living a solitary life. Earlier in his excerpt, Thoreau expresses the same view that Frost initially did, that people are ultimately always alone, even if they are thinking or working with others. Where the speaker in Frost's poem feels nourished by connecting with an absent worker through their shared work, however, Thoreau feels nourished by focusing on enjoying the benefits of saving for himself the energy that would be drawn away by being in the company of others, which he often finds wearisome. Both writers found paradox to be a useful literary device for leading their readers to understand the deeper meaning of their writing. In each case, the paradox forces the reader to pause a moment to puzzle out how a person could be working with others while working alone or how being in a state of solitude could be the most companionable state. This, then, causes the reader to think more intensely about what it means to be alone or to be with others and therefore to perceive what each writer is saying about the experience of being alone in the world.

How Did I Do?

Assess your response to the Practice activity by completing this checklist. If necessary, go back and revise your work.

1. _____ I interpreted the paradox in each text.
 2. _____ I used evidence from the selections to compare the meaning of each paradox.
 3. _____ I evaluated reasons why each author used a paradox.
 4. _____ I used correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
-

Objective and Key Words

Objective

In this section, you will analyze the role of figures of speech in literary text.

Key Words

- **figures of speech** – expressions that use words in a way that departs from their literal or common meaning
 - **hyperbole** – the use of extreme exaggeration to make a point
 - **metaphor** – a figure of speech that implies a comparison between seemingly unlike things without using *like* or *as*
 - **paradox** – a figure of speech that uses words that contradict each other in a way that makes a sort of sense
 - **pun** – a word used humorously to suggest the meaning of a similar-sounding word, or a multiple-meaning word used in an intentionally incorrect way
-

Analyzing the Role of Figures of Speech



Source: ollyy. Shutterstock

Figures of speech expand an author's ability to be creative in their writing. They allow authors to convey important feelings and ideas in effective ways. A reader will miss the deeper meanings in a text if they do not pause when they locate a figure of speech and think about what it is really saying and why the author might have used it.

Hyperbole, paradox, metaphor, and puns are tools in the box of literary devices an author can use.

Types of Figures of Speech in Writing

Figure of Speech	Example	Role
Hyperbole	I'm so hungry I could eat a horse.	Extreme exaggeration emphasizes the amount of rainfall.
Paradox	Less is more.	The contradiction points out that something might be more effective if not overdone.
Metaphor	The treasure became an anvil around his neck.	Comparing unlike things— something of great value to a weighted object— explores the idea that money doesn't always bring happiness.
Puns	The census shows the population in Ireland is always Dublin. The gorgeous wedding cake had me in tiers.	A play on words with similar sounds or multiple meanings (<i>Dublin, doubling</i>) and (<i>tiers, tears</i>) that creates humor.

When reading texts, remember that figures of speech should not be read literally. In each case, consider what figurative meaning an author might be trying to convey instead.

As you watch the following video, pay attention to the figures of speech the student introduces and how a good reader would stop to analyze their use.

Video cannot be displayed on Print Preview

Now, answer the questions.

Question 1

How do figures of speech depart from the dictionary meanings of words and phrases?

Show Answer

Hide Answer

A figure of speech relies on the reader's recognition that they are not interpreting the literal meanings of the words; instead, readers are analyzing a figurative expression that conveys meaning in an unexpected way.

Question 2

How would you explain the difference between the two types of puns? How is their purpose the same?

Show Answer

Hide Answer

One type relies on similar sounds, where words are mistaken for one another because they sound the same. The other type relies on knowing that a word has multiple meanings and that an incorrect one is being used for humorous reasons. Puns are often intended for humor; however, they can make more serious points too.

Check-In

Complete the activity by matching each figure of speech to an example that represents it.

Now, reread each example and analyze the role the figure of speech plays in the text.

Activity 1

Hope is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul,
And sings the tune without the words,
And never stops at all,

Show Answer

Hide Answer

The author uses this metaphor to compare hope to a bird. The author inspires the audience to call to mind qualities related to a bird, like singing and perching, to be able to picture better the image of what the author thinks hope is. Just as a bird perches and sings, hope perches in the soul and sings.

Activity 2

"Mine is a long and sad tale!" said the Mouse, turning to Alice and sighing.
"It *is* a long tail, certainly," said Alice, looking down with wonder at the Mouse's tail; "but why do you call it sad?" And she kept on puzzling about it while the Mouse was speaking . . .

Show Answer

Hide Answer

The author uses this pun to create a humorous situation. The reader is amused and entertained to see that Alice mistakes the word *tale* for *tail* and is therefore confused by the Mouse's words.

Activity 3

I had to wait in the station for ten days—an eternity.

Show Answer

Hide Answer

The author uses hyperbole to exaggerate how long they waited. It was only ten days, but it was described as an eternity, which is longer than anyone could actually wait. The use of this hyperbole emphasizes the point that the author had to wait a very long time.

Activity 4

“Take some more tea,” the March Hare said to Alice, very earnestly.

“I've had nothing yet,” Alice replied in an offended tone, “so I can't take more.”

“You mean you can't take less,” said the Hatter; “it's very easy to take more than nothing.”

Show Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: The Hatter presents a paradox in this text. Alice claims she cannot take “more” tea because she hasn't had *any* yet, but the Hatter is correct that you can always take more than nothing. You just can't take less. The use of this paradox creates a humorous effect and reveals details about the personality of the Hatter.

Practice

Read each of the following passages. Then complete the activity.

From Ezra Pound's poem "In a Station of the Metro":

The apparition of these faces in the crowd;

Petals on a wet, black bough

From William Shakespeare's tragedy *Romeo and Juliet* at a moment in the play when Romeo is upset that his love for Rosaline is not returned:

Mercutio: Nay, gentle Romeo, we must have you dance.

Romeo: Not I, believe me.

You have dancing shoes With nimble soles;

I have a soul of lead So stakes me to the ground I cannot move.

From Oscar Wilde's comedy *An Ideal Husband*:

Lord Caversham: I love talking about nothing, father. It's the only thing I know anything about.

From Elizabeth Bennet's refusal of Mr. Darcy's proposal of marriage in Jane Austen's novel *Pride and Prejudice*:

“From the very beginning — from the first moment, I may almost say — of my acquaintance with you, your manners, impressing me with the fullest belief of your arrogance, your conceit, and your selfish disdain of the feelings of others, were such as to form the groundwork of disapprobation on which succeeding events have built so immovable a dislike; and I had not known you a month before I felt that you were the last man in the world whom I could ever be prevailed on to marry.”

Activity

In separate paragraphs, analyze the role of each figure of speech in the four excerpts, choosing from pun, metaphor, hyperbole, or paradox.

Show Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: The poem in the first passage uses a metaphor to create an image that conveys the poet's experience of being in the metro station. The metaphor compares the faces of people in a crowd to how petals look on a wet, black bough. The poet uses the metaphor to create a sensory effect.

In the second passage, Romeo uses a pun by playing on the words *sole* and *soul*. Romeo says that while Mercutio has dancing shoes with nimble soles, Romeo has a soul of lead that is so heavy it stakes him to the ground. By drawing this comparison, Romeo draws attention to and emphasizes the depth of his sad feelings about Rosaline.

The line in the third passage presents a paradox. It seems impossible at first that nothing could be the only thing that someone knows anything about. When looked at more deeply, though, this paradox reveals details about the personality of this

character: he wants people to think that surface-level chatter is all he can hold conversations about.

The fourth passage shows Elizabeth Bennet using hyperboles such as, “the last man in the world whom I could ever be prevailed to marry.” Her use of hyperbole emphasizes how deeply she thinks she dislikes Mr. Darcy and how violently she is rejecting his proposal.

How Did I Do?

Assess your response to the Practice activity by completing this checklist. If necessary, go back and revise your work.

1. _____ I responded to the entire prompt.
 2. _____ I analyzed the roles of pun, metaphor, hyperbole, and paradox.
 3. _____ I used specific evidence from the text to support my analysis.
 4. _____ I used correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
-

Comparisons

Unit Reading Information

In this unit, you will read "The Raven" and "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County" unless otherwise directed by your teacher.

Select the links to access the texts and reading logs.

The Raven

Reading Log: The Raven

The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County

Reading Log: The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County

Objective and Key Words

Objective

In this section, you will explain the use of similes and metaphors to create vivid descriptions and sensory images.

Key Words

- **metaphor** – a figure of speech that compares seemingly unlike things without using *like* or *as*; “A is B” although A is not literally the same as B
 - **sensory details** – words that appeal to the senses: touch, taste, sound, smell, and sight
 - **simile** – a figure of speech that makes a comparison between seemingly unlike things using *like* or *as*
-

Comparisons

Similes and metaphors are two related literary devices that compare unlike things. An important use of both figures of speech is to add vividness and sensory details to a piece of writing.

Sometimes, an author includes sensory similes and metaphors to enhance what is already there. A baby’s cry might “go off like a fire alarm,” with one loud sound being compared to another, even louder sound. Fireflies might “flicker like embers” or “pop like light bulbs,” depending on whether their brightness is being downplayed or emphasized. To suit the author’s goals, one light source (fireflies) is likened to another one that is dim and gentle (embers) or bright and sudden (light bulbs).

In other cases, metaphors and similes bring different senses into the picture to help capture the intensity of an experience. One sense can be described with the help of another, as happens whenever someone describes colors as “loud.” The colors do not actually make a sound, of course, but they are *like* loud noises in that they capture attention and are hard to ignore. An author may choose to use sensory similes and metaphors for an abstract idea; for instance, “The diagnosis hit me like a slap in the face.” This simile relates an abstract idea—a piece of upsetting information—to a more immediate physical sensation of pain.

Read the passage below, paying attention to how the author uses similes and metaphors to create an effect. Then answer the questions.

Marcus pushed through the door of the antique shop, then quickly closed it behind him to shut out the noise of the rain. He was not much of an antique buff, truth be told, and as far as he knew, none of his new classmates were either. Still, the shop seemed a warm and welcoming place to wait out a sudden storm. The old-fashioned wall sconces threw a cozy light, like a hearth in an old cabin.

Passing by the counter, Marcus saw a wall of snow globes—hundreds of them, it seemed like. Most depicted the usual kind of old-timey winter scenes: children tobogganing through a buttercream landscape, fir trees clustered on a round, white hill. In some of the globes, the confetti snow had settled in improbable places, like the palm treetops of Hawaii or the belly of a grinning Florida gator.

Though it was barely fall, Marcus thought briefly of winters in Michigan, where the snow fell in sheets and clung to the landscape for weeks. He remembered being one of those toboggan children, gliding down a low hill that felt at the time like a roller coaster. Here in Gainesville, he knew, snow was a rare visitor and hardly ever stayed the night.

Question 1

How does the simile of “a cozy light, like a hearth in an old cabin” contribute to the description of the setting in the first paragraph?

Show Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: The image of a hearth further contributes to the sense of warmth and welcome built up in previous sentences. By likening them to an even older form of lighting—the flame of a hearth—the author makes the wall sconces seem even more “antique” than perhaps they actually are. The image of a hearth also provides some direct sensory information that helps make the setting more vivid: lighting fixtures can have just about any sort of color and brightness, but these resemble firelight specifically.

Question 2

In the second paragraph, what sensory details does the metaphor of a “buttercream landscape” suggest?

- a.** The snow is hard and crunchy.
- b.** The snow is smooth and soft.
- c.** The snow is melting easily.
- d.** The snow is cold.

Show Answer

Hide Answer

- b.** The snow is smooth and soft.

Question 3

What does the simile “felt like a roller coaster” suggest about the tobogganing hill in the third paragraph?

- a.** The hill seemed more exciting to a child than it might to an adult.
- b.** The hill was steeper and more dangerous than it seemed to Marcus at the time.
- c.** Marcus felt nauseous going down the tobogganing hill for the first time.
- d.** The tobogganing path went up and down before reaching the bottom of the hill.

Show Answer

Hide Answer

- a.** The hill seemed more exciting to a child than it might to an adult.

When you are reading, pay close attention to the author’s use of similes and metaphors.

Ask yourself:

- How do similes and metaphors help to make the writing clearer or more vivid?

- How do the sensory details provided by similes and metaphors contribute to an intended effect?
- How do rich descriptions and striking comparisons help reveal more about a setting, event, or a character's personality or state of mind?

Comparisons

Similes and Metaphors



Source: Brian E Kushner. Shutterstock

Sometimes an author wishes to show that a setting has a special significance for a character. This can be tricky to convey using only literal language, so various figures of speech—including similes and metaphors—often come into play. The excerpt you are about to read, from the novel *Sinking Islands* (2021), represents a moment of calm in the main character’s otherwise tempestuous life.

Get Ready to Read

Sinking Islands, a work of fiction by Cai Emmons, tells about a climate scientist who has the ability to alter the forces of nature. The character of Bronwyn Artair, who discovers her gift in Emmons' earlier novel *Weather Woman* (2018), returns in the 2021 book to impart her power to others. In this scene, set in the Pacific Northwest, Bronwyn is enjoying a coastal view that includes both the ocean and Washington's Olympic Mountains.

Did You Know?

The excerpt includes a vivid image of eagles. Though not usually thought of as aquatic birds, eagles are strong swimmers. Occasionally, as in the episode described in *Sinking Islands*, an eagle will swim to shore with a particularly large fish it has caught. In other cases, an eagle hits the water while trying to catch prey and its feathers become waterlogged, forcing it to swim rather than fly. Wildlife researchers have their own metaphors for the eagle's swimming behavior: some describe the bird's swimming stroke as a "rowing" motion, with its wings serving as the oars.

Take Notes as You Read

As you read this excerpt from *Sinking Islands*, pay attention to the use of metaphors and similes to describe the natural landscape and the behavior of the wildlife. Note where Emmons uses comparative language to create a vivid impression of what is happening or to enrich the sensory detail of the scene. Record your ideas in your Reading Log.

Useful Vocabulary

1. **Olympics:** a mountain range in western Washington State
 2. **scapula:** a flat, triangle-shaped bone that lies in the upper back; also known as the shoulder blade
 3. **thermal:** a current of rising warm air, used by soaring birds to maintain flight
-

Check-In

As the *Sinking Islands* excerpt begins, the main character, Bronwyn, is trying to enjoy the seashore despite the feeling she is being followed or watched. Think about the author's use of simile or metaphor as you answer the questions.

Question 1

What sensory image does the metaphor suggest about the sunlight?

Show Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: A tambourine is a percussion instrument that, when shaken, can be heard clearly above even a loud orchestra. Tambourines are often associated with festive and celebratory music, such as that heard at parades. By calling the sun a “brash tambourine,” the author suggests that the sun’s brightness is like the loud, hard-to-ignore sound of a shaken tambourine. She also hints that there is a cheerful quality to the sunlight.

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Question 2

What specific purpose does the author accomplish by likening the fog to “sleeves”? Why not “rags” or “blankets,” for instance?

Show Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: Many metaphors have been coined to liken clouds or fog to fabric on account of their soft-textured appearance. Here, the author carefully chooses a word that evokes the fog’s fabric-like texture without making the fog seem either

too pleasant or too oppressive. A word like “rags” might go too far, creating the impression that the fog itself is dirty or very unsightly. “Blankets,” meanwhile, often evoke comfort, warmth, and protection—qualities that contrast with the idea of fog “sully” a view. The author’s use of “sleeves of fog” captures the fabric-like aspect of fog without pushing the reader to see it as inherently good or bad.

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Question 3

Which of the following is the most reasonable inference to draw from the seals “staring ... as if to say *good morning*”?

- a.** The seals are sentient and capable of conversing with Bronwyn.
- b.** The seals are hostile and see Bronwyn as potentially dangerous.
- c.** The seals are part of a landscape that Bronwyn views as welcoming.
- d.** The seals, like Bronwyn, have just woken up for the day.

Show Answer

Hide Answer

- c.** The seals are part of a landscape that Bronwyn views as welcoming.

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Practice

Reread the latter half of the *Sinking Islands* excerpt. In it, the narrator watches an eagle catch a fish in the Pacific Ocean.

Activity

In a paragraph or two, explain how the use of simile helps contribute to the overall vividness and sensory richness of this passage.

Show Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: In this passage, the author interweaves two similes with several other figures of speech to capture a brief but intense moment in the story. The eagle is said to rise “as if to display his strength and grandeur,” which gives the author a way of discussing the impression that the eagle makes on Bronwyn. The author could simply have called the eagle “strong and grand” directly, but the heightened language of the simile helps to show how impressed Bronwyn is with the eagle’s majestic movement.

Most of the passage, however, describes the eagle swimming to shore with its catch. The author likens the bird to “someone swimming the breaststroke” to relate its movements to an activity more easily understood by humans. Although the idea of a bird flapping its wings in air is familiar to most people, an eagle swimming is a sight that Bronwyn finds striking even though she has seen it before. The simile to a human swimming stroke also makes it clear that this is hard work for the eagle. The author points this out directly as well (“What work it must be”), but the image of a person “swimming the breaststroke” provides a clear sensory context for Bronwyn’s thoughts and feelings about this bird of prey.

How Did I Do?

Assess your response to the Practice activity by completing this checklist. If necessary, go back and revise your work.

1. _____ I responded to the entire prompt.
 2. _____ I interpreted similes in the context of a literary narrative.
 3. _____ I explained specific ways in which those similes contribute to the sensory vividness of the writing, providing clear, specific details.
 4. _____ I used correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
-

Objective and Key Words

Objective

In this section, you will explain how analogies are used within a literary text to develop meaning.

Key Words

- **analogy** – the comparison of two things for the purpose of explaining, clarifying, or making a point about a difficult or unfamiliar idea by showing how it is similar to something familiar
 - **metaphor** – a figure of speech that compares seemingly unlike things without using *like* or *as*; “A is B,” although A is not literally the same as B
 - **simile** – a figure of speech that makes a comparison between seemingly unlike things using *like* or *as*
-

Comparisons: Using an Analogy



Source: kamchatka. 123rf.com

Effective writers use analogies not just to decorate their text or add variety but to develop meaning. To get the most out of a literary text, it benefits readers to think about bigger ideas that an analogy points out.

An [analogy](#) is a type of comparison that explains one thing in terms of another, often describing the similarities between the two things by comparing the unfamiliar concept with something familiar. Extra elaboration sets analogies apart from [similes](#) and

metaphors, though a simile or metaphor can be a part of an analogy. Writers might capture an analogy within a sentence, but sometimes an analogy spans several sentences, paragraphs, or even runs throughout an entire work.

Careful readers understand the meaning an analogy brings to the text. Readers should question why an author uses an analogy and determine what purpose it serves within the text. One way an analogy can provide a deeper meaning is to encourage a reader to look beyond first impressions. Where a simile or metaphor can be helpful for giving an immediate, vivid idea of a person or place, an analogy can take us further, adding depth and nuance to a comparison. In fiction, this can be important for creating characters who feel like real people, rather than stock figures or stereotypes.

Consider this simple simile.

The convention was like a jungle.

Readers will likely approach this comparison with prior knowledge about what jungles are like (dense, wild, dangerous) and some ideas about conventions (crowded, noisy, busy). It's very likely that, without further context, the reader would get a negative overall impression of the convention from this simile.

Now consider an analogy that goes further than the simile to develop meaning. The analogy makes comparisons to tell how the convention was like a jungle—full of life but overwhelming. By using an analogy, the author gives meaning to the text by developing the setting and how the character (Scott) is affected by it.

The convention was like a jungle, full of life but a little overwhelming. Posters, plushies, and other souvenirs sprouted like tempting flowers from the booths. Scot

felt like an explorer as he bushwhacked his way through the narrow aisles and costumed crowds to the booth of his favorite artist.

Select each number to explain the analogy. Then, select each highlighted word or phrase for more information.

☰

Aquila JS | Comparisons: Using an Analogy – Hot Spot

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1

Work at the chocolate shop was a dance,

2

fun on the best of days but frequently exhausting.

3

Taylor found himself tangoing

4

through the narrow kitchen to fetch a new tray of cookies, only to whirl around and greet a customer who had snuck in without the doorbell ringing. No sooner was the customer served and seated (with flair,

5

Taylor thought) than it was time to pivot to unmolding, wrapping, and boxing up candies. The hall to the walk-in cooler was so crammed with boxes that it required quite a bit of shimmying—

what their salsa instructor called “Cuban motion.”

As you watch the following video, note how the student identifies an analogy in *Sinking Islands* and explains how the comparisons contribute to a deeper understanding of the literary text.

Video cannot be displayed on Print Preview

Now, answer the questions.

Question 1

Which of the following logical analogies best matches the passage from *Sinking Islands* as described in the video?

- a.** An eagle is to a swimmer as a scapula is to the breaststroke.
- b.** An eagle is to the sky as a swimmer is to water.
- c.** An eagle is to a thermal as strength is to grandeur.
- d.** Wings are to an eagle as arms are to a swimmer.

Show Answer

Hide Answer

- d.** Wings are to an eagle as arms are to a swimmer.

Question 2

How does the author's use of analogy give meaning to the text?

Show Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: By likening the eagle to a person, the author makes it easier for readers to relate to the bird's actions—a point the student makes in the video. The main character “feels her own scapula rising and falling” as if she herself is swimming, a detail that underscores and enriches the comparison of the eagle to a person. The swimmer analogy also offers the author a way of talking about abstract ideas (strength, grandeur, vigor) in a clear and concrete way. Moreover, details of the main character's reaction offer a window into her reverent attitude toward birds, animals, and nature in general.

Check-In

Read the passage, paying attention to how the author uses analogy to clarify and give meaning.

The thunderstorm, when it finally came, was nothing short of symphonic. Not a Beethoven's 5th kind of symphony, though, that hurled the listener right into the action—more like his 7th, with an initial percussive thunderclap that gave way to a gentle buildup. Amid the timpani beats of the thunder, the rain played the part of the strings, plinking and plunking against the siding at first, then reaching a crescendo with a heavy, surging sound. The sky lit up as if in sync with the music of the thunder and rain. Then, just as it seemed like the windows would burst, the storm-music tapered off.

Question 1

How does the author use an analogy to compare something familiar, a storm, to a less familiar concept, namely a work of orchestral music?

Show Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: In the second sentence, the author clarifies by using a comparison to a widely known symphony to say what qualities of the storm are *not* like Beethoven's 5th. The storm doesn't suddenly arrive and stay loud the entire time; at first, the thunder is loud but infrequent, and the rain is gentle. Importantly, the author doesn't lean too heavily on the reader's specific knowledge of the works of Beethoven. Instead, they say what details of those symphonies are relevant: one starts off busily, and the other has a gentler beginning. A reader does not have to hear the opening of Beethoven's 5th in their head to get the point.

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Question 2

Which of the following best describes the narrator's attitude based on the way the storm is compared?

- a.** The narrator finds music harsh and distressing.
- b.** The narrator is unimpressed by the storm.
- c.** The narrator finds the storm lyrical and powerful.
- d.** The narrator is terrified of thunderstorms.

Show Answer

Hide Answer

- c.** The narrator finds the storm lyrical and powerful.

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Question 3

Which details does the author use to show how various aspects of a storm are like a symphony?

Show Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: The author compares the sound of thunder to “timpani beats”; since timpani (the collection of drums in the percussion family) is so important in an orchestra, it helps me understand the powerful sound of the thunder. The author

calls the rain the “strings,” such as a violin, giving more meaning to the gentle sound of falling rain.

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Practice

Read the following brief passage and observe its use of analogy to develop meaning.

The files were sent, the ink was dry, and the Carmichael Corporation was definitively out of his hair. “Two weeks,” Noel reflected as he closed his laptop and heaved a sigh of relief. “Now for a couple days off.”

In those two weeks, though, the once-tidy apartment had morphed into a Superfund site. The kitchen sink was a lagoon of dirty dishes, and takeout containers loomed over it like the ruins of some dilapidated factory. He shuddered to think what hazards would be released if he breached the lid of that pizza box, and as far as he knew, there was no federal funding available for remediating cheese and grease. “A hazmat suit would have been handy,” he thought as he pulled on a pair of yellow, elbow-length gloves and rummaged in the lagoon for a dish brush. With another, sadder sigh, he got to work.

Activity

In a paragraph or two, explain how the analogy comparing the apartment and an environmental hazard site sheds light on Noel as a character.

Show Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: Looking at a kitchen that has dirty dishes and takeout containers all over the place, it would be easy to jump to the conclusion that the occupant, Noel, is very messy. Indeed, some of the details the author uses in the analogy, like the references to a “lagoon of dirty dishes” and factory ruins, serve mainly to underscore how much of a mess there is.

There are some other details in this analogy, however, that prevent me from seeing Noel as simply a lazy, untidy person. For one thing, Noel appears shocked by how messy his apartment—especially his kitchen—has become in just two weeks (“the once-tidy apartment had morphed into a Superfund site”). He “shudders to think” what is in the pizza box, and he somewhat melodramatically wishes for a protective suit to wear while cleaning the kitchen. He seems to see the mess as abnormal, not as acceptable living conditions. Moreover, the joking reference to a lack of “federal funding” makes a point about Noel’s attitude toward the situation—he realizes and accepts that cleaning up the kitchen is his responsibility.

How Did I Do?

Assess your response to the Practice activity by completing this checklist. If necessary, go back and revise your work.

1. _____ I responded to the prompt without veering off-topic.
 2. _____ I deepened my explanation of an analogy by investigating key details that develop meaning.
 3. _____ I explained how those details help the analogy contribute to a larger point.
 4. _____ I used correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
-

Objective and Key Words

Objective

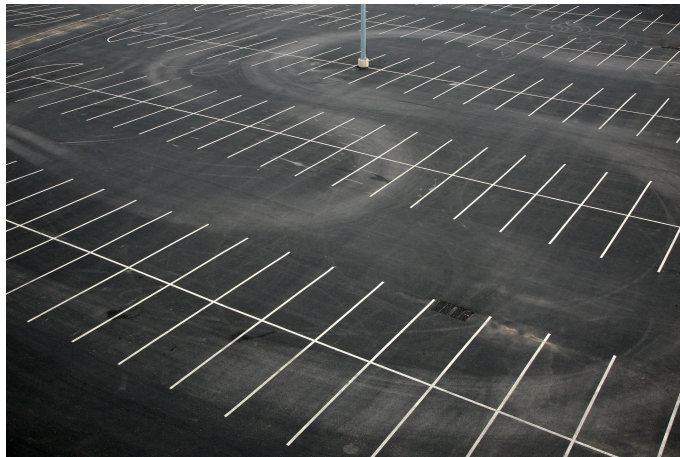
In this section, you will produce similes, metaphors, and analogies in order to create precise, realistic, and vivid images, plots, settings, or characters.

Key Words

- **analogy** – the comparison of two things for the purpose of explaining, clarifying, or making a point about a difficult or unfamiliar idea by showing how it is similar to something familiar
 - **metaphor** – a figure of speech that implies a comparison between seemingly unlike things without using *like* or *as*
 - **simile** – a figure of speech that makes a comparison between seemingly unlike things using *like* or *as*
-

Comparisons: Similes, Metaphors, Analogies

Think Creatively



Source: James R. Martin. Shutterstock

Comparisons have numerous uses in literary writing. They help authors make unfamiliar things seem familiar and accessible to the reader, and they can also help situate a reader in a place they've never been. Comparative language can also add interest and variety to familiar objects and places, keeping the writing fresh and

engaging even when the subject matter might seem mundane. With well-chosen comparisons, an author thinks creatively to conjure up settings, characters, and actions that are filled with vividness and precision.

Often, writers use different literary tools. This is certainly the case for comparisons. Two basic ways to compare are simile, a comparison using *like* or *as*, and metaphor, which does not use these overt comparative words. Either of these can then serve to introduce an analogy, a more detailed form of comparison that explains, clarifies, or makes a point. The sentences below show a simile, a metaphor, and an analogy, respectively, all used to describe the same place. Each creates a unique image.

The office was like a maze.

The office was a maze.

The office was a maze of carpeted floors and cubicle panels, seemingly set up by some mad engineer intent on entrapping visitors.

All three ways of expressing this comparison use a vivid image (that of a maze) to describe a familiar setting (an office) in a striking way. Notice, though, that the analogy uses a metaphor as a springboard to a fuller, more detailed comparison. It follows through on the initial idea of a maze by explaining what components make the office maze-like and fancifully suggests that the office was laid out confusingly on purpose. Sometimes, this sort of elaboration is appropriate, but at other times, a writer may wish to be succinct, making their point briefly but vividly before moving on. All three types of comparisons have their uses when developing characters, settings, or plots, adding to the reader's enjoyment of a story.

Activity

On a sheet of paper, computer, or tablet, write a brief paragraph in which you use at least one simile, one metaphor, and one analogy to describe a setting in detail.

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: The parking lot was an enormous desert of blacktop, heat rippling like a mirage in the early afternoon sun. Cars hunkered like huge scarabs on the dark pavement, their carapaces catching the light and throwing it back in Jess's face. Tired, thirsty, and late for her next appointment, Jess felt like a camel driver who had strayed from her caravan. She clicked her key fob again and again, hoping to hear an answering chirp.

Check-In

Practice writing a simile, metaphor, and analogy. Write your answers on a sheet of paper, a computer, or tablet.

Activity 1

Create a simile to describe your initial impression of a person. Explain how your choice of simile adds vividness and interest beyond that of a literal description.

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: Simile: When I was little, Uncle Victor seemed as stern and imposing as a statue, and I thought he didn't like us kids. Explanation: By likening Uncle Victor to a statue, an object with no emotions, I can show how my initial impression of him was quite extreme. If I just said he was "stern and imposing," it wouldn't capture the impression he made on me as effectively.

Need a little extra support?

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Activity 2

Thinking about the same person you described in the previous activity, think creatively to write a metaphor that shows them in a different light. Explain why your metaphor is effective.

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: Metaphor: Only later did I realize that Uncle Victor could be a jokester, even a bit of a clown—not often, but occasionally, when it suited him.

Explanation: I think this is effective because many readers will have their own memories about the silly antics of clowns. Using this metaphor lets me draw on readers' own experiences without having to use a bunch of adjectives like "funny," "silly," or "humorous." Those might get the same point across, but they would do so less vividly.

Activity 3

Expand on either your simile or your metaphor in the form of an analogy that further describes your chosen person. Explain how your analogy clarifies or makes a point and introduces further vividness and detail beyond the original comparison.

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: Analogy: When I was little, Uncle Victor seemed as stern and imposing as a statue. At Thanksgiving he would sit at the other end of the table, hardly speaking, with a scowl seemingly chiseled onto his face. Since he never laughed at our jokes or silly behavior, I assumed for a long time that he just didn't like us kids. Explanation: I continued the statue simile by showing how Uncle Victor's facial expression seemed "chiseled" onto his face, and how he almost never spoke or laughed. Although it would be unrealistic to say that he *never* spoke, his quiet and unexpressive behavior clarifies the image of him being like a statue.

Practice

Thinking creatively, use comparative language to provide a rich description of an event you could submit for publication in a literary magazine.

Activity

Write at least two paragraphs, using similes, metaphors, and analogies to provide a rich and vivid description of a memorable event from your life. Do your best to use at least one simile, one metaphor, and one detailed analogy. It may help to decide on a central analogy that captures the event, then add further detail from there.

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: I hated the allergenic dustiness of the cabin, but I soon fell in love with the lake. The first time, I tentatively climbed down the ladder off the dock, shuddering as the cold water in turn climbed up my legs and sides. It didn't take long, though, before I felt the cold melt away, and I almost couldn't tell where I ended and the water began. Next time, I would forgo the ladder and leap.

Floating there as the sun set, I felt like an astronaut adrift in the vastness of space, looking out—not up—at the first stars of the evening. Surrounded by the darkening water, I lost track of time and place. The cabin was a planet I merely happened to orbit, the light on the dock a tiny, distant satellite. For years after, the lake was a sanctuary during our trips up to the Metacomet Ridge, a cradle I could never completely outgrow.

How Did I Do?

Assess your response to the Practice activity by completing this checklist. If necessary, go back and revise your work.

1. _____ I wrote two paragraphs about an event.

2. _____ I responded to the entire prompt.
 3. _____ I distinguished among the types of comparisons and used them accurately.
 4. _____ I produced similes, metaphors, and analogies to describe my chosen event in a precise, realistic, and vivid way.
 5. _____ I used correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
-

Mood and Sensory Language

Unit Reading Information

In this unit, you will read "The Raven" and "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County" unless otherwise directed by your teacher.

Select the links to access the texts and reading logs.

The Raven

Reading Log: The Raven

The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County

Reading Log: The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County

Objective and Key Words

Objective

In this section, you will analyze how nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations influences mood or tone in literary text.

Key Words

- **connotations** – the associations attached to a word, which may be positive, negative, or neutral
 - **denotations** – the literal meanings of words
 - **first-person narration** – storytelling in which a character narrates the action through their own perspective, using the pronoun *I*
 - **mood** – the atmosphere or emotional quality that a reader detects from a text as they read
 - **nuances** – subtle or slight degrees of difference in a word's meaning
 - **third-person narration** – a point of view from outside the narrative, using the pronouns *he*, *she*, or *they*
 - **tone** – the author's attitude toward the events or characters in a literary text, as conveyed through word choices and the use of literary devices
-

Analyzing Nuances in Word Meanings



Source: Maciej Maksymowicz. 123rf.com

Every word evokes different feelings and ideas in a person's mind. Some words have similar denotations, or literal meanings. For example, *damp*, *moist*, and *drenched* are all words that describe the state of being wet. However, words also have unique connotations, or the resonances that people associate with each one. Think about the difference between a towel that is damp and one that is drenched.

Like brushstrokes of paint merging to form a picture or notes harmonizing to make a song, nuances in the meaning of words combine to shape the mood and tone of a text. The mood is the atmosphere of a story and the emotions a reader feels as they read it. The tone is the attitude of the author toward what is happening. In fiction, the tone will come from the narrator or a character through whose eyes the reader experiences the events of the story.

Get Ready to Read

In Beth Gilstrap’s short story “‘Sinking and Swaddled’ from Deadheading and Other Stories,” Ona leaves her mother and family home sinking behind her as she searches for safety and salvation on higher ground. Her mother has “succumbed to a sinking disease” and refuses to leave her bedroom, but Ona believes she can find a better life ahead.

Take Notes as You Read

As you read this excerpt, look for how the author uses nuances in the meaning of words to influence the mood and tone of this story. Consider the tone, or what Ona’s attitude is toward her life and the challenges she is facing. Record your findings in your Reading Log.

Useful Vocabulary

1. **hitch:** to move by a sudden tug or jerk
 2. **mite:** a slang way of saying “a very tiny bit”
 3. **prefab:** a small house built from pieces made in a factory and assembled quickly on location
 4. **swaddled:** wrapped tightly in a cloth, usually done to soothe a baby
 5. **swindled:** obtained something by behaving in a deceptive manner
-

Analyzing Nuances in Word Meanings

Mood and Tone



Source: lightpoet. Shutterstock

One role the mood of a text can play is connecting the reader emotionally to the surroundings within the story. The emotions kindled in the reader by the atmosphere can draw the reader closer to the events and inspire the reader to care more deeply about the characters and what happens to them.

The kind of narration an author chooses to use, such as first-person narration or third-person narration, can help to set the tone of the story and help the reader understand a character better. The narration can reveal the character's attitude about life and the events of the story. The word choices and the way that the story is told will reflect their feelings and opinions.

As you watch the following video, observe how the student analyzes the differences of meaning in sets of words from “‘Sinking and Swaddled’ from Deadheading and Other Stories” and explains how these nuances of meaning influence the mood and tone of the story.

Video cannot be displayed on Print Preview

Now, answer the questions.

Question 1

What are some reasons why an author might choose one particular word over another one?

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: An author might choose a particular word to be as precise as possible or to create a specific mood or tone.

Question 2

How can you explain the difference between mood and tone?

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: The mood is the atmosphere or emotional quality of a text, while the tone is the author's attitude that gets revealed through the narrator or the words spoken by the characters and the description of events. An author influences mood or tone by selecting particular words that influence the reader.

Check-In

Reread the following two excerpts from “‘Sinking and Swaddled’ from *Deadheading and Other Stories*.” Then, answer the questions that follow each section.

Question 1

How do the words *drop*, *sunk*, *dove*, and *sinking* share a similar denotation?

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

All of these words have a similar literal meaning of moving or falling downward.

Need a little extra support?

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Question 2

What mood is emphasized by the author’s use of the words *drop*, *sunk*, *dove*, and *sinking* because of their similar denotations?

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: Used so closely together, the repetition of words creates a depressing mood, where everything seems to be inescapably pulled downward in the end, one way or another.

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Question 3

How do the words *determined*, *settled*, and *concluded* share a similar denotation?

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: These words are both related to fixing something in place. If you determine something, you decide it is going to be a certain way. If you settle somewhere, you are going to stay in that place. If you conclude something, you are set on that being the end of the matter.

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Question 4

How do the meanings of the words *determined*, *settled*, and *concluded* influence the tone of the narration of this part of the story?

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: Used so closely together, these words create a tone of firm determination, indicating Ona's attitude of being focused on taking care of herself and finding a safe place to live.

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Practice

Reread this section from “‘Sinking and Swaddled’ from Deadheading and Other Stories” to complete the activity.

Activity

In a paragraph, discuss the similar denotations of the words *sick*, *grief*, *longing*, and *numb*. Then analyze how nuances in the meaning of these words influence the mood and tone of the end of the story.

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: These words have similar denotations related to feeling unwell—feeling physically ill (*sick*) or emotionally upset (*grief*, *longing*, *numb*). Taken together, they create a melancholy mood that makes the reader feel sad for Ona and for everything she is missing, has lost, and is still wanting to have. The tone, which indicates Ona’s attitude toward her new life in this shack, is wistful, a mixture of yearning for the past and letting herself be sad in the present. She is thoughtful but does not let her feelings stop her from taking the actions necessary to make a new home for herself here.

How Did I Do?

Assess your response to the Practice activity by completing this checklist. If necessary, go back and revise your work.

1. _____ I responded to the entire prompt.
2. _____ I considered denotations of words.
3. _____ I analyzed how nuances in the meaning of words with similar denotations influenced the mood and tone of the text.
4. _____ I used specific evidence from the text to support my idea.

5. _____ I used correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

Objective and Key Words

Objective

In this section, you will draw conclusions about how an author's sensory language creates imagery in literary text.

Key Words

- **imagery** – the use of descriptive language that creates a vivid picture in the reader's mind and may evoke an emotional response
 - **kinesthetic imagery** – a literary device that conveys the feeling of movement and action
 - **sensory language** – description that appeals to the reader's senses
-

Mood and Sensory Language



Source: royalkangas. 123rf.com

Part of the joy in reading a literary text is gathering insights into the setting, characters, and events, which bring the story to life in the reader's imagination. An author may accomplish this through description, particularly the use of sensory language to engage a reader's mind and emotions. Providing details about how things look, sound, smell, taste, and feel creates imagery that makes settings, events, and characters more realistic and easier to visualize. Imagery also helps the reader connect emotionally with the text on a personal level. Kinesthetic imagery, an option that is often used in

poetry, is a recreation of the feeling of the actions and movements of people and objects.

Authors Use Sensory Language to Create Imagery

Read these examples of sensory imagery, taken from some short stories by American writer Bret Harte:

Examples of Sensory and Kinesthetic Imagery	
Sense	Example
sight	the outline of the white dunes on the peninsula showed dimly ahead
taste	the bitter fruit of the low cranberry bushes
sound	she heard the same rasping and thumping against the wall
smell	for many days after an odor of salt codfish prevailed in the settlement
touch	the baby’s cold cheek
Kinesthetic imagery	stiffened in her cramped position

Sensory language is not limited to a focus on only one sense at a time, of course.

Authors can mix appeals to many senses at once in a description, just the way a painter might combine colors on a canvas to create a more complex visual effect.

When the tide was out on the Dedlow Marsh, its extended dreariness was patent. Its spongy, low-lying surface, sluggish, inky pools, and tortuous sloughs, twisting their slimy way, eel-like, toward the open bay, were all hard facts.

Question 1

Which details appeal to a variety of senses to create the imagery of the marsh in the reader's mind?

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: Details such as “spongy and slimy” appeal to the sense of touch.

Details such as “low-lying,” “inky,” and “open” appeal to the sense of sight. Details such as “sluggish” and “twisting their slimy way” are kinesthetic images that help me understand the movement of the pools and sloughs.

Draw Conclusions About the Use of Sensory Language

Sensory language conveys information in a descriptive way, while the imagery it creates can communicate deeper levels of meaning. An author's choice of description can help the reader understand the setting, aspects of a character's personality, events of the plot, or the theme. Careful readers think deeply and use effective reasoning to draw conclusions about the author's use of sensory language and its imagery. To draw conclusions, the reader must piece together the details and information the author has provided to reach some decision or judgment.

In this passage from “High-Water Mark,” the young mother discovers that the waters on which she and her baby are floating are part of the tide coming in, which should bring them safely aground.

She dipped up the water to cool her parched throat, and found that it was salt as her tears. There was a relief, though, for by this sign she knew that she was drifting with the tide.

Question 2

How does the author’s use of sensory language affect this part of the plot?

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: The mother tests the water and finds it “salt as her tears.” On a literal level, this is good information for the reader to have to understand a key event in the plot—she and the baby are drifting with the tide. By comparing the taste of the water not just to salt, but to salty tears, the imagery helps the reader understand more clearly how the mother feels as she tries to save herself and her baby from a stressful situation. It also helps the reader to connect emotionally with the mother and to empathize with her plight.

Mood and Sensory Language

Readers benefit from observing an author's style so they can better understand a story. They draw conclusions about the author's choice of words, using the information the author provides, but also using reasoning, keen observation skills, and what they already know about life.



Source: Elena Schweitzer. Shutterstock

Read Strategically

Sometimes authors weave patterns of imagery throughout an entire text. Repeated words that appeal to the senses draw the reader's attention to a common theme or a thread of meaning. For example, in "High-Water Mark" Harte uses multiple sensory details relating to roaring sounds, gloom or darkness, and gurgling, drifting, sweeping water. These images flesh out the story of the young mother's dangerous journey across the flood to safety. They contrast with the woman's situation at the end of the story, when she regains consciousness in "bright sunlight" surrounded by "dead low water," which no longer poses any threat.

Take Notes as You Read

As you read the passage, pay attention to the sensory language that the author uses to describe the plight of a girl named Ona who is in search of a more secure home. Look for imagery and patterns of images. Record your ideas in your Reading Log.

Useful Vocabulary

1. **hitch:** to move by a sudden tug or jerk
 2. **mite:** a slang way of saying a very tiny bit
 3. **prefab:** a small house built from pieces made in a factory and assembled quickly on location
 4. **swaddled:** wrapped tightly in a cloth, usually done to soothe a baby
 5. **swindled:** obtained something by behaving in a deceptive manner
-

Check-In

Read the following passage from “Sinking and Swaddled.” Use effective reasoning to draw conclusions and answer the questions.

Question 1

How does the author describe the bedlinens and why does the imagery contribute to a deeper meaning about Ona’s mother?

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: The author uses the words *agitated*, *curled*, and *heaped on top* to appeal to the sense of sight to explain the messiness of the bedlinens on top of Ona’s mother. The bedlinens end up “sunk along with everything else.” The imagery helps the reader understand an apparent hopelessness her mother felt.

Need a little extra support?

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Question 2

What conclusions can you draw about the imagery created by the author’s use of “swaddled and maneuvered” to describe Ona while her father’s home was sinking?

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: Swaddling brings comfort to a baby. Using *swaddled* tells how Ona looked, and *maneuvered* suggests how she was moved passively by other people to keep her safe during a previous disaster. The end of this paragraph says that perhaps it was this swaddling that Ona longs for now, in the face of all the

“terrible sinking.” The imagery helps to convey to the reader Ona’s yearning to be taken care of again in the present day and draws attention to the fact that no one in her life now is taking care of Ona except Ona herself.

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Question 3

How does the author use sensory language to describe Ona’s first reaction to the “family of plates” on the butcher-block table?

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: The author uses the words “piled them one on top of the other and pulled them to her chest” to create a visual and kinesthetic image of Ona, as if she desperately needed to hold them closely to her. The author also uses the visual image of “the sight of the dust-free circles left behind” when Ona picks up the plates that cause Ona to feel grief and longing.

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Question 4

How can you relate the imagery that describes Ona and the plates to the imagery used to describe the bedlinens?

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: Both the bedlinens and the plates are described as being on top of something. Where the bedlinens are described as haphazardly heaped on Ona's mother and senselessly wasted by sinking, however, the plates are described as being carefully piled and pulled toward Ona as part of the actions she performs to take care of them. These two images provide insight into Ona's longing for things to be safe and in place. Ona couldn't do anything to stop the bedlinens, and her mother, from being senselessly wasted by sinking, but at least she can channel the impulse to save things toward caring for these plates.

Need a little extra support?

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Practice

Reread this passage from “Sinking and Swaddled.”

Activity

In a paragraph or two, use effective reasoning to draw conclusions about the author’s use of sensory language to create imagery in the final line of this story.

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: The author appeals to the sense of touch by describing Ona’s fingertips as *numb*. Ona’s fingertips are probably literally numbed from the work of washing and drying the plates and from tearing the bark to make a bed. However, this image also hints at Ona’s current emotional state. Ona has been through the difficult experience of leaving her mother behind and walking for days to find and set up a safe place to live. She was so emotional when she first found this bungalow that the sight of the plates sparked a flood of grief and longing. Now, she seems to have moved beyond those feelings to a state of numbness.

The author also appeals to the sense of sight by describing the “papery cradle” and the “uneven floorboards” in Ona’s new home. Throughout this passage, Ona has yearned to be swaddled. A cradle is a bed for a swaddled baby, but this cradle is made of paper, which is not a sturdy material like wood. Also, throughout this whole passage and her life, Ona has had to deal with unsteady ground that moves up and down unpredictably. The bungalow is the sturdiest shelter she has found so far, and she seems sure that it isn’t sinking. However, even this refuge has “uneven” floorboards.

Taken together, these images indicate that although Ona has improved her situation from where it was at the beginning of the passage, her life is not perfect yet. Her feelings are numb, and her new home will have a paper bed and an uneven floor. Still, she feels safe enough to anticipate being able to sleep, presumably peacefully, “for years.”

How Did I Do?

Assess your response to the Practice activity by completing this checklist. If necessary, go back and revise your work.

1. _____ I responded to the entire prompt.
 2. _____ I used effective reasoning to draw conclusions about how the author's use of sensory language creates imagery.
 3. _____ I included details from the story in support of my response.
 4. _____ I used correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
-

Objective and Key Words

Objective

In this section, you will draw conclusions about how an author's sensory language affects mood or tone in literary text.

Key Words

- **mood** – the atmosphere or emotional quality that a reader detects from a text as they read
 - **point of view** – the standpoint from which a story is told
 - **tone** – the author's attitude toward the events or characters of a literary text, as conveyed through word choices and the use of literary devices
-

Mood and Sensory Language



Source: WhiteTag. Shutterstock

Authors do not use sensory language only to help readers visualize the settings, characters, and events of a story. They also use sensory details and imagery, including kinesthetic imagery, which conveys the feeling of movement, to engage the feelings and thoughts of their readers to create the mood and tone of a text and to draw readers into the deeper meaning of the story.

The mood is the atmosphere of the story, which evokes certain emotions and responses from the reader. Possible moods for a story might be tense, gloomy, hopeful, or jubilant. The tone is the author's attitude toward and opinion about what is happening. In a fictional story, the narrator or main character will set the tone. Possible tones include grim, philosophical, judgmental, or flippant. Careful readers piece together sensory details and imagery with information they already know to draw conclusions about what mood and tone is being created and why the author might be using this mood and tone.

Read this passage from the novel *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë. Jane Eyre has recently discovered that the man she loves has a terrible reason why he is not free to marry her. Instead of staying near him and being tempted to be with him, she has fled across the countryside, losing her possessions along the way. Poor and homeless, she spots a light and moves toward it rather than giving in to the urge to freeze to death in the rainy night.

Question 1

Which examples of kinesthetic imagery and sensory details can you cite?

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: In this passage, Brontë uses sensory details that appeal to the senses of sight and touch, as well as some kinesthetic imagery. She uses visual details to describe the light that Jane is moving toward as “shining dim but constant through the rain” and as an object “which beamed from a sort of knoll.” She also uses visual imagery to describe the road Jane spies and moves toward as “a trace of white over the moor” and the gate Jane discovers as “a whitish object [that] gleamed before [her].” She uses tactile details to describe how Jane has to “put out [her] hand to feel the dark mass before [her]” when the light vanishes and how Jane runs her hand over “the rough stones of a low wall” and “a high and prickly hedge.” She uses kinesthetic imagery to describe how Jane “dragged [her]

exhausted limbs” forward and “rose and rallied [her] faculties.” She also uses kinesthetic imagery to describe the bog, which is “splashy and shaking.”

Taken together, these details create a suspenseful yet hopeful mood. Jane is exhausted and at one point plunged into total darkness, and her journey forces her to encounter such obstacles as a splashy bog and a prickly hedge. However, the repeated descriptions of the shining of the light ahead and the other white objects that lead Jane forward, such as the path and the gate, create an atmosphere that encourages the reader to hope that Jane will find a safe place to stay if she just perseveres and keeps going.

The tone is determined and strong. It conveys Jane’s attitude, since she is the first-person narrator. The sensory details of this passage emphasize Jane’s focus on reaching the light and how stubbornly she keeps moving forward, exploring and pushing past every physical obstacle in her way.

Read the next part of *Jane Eyre*, where Jane reaches the house from where the light is shining. Pay attention to the sensory language and imagery and think about what conclusions you can draw about the effect they have on the mood and tone of the story.

Question 2

What conclusion can you draw about the mood created by the sensory language Brontë uses in this passage?

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: Overall, the sensory language creates a mood that is gripping, but then ultimately peaceful. At first, Brontë uses sensory details that tell how the house looks. From the outside, its silhouette is “black, low, and rather long” and its window has an opening that is “screened and narrow” and covered with “the growth of ivy or some other creeping plant” with leaves “clustered thick” over the house’s wall. This makes the house seem dark and hidden and not very inviting. As the sensory details reveal what happens as Jane explores the house and peers

inside, the reader feels the emotion of wanting to see inside this dark house as well and discover the source of the light. At this point, Brontë presents the light and warmth inside the house using more positive terms. She describes the light that has drawn Jane toward the house as a “friendly gleam,” notes that there are plates “reflecting the redness and radiance of a glowing peat-fire,” and describes the “rosy peace and warmth” of the house’s hearth. She also notes how the floor of the house is “clean scoured” and how the elderly woman sitting by the candle is “scrupulously clean.” Now, when Jane sees the warm hearth and the “candle, whose ray had been [her] beacon,” the reader, too, feels attracted to the peacefulness of the scene inside. In the end, the mood is one of attractive calmness.

Question 3

What conclusion can you draw about the tone created by the sensory language Brontë uses in this passage?

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: Overall, the sensory language creates a tone that is discerning and curious. The narrator, Jane, does not just note and describe the details of the house closely, though she does explore and catalogue them thoroughly. She also passes judgment on them, deeming some to be “nothing extraordinary” and labeling the gleam “friendly” and the atmosphere by the hearth to be full of “rosy peace and warmth.”

When you read a story, think about the ways the author uses sensory language to create mood and tone. Also consider what other conclusions you can draw about the characters from the mood and tone. In these passages from *Jane Eyre*, the mood and tone Brontë creates through her use of sensory language help the reader to draw conclusions about Jane’s life at this point in the novel, revealing aspects of her personality and motivations. The mood helps the reader to connect to Jane’s situation

and empathize with her search for a safe place to stay. The tone helps the reader see how Jane's mind works and tells what type of place in the world she is searching for.

Mood and Sensory Language

Read Strategically



Source: David Woods. Shutterstock

When using sensory language to determine the tone of a story, readers should consider the [point of view](#) the author uses to tell about the subject. An author will choose sensory language that emphasizes a particular perspective through their choice of narration: first-person, second-person, or third-person narration. In *Jane Eyre*, the story is told through Jane's first-person point of view, so the reader can learn about Jane's personality from the tone she uses to present the events. Sometimes a story is recounted

by a third-person narrator who is quite removed from the events, and the tone will reflect this distance. Still other times, a story is told through the use of a third-person perspective that reflects the point of view of one of the characters. In this case again, readers can learn information about the character's nature from the tone.

Take Notes as You Read

As you read the excerpt from “Sinking and Swaddled,” pay attention to the author’s use of sensory language. Think about what the mood and tone help the reader understand about Ona and her situation. Record your ideas in your Reading Log.

Reading Log: Sinking and Swaddled

Useful Vocabulary

1. **hitch:** to move by a sudden tug or jerk
2. **mite:** a slang way of saying a very tiny bit
3. **prefab:** a small house built from pieces made in a factory and assembled quickly on location

4. swaddled: wrapped tightly in a cloth, usually done to soothe a baby

5. swindled: obtained something by behaving in a deceptive manner

Check-In

Reread this passage from “Sinking and Swaddled.” Then answer the questions.

Question 1

What conclusion can you draw about the mood created by the sensory language and imagery the author uses in this passage?

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: The mood of this passage is confident and optimistic. The author describes the bungalow by saying that it is made of “slate” and clarifying that this home “wasn’t sinking.” Taken altogether, these images convey that this home is sturdier than the one Ona has left behind. Slate is a strong building material, and this home is not sinking. Additionally, the author writes that the bungalow encloses a “birch tree that had swindled its way up and through the middle of the sweet, abandoned home.” The birch tree having “swindled” its way into the home can be compared to Ona, who also does not belong in this bungalow as such, but who may be feeling that she must use trickery to maneuver herself into the bungalow and make herself at home, since this house does not technically belong to her. Taken together, the sensory language and imagery emphasize the idea that this bungalow will be a strong and safe home for Ona, which helps to create an optimistic mood.

Need a little extra support?

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Question 2

What conclusion can you draw about the tone created by the sensory language and imagery the author uses in this passage?

Reveal Answer

Sample answer: The tone of this passage is assertive and encouraging. When describing the bungalow by saying that it is made of slate and claiming that it is not sinking, the narrator seems very sure about these facts. This certainty conveys that the attitude of the narrator is that Ona is successfully meeting her goal of finding safety on higher ground.

Need a little extra support?

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Question 3

What can you learn about Ona's character from the tone of the narrator in this passage?

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: Ona is the main character of this story, and although the story is narrated from a third-person point of view, it is told from Ona's perspective. Therefore, the assertive and encouraging tone of this passage stems from Ona's own certainty that this bungalow is safe and sturdy and will be a good choice for her new home.

Need a little extra support?

[Get Help Here](#)

Practice

Reread this passage from “Sinking and Swaddled.” Then complete the activity.

Activity

In a short essay, use text evidence to draw conclusions about how the author’s sensory language affects the mood and tone of this passage. Then evaluate what you can learn about Ona’s character from the tone of the narrator in this passage.

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: The mood of this passage is one of uncertainty and instability. This passage uses a lot of sensory kinesthetic imagery related to the actions of things moving up and down. Ona thinks she feels “the earth drop” and she thinks of all the things that sink with her mother’s house. She also thinks about how her father “sunk” years ago, when “the lake rose a mite and the ground dove a mite.” In general, there is a lot of “terrible sinking going on.” There is an atmosphere or pervading feeling that everything is being lost and nothing is to be counted on, including Ona’s father, who is apparently better off sunken below the lake than with his family.

The tone is informal and folksy. For example, the narration uses slang expressions such as “a mite.” The narration also prefaces part of a story about Ona’s father with the phrase “as legend tells,” as if the narrator is telling a tale.

Although the story is told from a third-person point of view, it is narrated from Ona’s perspective. The tone, therefore, reflects Ona’s own feelings and reactions to events. On the one hand, by using a casual and folksy tone to describe awful events like her father sinking into water, Ona distances herself from the emotional weight of dealing with these events head-on, rather than protecting herself by thinking of them as a long-ago story. However, the tone also judges the situation to be one of “terrible sinking,” so the reader can tell that at heart, Ona is aware of the seriousness of the overall situation. The informal tone could be evidence of the

narrator distancing themselves from the events because they are so very painful to Ona, and Ona is trying to protect herself from more harm as she tries to deal with her problems, since no one else is taking care of her.

How Did I Do?

Assess your response to the Practice activity by completing this checklist. If necessary, go back and revise your work.

1. _____ I responded to the entire prompt.
 2. _____ I drew conclusions about how the author's use of sensory language affects the mood and tone of the passage.
 3. _____ I evaluated what I could learn about a character from the narrator's tone.
 4. _____ I included details from the story in support of my response.
 5. _____ I used correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
-

Irony

Unit Reading Information

In this unit, you will read "The Raven" and "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County" unless otherwise directed by your teacher.

Select the links to access the texts and reading logs.

The Raven

Reading Log: The Raven

The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County

Reading Log: The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County

Objective and Key Words

Objective

In this section, you will explain the role of irony in literary works.

Key Words

- **dramatic irony** – in a work of fiction or drama, a contrast between a character's expectations and the audience's or reader's knowledge
 - **irony** – a literary technique that shows a contrast between what is expected and what actually happens, or between the way things seem to be in contrast to the way they really are
 - **situational irony** – a situation whose outcome is different from what would normally be expected
 - **verbal irony** – the use of language that states the opposite of what is actually meant
-

Irony



Source: Sarah Nicholl. Shutterstock

In classic and modern literature, things often turn out differently than expected. In *Oedipus Rex*, a Greek king vows to find and punish the man who killed his father, unaware that he himself is the murderer. The audience may be rooting for the star-crossed lovers in *Romeo and Juliet* to run away and live happily ever after, but their feuding families make this impossible. Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz* goes on a long journey to learn how to get home, unaware that she already has the power to do so.

These are examples of irony. In literature, irony occurs when someone's words, or a situation created by the author, conflict with the expectations of a reader or character. In verbal irony, someone says the opposite of what they literally mean. (If you've ever said "Oh, *great*" out of frustration or disappointment, this is the kind of irony you were employing.) Dramatic irony arises when the audience or reader knows something that one of the characters doesn't. Situational irony is a little broader; it happens when things turn out differently from what we would normally expect, such as when a cat is afraid of mice.

In literature, irony plays a range of different roles. Interestingly, irony can make a funny book or play even funnier, but it can also make a sad or serious work even more somber. When will Oedipus find out that he is the killer, and how will he react? What will Dorothy do when she realizes how to get home? Irony can be revealing, shedding light on a character's true personality. Sometimes, the author uses irony to point out a lesson as a theme. The value of the seemingly conflicting effects of this literary technique is that irony engages the reader or audience—it makes people want to know how something turns out. Irony makes the reader think more deeply about the author's real meaning.

As you watch the following video, observe how the students talk about the role of irony in literary works.

Video cannot be displayed on Print Preview

Peer Model Video Transcript

Now, answer the questions.

Question 1

The video builds on the definition of irony by saying that ironic language and situations “reveal a reality” that differs from appearance. What does it mean to “reveal a reality” in this sense? Use examples as needed.

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: In verbal irony, the speaker *reveals* an attitude that contrasts with what they are literally saying. So, in this case, the reality is their true thoughts or feelings. Someone who says, “Oh boy, I love broccoli,” while grimacing and pushing the vegetable to the edge of their plate is really revealing that they do *not* love broccoli.

Likewise, in situational irony, a situation reveals that someone or something is not quite as we might expect. Consider the classic example of a fire station burning down. There, the expectation is that firehouses are safer from fire because of the people and equipment inside. The reality is that a firehouse may be well protected but is not necessarily *fireproof*.

Question 2

The students in the video argue that situational irony can help a reader, or an audience, engage more deeply with the themes of a literary work. How does irony accomplish this? In explaining, it may help to offer an example of your own or to expand on an example from the video.

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: Situational irony engages readers and audiences with a work's themes by making them reconsider their own expectations. For instance, a character in a novel might move to the big city hoping to become rich and famous. The author may present the character as smart and hardworking, yet the riches and fame never materialize. The outcome clashes with any expectation we might have that a smart, hard-working person will succeed.

This then raises the big question—Why?—and the author's answer to that question reveals themes within the work. If the character is thwarted by prejudice, then that's a possible theme: prejudice can hinder talented and hardworking people from realizing their potential. If it's a simple matter of bad luck or poor timing, then the theme may be that success depends not only on skill and work ethic, but to some degree on chance.

Check-In

Read the passage below, paying attention to how the author uses irony. Then, answer the questions.

Squadron leader Xiomara Alvarez checked the radar one more time. Enemy drones were closing in rapidly on her craft, and in a minute or less they would choke off her last chance of escaping the sector. “Perfect,” she muttered.

“Time to bail out,” Alvarez told her lieutenant, adjusting her headset as she looked over the instrument panel. With some fancy maneuvering, they could barely make it past the tightening cordon of drones. But they would need to act quickly. Alvarez flipped a bypass switch and pushed the engine as hard as it would go. Dark foliage crowded her field of view for a second before her plane punched through into a clear night sky. Just as she was catching her breath, a loud *thud* came from her right.

“Hey, Xio!” Her kid brother Noel stood in the doorway. “Sorry to interrupt your game, but Dad says dinner’s getting cold.”

Question 1

Why might the author have chosen to employ situational irony here, instead of making it clear that the flight command scenario was not real?

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: By placing the main character in an intense and demanding situation, the author gets to show how she acts under pressure: confidently and decisively. If the low stakes (“it’s just a game”) were made clear at the start, that description would lose some of its power. Moreover, the ironic touch at the end,

when it's discovered that "Squadron leader Xiomara Alvarez" was not actually flying an aircraft, helps to underscore how immersed she was in her game. If the story were to continue, perhaps we'd learn that this is an important hobby for her, or a way of escaping the pressures of daily life, or a step toward her aspirations of flying a real fighter jet.

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Question 2

Does irony always serve to underscore the major themes of a literary text?

Why or why not?

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: Situational and dramatic irony often contribute to the development of a work's themes by causing readers to stop, think beyond the surface level, and reconsider their own expectations about the meaning of a story. However, this isn't always the case. These types of irony can also be used simply to lighten the mood or to keep a reader engaged and alert as a complicated plot unfolds. Verbal irony has many other uses that might not directly advance the themes of a work, such as helping to establish a character's personality, giving characters a distinctive voice, or illustrating a character's motivations.

Practice

Use what you learned about the role of irony to complete the activity.

Activity

How Did I Do?

Assess your response to the Practice activity by completing this checklist. If necessary, go back and revise your work.

1. _____ I responded to each part of the prompt.
 2. _____ I used irony in my own passage.
 3. _____ I explained the role of irony in my writing.
 4. _____ I used correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
-

Objective and Key Words

Objective

In this section, you will differentiate between kinds of irony: verbal, dramatic, and situational.

Key Words

- **dramatic irony** – in a work of fiction or drama, a contrast between a character's expectations and the audience's or reader's knowledge
 - **irony** – a literary technique that shows a contrast between what is expected and what actually happens, or between the way things seem to be in contrast to the way they really are
 - **situational irony** – a situation whose outcome is different from what would normally be expected
 - **verbal irony** – the use of language that states the opposite of what is actually meant
-

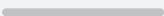


Types of Irony



Source: Nicholas Piccillo. Shutterstock

Irony contrasts expectation and reality. Distinguishing the different types of irony is useful in analyzing a work of literature, and it can help you be more resourceful in your own writing.

As you listen to the following podcast, notice the differences between three kinds of irony.

▶ 0:00 / 0:00   

Isn't it Ironic? Transcript

Dramatic irony occurs when the audience or readers of a work know something important that a character within the work does not. For instance, in Shakespeare's

Comedy of Errors, the people of Ephesus get very confused because they don't realize they are dealing with identical twins. Scott and Toya in the podcast refer to this as the "MVP" of irony because it has been used in major works of dramatic literature for thousands of years.

Situational irony creates a contrast based on normal expectations that a reader or audience might have. An outcome defies our expectations about what is likely to happen. In the podcast, Toya gives the example of a star kicker who misses an important goal. The kicker's past performance sets up the expectation that they will do well, but that expectation is then disappointed.

Verbal irony is when someone says the opposite of what they mean, often for purposes of humor or criticism—for example, saying "Oh, too bad!" when a boring meeting gets cancelled. The podcast commentators say it's "sometimes overlooked" because it doesn't work quite the same way as dramatic and situational irony. Those other types of irony involve what happens, but verbal irony is all about what is said.

Check-In

Use your understanding of the kinds of irony to classify each example. Then, answer the questions.

Question 1

In your own words, how are dramatic and situational irony similar? Refer to the examples from the previous exercise if you need to.

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: In both dramatic and situational irony, something happens that defies somebody's expectations. In the example with the chocolate cake, Swetha brings a dessert that she probably expects her friend to like, but it turns out (and the reader knows) that her friend is allergic to an ingredient in the dessert. In the zookeeper example, the reader likely expects that someone who works in a zoo is not afraid of animals. The zookeeper's fear of cats clashes with that expectation.

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Question 2

How do dramatic and situational irony differ? Again, refer to the examples from the Classify exercise as needed.

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: The difference between these two types of irony is *whose* expectations are being challenged. In dramatic irony, a character is left out of the loop on some piece of knowledge that might affect their actions. We, the readers or

audience, know that the character's expectations don't match reality. In situational irony, it's the other way around. The readers or audience have some general expectations, and the events or actions in the story fail to uphold those expectations in a striking way.

Practice

Different types of irony can work together within the same piece of writing. For instance, a parent might jokingly make an ironic statement (verbal irony) that their child takes seriously. Since the reader knows that the child is misunderstanding the joke, this is also an example of dramatic irony—the readers know something a character does not. Complete the activity.

Activity

Write a short scene that uses at least two of the kinds of irony discussed in this section. Then, in a brief paragraph, identify and explain which types of irony you chose.

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: The old theater had been abandoned for as long as Kenta had been alive, probably longer. It was one of those weird, derelict spaces in the middle of the otherwise cheery downtown, like the spooky house at the end of the road in a horror flick. Kenta had gone in on a dare, and he wanted to score his proof—film from the projectionist's room—and get out as quickly as possible.

As he made his way up the saggy, carpeted stairs, Kenta did not notice the lights coming on in the lobby below him. He slunk like a cat into the projector room, stifling the car keys on his belt and trying not to disturb any creaky floorboards. Slowly, with gloved hands, he opened drawer after drawer of the rusty film cabinets, looking for his “souvenir.”

Suddenly, Kenta heard a door opening below him. He froze. Who, or what, could be haunting this shabby old theater? Through the narrow window at the front of the room, he peered down onto the rows of empty seats. Halfway down the center aisle was a man in a hard hat and a suit, plus two others more casually dressed. They didn't look like trespassers, but Kenta was sure they wouldn't take kindly to his presence.

The first paragraph sets up two kinds of irony: dramatic and situational. The situational irony is that, based on how long the theater has been abandoned, the reader has no reason to believe it will be occupied—and yet it is. The dramatic irony occurs when the lights go on and Kenta fails to notice. For the rest of that paragraph, the reader is on alert that someone else is in the theater and waiting to see when (and how) Kenta will find out.

How Did I Do?

Assess your response to the Practice activity by completing this checklist. If necessary, go back and revise your work.

1. _____ I responded to each part of the prompt.
 2. _____ I used at least two types of irony in my writing.
 3. _____ I clearly explained how the types of irony I used differed.
 4. _____ I used correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
-

Objective and Key Words

Objective

In this section, you will analyze the use of irony in literary works.

Key Words

- **dramatic irony** – in a work of fiction or drama, a contrast between a character's expectations and the audience's or reader's knowledge
 - **irony** – a literary technique that shows a contrast between what is expected and what actually happens, or between the way things seem to be in contrast to the way they really are
 - **situational irony** – a situation whose outcome is different from what would normally be expected
 - **verbal irony** – the use of language that states the opposite of what is actually meant
-

Analyzing Irony



Source: Shutterstock

Like instruments in an orchestra, literary devices work together to create an experience or convey a message. Identifying irony is a first step to analyzing how an author uses it. It's similar to recognizing the sound of a trumpet and noticing how it contributes to the entire ensemble.

Recognize different types of irony, such as verbal irony, where someone says the opposite of what they mean; situational irony, in which an outcome defies what the

reader or audience would normally expect; and dramatic irony, which is when the audience knows something important that a character does not.

Analyze the Use of Irony

The effects of irony can best be understood when it is analyzed in the context of the whole work—the entire story, poem, play, or essay in which it is used. That context includes other literary elements the author uses, such as dialogue. Contextual elements can intensify or otherwise shed light on an ironic incident, gesture, or statement in a work—helping the reader decide, for instance, whether an ironic comment that a character makes should be taken playfully or maliciously.

Sometimes, an orchestral instrument largely appears in the background of a piece; other times, it has lengthy solos where it is clearly heard and defines the atmosphere of the music. Likewise, irony can play a wide range of roles in a written work. It can provide incidental bits of color and drama, or it can define the entire arc of the story. Either way, it depends on context for its full effect. Consider, for instance, the following introduction to the plot of a story:

When Pádraig won the lottery, he expected to be very happy, but it turned out that he was very sad.

This is an ironic situation, but in explaining how Pádraig came to feel sadness at what seems like such good fortune, the author will likely depend on context to show the changing events that led to his changing feelings. Using irony effectively makes a story interesting or memorable, but skilled authors usually employ additional literary devices in addition to irony to heighten the drama or interest and to focus the reader's attention.

Check-In

Read the following poem by Emily Dickinson, first published in 1878 under the title “Success.” Then, answer the questions.

Question 1

What is the main irony expressed in Dickinson’s poem? What kind of irony is it and how do you know?

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: Most people would probably think that “comprehending” success requires some experience of it. After all, many life experiences—such as falling in love—are deemed impossible to understand unless one has lived through them. Here, however, Dickinson proposes that the people who most understand success (or its equivalents in the poem, victory or triumph) are the ones who *never* get to experience those things. This claim is situational irony because it defies a common expectation that people may have, namely, that knowledge and understanding are gained through experience. Even if this isn’t completely true, Dickinson may make this thought-provoking statement to show that when something is rare or scarce, it is often more appreciated.

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Question 2

What other specific images or devices does Dickinson use to complement the ironic message of her poem? Evaluate how images heighten the emotional extremes.

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: Dickinson uses several vivid images to show how thrilling victory is and how terrible it can feel to fail or lose. Both emotional extremes are heightened by specific choices the poet makes. For instance, at the end of the poem, Dickinson singles out the defeated person as an individual, cut off from the victory celebration, while the “purple host” are a group who get to celebrate together. She uses synecdoche when she describes this same person in terms of the “forbidden ear” that hears the victory fanfare of others.

At the other extreme, Dickinson uses rich and luxurious-sounding images (“nectar,” “purple host”) to make both winning and the winners seem glorious. Those same images have a classical overtone; they sound like something that comes out of a Greek or Roman myth. Thus, they give the poem a certain grandeur that it wouldn’t have if Dickinson had referred to people winning and losing at checkers or table tennis. Victory, in Dickinson’s poem, is a grand thing that a group experiences together, while defeat is miserable and isolating.

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Question 3

In illustrating her ironic message, Dickinson refers to winners and losers of a battle. Evaluate if it’s possible for the irony that she identifies to apply to people in other situations.

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: In discussing the battle, with its “purple host” of winners and their “defeated, dying” opponents, Dickinson suggests that the losers of the fight are the ones who really know what victory is all about. I have never been on a battlefield,

but I don't think this is true in other areas of life. For instance, in business, it would be hard to argue that people who fail know more about success than people who start a successful company. Or consider sports—the athletes who win the gold at the Olympics seem to have a very “clear” sense of what victory is and what they must do to achieve it.

Need a little extra support?

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Practice

Reread Emily Dickinson's poem "Success" with your reflections on irony fresh in your mind. Then, complete the activity.

Activity

Overall, do you agree or disagree with the message of Dickinson's poem? As you articulate your position, make clear reference to Dickinson's use of irony and other literary devices, saying why you find these effective or ineffective. Write an extended response, building on the observations you made earlier.

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: In her poem "Success," Emily Dickinson makes the boldly ironic claim that success and victory can only really be appreciated by "those who ne'er succeed." Although Dickinson uses a wide range of literary devices to embellish her argument, I ultimately disagree with the message she is conveying here. I think success is like most other kinds of human experiences; namely, we learn about it best by actually living through it. In other words, I think the ironic idea of the poem is interesting to ponder, but not true in real life. Think about it—who would you choose to give a talk about success in business, someone who founded a big, successful company or someone whose startup failed before it left their garage? Dickinson doesn't mention success in business, though, because she is trying to appeal to the reader's emotions. So instead, she presents grand, mythological-sounding situations in which the irony has a tragic dimension to it. She mentions a person who is in "sorest need," or suffering greatly, and suggests that, ironically, only they can truly understand what nectar is. (My take is that, if they've never tasted it, they can only *imagine* what nectar is.) Then, she takes us to the battlefield for the last eight lines of the poem and shows us a "defeated, dying" person who, unlike the winners, really understands what victory is. The reader is likely to sympathize with the defeated person and the person in "sorest need"; in that sense, Dickinson's choices of imagery are very effective and part of why this

poem is considered a classic. Beneath the emotional appeal, though, it just doesn't add up, in my opinion. The people who actually know what victory is are the ones marching away with the flag, even if they don't win our sympathy in the poem.

How Did I Do?

Assess your response to the Practice activity by completing this checklist. If necessary, go back and revise your work.

1. _____ I stated whether I agreed or disagreed with the poet's message.
 2. _____ I articulated my position by analyzing the use of irony in context.
 3. _____ I analyzed irony alongside other elements of the work as effective or ineffective.
 4. _____ I used correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
-

Context

Unit Reading Information

In this unit, you will read "The Raven" and "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County" unless otherwise directed by your teacher.

Select the links to access the texts and reading logs.

The Raven

Reading Log: The Raven

The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County

Reading Log: The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County

Objective and Key Words

Objective

In this section, you will relate the figurative language of a literary work to its historical setting.

Key Words

- **context** – the set of circumstances in which an event or situation takes place, which affects the behavior and reactions of the people involved and that can help explain and interpret what is happening and why
 - **epigraph** – a short quotation placed at the beginning of a chapter that may relate to the content of the chapter in ways such as hinting at its theme, linking this work to other works, or serving as a preface to what follows
 - **historical fiction** – a type of fiction in which a made-up story is set during a real historical time or event
 - **idioms** – phrases or expressions whose meanings cannot be figured out from the individual literal meanings of the words used in the expressions but instead have figurative, nonliteral meanings when taken as a whole
 - **imagery** – the use of descriptive language that creates a vivid picture in the reader's mind and may evoke an emotional response
-

Context



Dividing East Berlin from West Berlin, the Berlin Wall ran right across Bernauer Strasse, the street one street away from the apartment where Luisa and her father live in West Berlin.

Source: Everett Historical. Shutterstock

Both history books and encyclopedias can teach readers about important moments from long-ago. However, historical fiction can be a more powerful way for readers to immerse themselves in the challenges faced by people in past times. You can evaluate the way an author fashions a historical setting by examining their use of figurative language and analyzing its relation to the historical setting. Careful readers will assess

the author's use of historic details. They will consider how well each piece of information provides a key into understanding past situations and the behavior of people living then. Today, you will travel to Cold War Germany in 1961, where the Berlin Wall divides friends and families.

Get Ready to Read

In the historical novel *The Slow March of Light*, Luisa Voigt lives in a city divided in half. After World War II, the United States and the Soviet Union are no longer allies. Instead, they are struggling with each other for supremacy in the world. They are holding a “cold” war of diplomatic maneuvering and proxy wars in other countries, rather than a “hot” open conflict with weapons. The Communist Soviet Union is tightening its grip on Eastern Europe. The democratic United States and its supporters are working to keep Soviet influence from spreading to Western Europe.

Germany has become the center of this Cold War conflict, split into a free western country and a Communist eastern country. In the city of Berlin, a heavily guarded wall divides the two Germanys. Although Luisa's apartment is on the free side of the wall, this area is close enough to the Soviet side that a cold and ominous aura fills the streets.

Did You know?

In this novel, Luisa lives in West Berlin, while her grandmother lives in East Berlin. After the Allies defeated Germany in World War II, they divided up and occupied various areas of the country. They wanted to keep an eye on Germany to make sure it did not rise up in strength again and cause another world-wide conflict. The Soviet Union, France, Great Britain, and the United States each governed different zones. The city of Berlin was located inside the Soviet area, but since it was so important, it, too, was split up and governed by all four nations. In 1949, Germany formed two separate states: West Germany, allied with the free western countries of France, Great Britain, and the United States, and East Germany, allied with the increasingly oppressive Communist Soviet Union. Because people began to try to flee from East Germany through West Berlin to reach freedom to the west, the East German government, backed by the

Soviet Union, built the Berlin Wall across the city. Stretching almost 27 miles long, this concrete barrier divided east from west from 1961 until it fell in 1989.



After World War II, the Soviet Union controlled East Germany and East Berlin, while the French, British, and Americans controlled West Berlin and the western sections of the country that united to become West Germany.

Source: Peteri. Shutterstock

In this passage, Luisa is going to visit her grandmother. She wants to try to persuade her to move from East Berlin to West Berlin, where Luisa and her father live. Her grandmother has been trapped in East Berlin by the construction of the wall. Luisa is allowed to travel from one side of the wall to the other. However, the walk to the checkpoint is surprisingly threatening, and in the text just after this passage, she will need to show her passport to cross to East Berlin.

As you read the passage, use your Reading Log to record details about the historical setting of this narrative, indicating which create the strongest impression in your mind.

Reading Log: The Slow March of Light

Useful Vocabulary

1. **dynamic:** in a relationship, the influences that govern the way people in the relationship behave and interact
2. **iridescent:** showing a number of different glowing colors that shimmer and change with movement

3. **loitering:** waiting around in a public place without any apparent purpose
 4. **petrified:** so frightened that one is frozen in place as if turned to stone
 5. **sector:** a distinct part of a region that has been divided into different areas
 6. **sphere:** a range over which a country or other organization has influence
 7. **Stasi:** the secret police agency of East Germany, one of whose jobs was to spy on citizens to suppress any opposition to Communist rule
 8. **statuesque:** tall and beautiful, like a statue
-

Context



The Berlin Wall ran around the Brandenburg Gate, separating East Berlin (on the left) from West Berlin (on the right).

Source: Everett Historical. Shutterstock

Relating Figurative Language to Historical Setting

When reading historical fiction, skilled readers will continually evaluate the information presented in the text. Readers should ask themselves if the comparisons and descriptions being used by the author are historically appropriate. They should also think about whether the author's use of figurative language and literary devices such as

metaphors, personification, and idioms, as well as imagery, truly provide context and help the reader visualize a particular time and place. To be effective, these elements should work together to help readers picture and comprehend situations different from any they have encountered in their own lives. When this happens, readers can then consider how the figurative language provides a glimpse into the historical setting and relates to the greater meaning of the story and the actions of the characters.

Reread the quotation from *The Slow March of Light*:

This quotation comes from a historic speech delivered in 1946 by the real-life former Prime Minister of Great Britain, Winston Churchill. Churchill used a metaphor—an iron curtain—to describe the political and mental barrier the Soviet Union erected across Europe. The Soviet Union used this barrier to separate itself and the Eastern European countries it dominated from the influence of noncommunist Western Europe. The iron curtain was an imaginary line, but the geographic places Churchill named as lying “in the Soviet sphere” were definitely isolated from the West.

By using this quotation as the epigraph to this chapter, the author leans on this metaphor to establish a sense of the divided world in which Luisa is living. This metaphor is a key to how people at this time thought about the world in which they lived and the political situation between countries in Europe. Considering what it must have felt to live in a country mentally split in half by an iron boundary will help the reader both empathize with Luisa and understand better her physical and emotional reactions to the events in this passage.

Read another passage from *The Slow March of Light*:

Question 1

How does the author’s use of figurative language to describe this part of West Berlin relate to the historical setting?

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: I see that the author is focusing specifically on describing the part of West Berlin that bordered East Berlin at this time. In particular, the author uses personification to describe the buildings here, saying that they are “statuesque” and that they “loomed above” Luisa. Generally, the adjective “statuesque” is only used to describe people, and often the verb “loom” is used to describe an action performed by a person, the action of appearing in a large and frightening way. By using personification to describe the buildings as if they were people towering menacingly over Luisa, the author conveys the threatened feeling people living in this area experienced at this exact time in history.

Question 2

Evaluate how the figurative language and the historical setting help the reader understand Luisa and her reactions better.

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: Even though Luisa is living in West Berlin, her neighborhood is close enough to the border that her life is heavily impacted by proximity to East Berlin. The combination of the image of the gust of wind sending her hands burrowing into her pockets and the buildings looming imposingly over her combine to explain why, mentally, Luisa appears to be in a space that makes her careful and quite reactive to potential outside threats.

As you read on or reread, look for examples of figurative language that present information about the time and place of the story. Pay attention to rich metaphors, idioms, personification, and the use of sensory imagery. Ask yourself: How does each example of figurative language relate to the historical setting? Answering this question allows you to evaluate how well the author has simultaneously engaged the reader’s imagination as well as provided details about the historical setting and clues to why characters might react as they do.

Check-In

Reread this passage from *The Slow March of Light* to answer the first two questions below.

Question 1

How does the author use figurative language in this section of the story?

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: The author uses personification to create a striking and telling image. The elderly woman warns Luisa that even though they live in West Berlin, they “are in the heart of East Germany still.” This personification is presenting East Germany as a living organism with a heart.

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Question 2

What is the relationship between the author’s use of figurative language and the historical setting?

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: The personification helps the reader understand more clearly an unfamiliar historical situation. The author makes the point that the city is not just physically located inside Soviet-influenced East Germany; this area is in the “heart” of the enemy, nestled close to the core from which oppression flows. The personification emphasizes the threatening conditions under which Luisa and the elderly woman and anyone else who values freedom over Communism lives.

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Read the next part of this section from *The Slow March of Light*. Reread it and answer the question below.

Question 3

What kinds of figurative language does the author use? Explain how they relate to the historical setting. Evaluate their effectiveness. Then explain how the figurative language and the historical setting help the reader assess Mrs. Herrmann and her actions.

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: Mrs. Herrmann, the elderly woman, uses the idiom “keep your head down.” It relates to the historical setting because of the danger and distrust. Then, the author personifies the wind, noting that the elderly woman speaks about her actions helping girls in the city “before the wind could sweep away her words.” Treating the wind as a being with the agency to sweep words away adds to the overall sense of living in an oppressed environment, where people’s words can be swept away without their consent. Together, the personification and the idiom provide details that help the reader visualize this historical setting and convey figuratively what it was like to live in this environment, where people, driven by fear, monitored their actions and words at all times. In turn, examining the figurative language and using it to understand the historical setting better allows the reader to understand the character of Mrs. Herrmann better. Mrs. Herrmann is well aware of the danger that she and Luisa face in this city. Her actions of warning Luisa and of stepping back before the wind can sweep away her words symbolizes her willingness and ability to work within this oppressive environment to take skillful risks to help Luisa and other girls like her.

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Practice

Reread this section from *The Slow March of Light* to complete the activity.

Activity

Recall that in this story, the author uses figurative language to establish the historical setting of Cold War Berlin. In a short essay, explain how the figurative language relates to the historical setting. Use your explanation to evaluate the effectiveness of the historical setting. Then assess how the figurative language and the historical setting help the reader understand Luisa and her reactions better.

Reveal Answer

Hide Answer

Sample answer: The author uses personification and sensory imagery to establish the historical setting. For example, the author personifies winter by saying it “kept a tight grip and didn’t want to let go.” By treating winter as if it were a person capable of deciding to grip an area with cold, gray weather and not let go, the author communicates the sense of what it felt like to people living in West Berlin near the Soviet sector of the city at this time. The Soviet police and the Stasi are keeping an eye on the people. Beyond that, even the weather feels like it is gripping them and keeping them under pressure in ways they have no control over.

Additionally, the author uses sensory imagery to help the reader visualize the historical setting of this specific area of Berlin. The author describes how this area of the city looked at this time, explaining that “the buildings seemed grayer,” “the streets [seemed] barer,” and “the clouds hung low and seemed almost iridescent with coal dust from heaters burning nonstop.” All of these sensory details relate to the dismal reality of the setting—this area near the Soviet sector feels gray and bare, and there is a sense of feeling under pressure since the clouds are low-hanging. The detail about the heaters burning nonstop lets the reader know that this area also feels cold, as does the description of how “the wind [seemed] colder.”

Overall, I believe that these examples of figurative language do work well together to help readers imagine and better understand the historical setting of Cold War Berlin in the early 1960s. The personification and the sensory imagery help the reader visualize what the experience of living in this time and place looked and felt like: gray, bare, and cold. They also work together to help the reader understand the silent threatening pressure the citizens were living under from being so close to the Soviet sector and the menace of oppression from East Germany.

Additionally, the figurative language and the historical setting work together to prepare the reader to consider Luisa's likely perspective on living in this time and place. As the reader learns more about the interactions Luisa has on her walk toward East Berlin, the reader will understand Luisa's state of mind from living in this gray, bare, and cold environment and will see why Luisa reacts as she does.

How Did I Do?

Assess your response to the Practice activity by completing this checklist. If necessary, go back and revise your work.

1. _____ I responded to the entire prompt.
 2. _____ I related the author's use of figurative language to the historical setting.
 3. _____ I evaluated the effectiveness of figurative language to help the reader imagine and understand the historical setting.
 4. _____ I assessed the effect of the historical setting on a character from the text.
 5. _____ I used specific evidence from the passage in support of my response.
 6. _____ I used correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
-

Objective and Key Words

Objective

In this section, you will relate the figurative language of a literary work to its cultural setting.

Key Words

- **cultural setting** – the social and cultural environment of the setting of a text, particularly as it pertains to the beliefs, values, and practices of the people who live there
 - **figurative language** – expressions used for a descriptive effect that are not literally true but imply ideas indirectly
 - **imagery** – the use of descriptive language that creates a vivid picture in the reader's mind and may evoke an emotional response
 - **metaphors** – figures of speech that imply a comparison between seemingly unlike things without using *like* or *as*
 - **personification** – an animal, object, or idea is given human characteristics
-

Context



Source: IM_photo. Shutterstock

The culture in which a person lives shapes them. It affects their beliefs and values and how they behave. When a setting is unfamiliar, it is important for a reader to use the context of a story to understand the characters and events. Today you will read a passage from a novel about a woman with a foot in two different cultures.

Get Ready to Read

In the novel *Anna In-Between*, Anna Sinclair finds herself living between two worlds. As an adult, she has carved out a life for herself as a successful book editor in Manhattan. Then, she discovers during a visit home that her mother is ailing from advanced breast cancer. Anna gets pulled back toward the Caribbean island where she grew up while she tries to figure out how best to help her parents and get treatment for her mother.

To understand a character's perspective on life, it is helpful for the reader to consider the cultural setting in which the character lives. In this case—and specifically in this passage—Anna has a unique perspective. She has experience with two different cultural settings. She is evaluating the Caribbean islands, and she is also evaluating America. The author uses figurative language to relate to the cultural setting.

Take Notes as You Read

As you read this passage, consider how the author establishes the cultural setting of Anna's Caribbean island and America, particularly the island of Manhattan, and notice details revealed with figurative language. Take notes in your Reading Log to record your observations.

Useful Vocabulary

1. **boroughs:** five smaller cities into which New York City is divided
 2. **circumscribed:** enclosed within a particular set of boundaries
 3. **congregate:** to gather together
 4. **cosmopolitan:** composed of people from many different countries
 5. **eking:** supporting oneself but only with very great effort
 6. **foreparents:** people from whom one is descended
 7. **indigenous:** having originated from or always lived in a place
 8. **intimacy:** closeness and familiarity
-

Context

Figurative Language and Cultural Settings



Source: Coleman Yuen. Pearson Education Asia Ltd

To help readers understand a cultural setting, authors might use imagery so readers can visualize aspects of an unfamiliar society in a powerful, sensory way. Authors might also use literary devices such as personification and metaphors. These types of figurative language work by presenting evocative comparisons that open readers' minds to new concepts. They influence readers to think about the world in new ways. This helps readers perceive more clearly unfamiliar customs, social classes, and patterns of

behavior of other cultures. Understanding a cultural setting can lead a reader to a deeper meaning of a text.

As you watch the following video, observe how the students discuss what a cultural setting is. Then, note how they analyze the author's use of figurative language to provide information about a cultural setting in *Anna In-Between*.

Video cannot be displayed on Print Preview

Peer Model Video Transcript

Now, answer the questions.

Question 1

How do the students explain cultural setting?

Reveal Answer

One student explains that a cultural setting is the environment as it pertains to the beliefs, values, and practices of people who live there.

Question 2

What do the students notice about the author's use of figurative language in this passage and how it relates to the cultural setting?

Reveal Answer

Sample answer: They identify an example of how the author uses metaphors to discuss the cultural setting of America. America is compared to a “melting pot,” which implies that it mixes people evenly together, which would be an ideal

situation. And yet the author also compared the cities of America to “distinct patches of an elaborate quilt,” which implies that different races of people live in distinct areas.

Check-In

Think about what you learned about how figurative language can relate to the cultural setting as you complete the Matching Interactive. Then, complete the activity.

Now, reread this passage from *Anna In-Between* to complete the activity. The girl referred to in the first paragraph is Anna's former assistant in Manhattan, an Indian from South Africa. Anna is upset that this girl's parents were able to immigrate from Africa and create a successful life, while prejudice and violence made it harder for Black South Africans to thrive.

Activity

What does the figurative language reveal about the cultural settings Anna is thinking about? How does it help the reader understand more clearly the comparison Anna is beginning to set up between her two worlds?

Reveal Answer

Sample answer: Anna is contrasting the cultural setting in America with the cultural situation in her Caribbean island. Her island has entered a "new day," where "the children of this past make peace with what had happened before." The "new day" is metaphorical, drawing attention to the new state of affairs, where people of different races are co-existing well. The descendants of previous inhabitants of the island cannot literally make peace with past events, but by personifying the events and saying the people today do "make peace with what happened before," the narrative again emphasizes this new state of affairs. This contrasts with the situation in America, where America is personified as a being that teaches its inhabitants to be overly sensitive to racial issues. Here, Anna's assistant is described metaphorically as "bearing the burden of her parents' past," to emphasize how heavily racial issues from before her time still weigh her down.

Practice

Reread the paragraphs from *Anna In-Between*. Then, complete the activity.

Activity

In one or two paragraphs, explain how the author's use of figurative language relates to the two cultural settings described. Explain how readers can understand the overall point the author is making about Anna's perspective on the two places she calls home.

Reveal Answer

Sample answer: Overall, the author is making the point that Anna believes that her Caribbean island is more successfully mixed than the island of Manhattan. In the first paragraph, the author uses the metaphor "bloods that run through her parents' veins." This emphasizes how people from different races peacefully intermingled to produce Anna's parents and draws attention to how many different kinds of people (including Ranjit Ramdoolal, Paul Bishop, and Neil Lee Pak) live together productively on Anna's island. The author also repeats from earlier the metaphor of a melting pot to make the point that Manhattan is not, actually, a place where many races mix together well. The author finalizes this point in the second paragraph, when she uses the simile "skin colors as defined and circumscribed as the black-and-white squares on a checkerboard." Instead of a melting pot where people blend together peacefully like the "many bloods" that run through Anna's parents' veins, Manhattan instead is full of races that are separated into distinct areas with people of different colors.

The figurative language helps the reader picture better the cultural setting of each place. Where people from many races blend happily together on Anna's Caribbean island, people on the island of Manhattan are firmly separated by color. The use of figurative language to make comparisons related to many bloods, melting pots, and black-and-white squares on a checkerboard clarifies for the reader the difference Anna perceives between the cultural settings of these two worlds.

How Did I Do?

Assess your response to the Practice activity by completing this checklist. If necessary, go back and revise your work.

1. _____ I responded to the entire prompt.
 2. _____ I examined the use of figurative language in this passage.
 3. _____ I related the author's use of figurative language to the cultural setting.
 4. _____ I used specific evidence from the passage in support of my response.
 5. _____ I used correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
-

Language and Style Apply

Unit Reading Information

In this unit, you will read "The Raven" and "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County" unless otherwise directed by your teacher.

Select the links to access the texts and reading logs.

The Raven

Reading Log: The Raven

The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County

Reading Log: The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County

Language and Style: Apply

Objective

In this section, you will apply skills learned throughout the unit.

Show What You Know

In this unit, you focused on skills and strategies necessary to comprehend and analyze the language and style of literary text by implementing these learning goals:

- Interpret hyperbole and paradox in context by describing their roles in a literary text.
- Analyze the role of figures of speech in literary text.
- Explain the use of similes and metaphors to create vivid descriptions and sensory images and the use of analogies to develop meaning in literary text.
- Produce similes, metaphors and analogies in order to create precise, realistic and vivid images, plots, settings, or characters.
- Analyze how nuances in the meanings of words with similar denotations influences mood or tone in a literary text.
- Draw conclusions about how an author's sensory language creates imagery and effects tone and mood in a literary text.
- Differentiate between different kinds of irony in a literary work and explain and analyze the use of each.
- Relate the figurative language in a literary work to its historical and cultural setting.

Now, you will have an opportunity to show what you have accomplished and apply your learning to the unit texts, “The Raven” and “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County.” If you haven’t already done so, take time now to finish reading the texts.

Then, spend a few minutes discussing your reading with your Learning Coach, using these questions as a guide. Notice that the questions are open-ended; there are no “correct” answers, but the questions will help you to focus on the text as you get ready to apply the learning goals you have mastered in this unit:

- Rate your overall enjoyment of each text from 1 (did not like) to 5 (liked a lot). Then, explain to your Learning Coach which text you enjoyed more and why.
- Give an example of how Edgar Allan Poe and Mark Twain might have told each tale through the point of view of a different character. How might that affect the language and style of Poe’s poem and Twain’s short story, as well as your understanding and enjoyment of each piece?
- In your opinion, which text would make a better movie? As you respond, consider not only the plots themselves, but the style in which each is written and the way each author creates a visual image suited to film.

Finally, review your notes and get ready to answer the text-related questions that follow.

Language and Style: Apply

Show What You Know

Reread this passage from “The Raven.” Then, assess your application of learning goals from this unit by answering the questions that follow.



Source: Prometheus. 123rf.com

from “The Raven”

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered weak and weary
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore—
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As if someone gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door—
“Tis some visitor,” I muttered, “tapping at my chamber door—
Only this and nothing more.”

Ah, distinctly I remember, it was in a bleak December;
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.
Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had sought to borrow
From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost Lenore—

For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore —
Nameless here forever more.

And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain
Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;
So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating,
“Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door—
Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door;—
This it is and nothing more.”

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,
“Sir,” said I, “or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;
But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,
And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,
That I scarce was sure I heard you”—here I opened wide the door;—
Darkness there and nothing more.

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before;
But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,
And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, “Lenore?”
This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word, “Lenore!”—
Merely this and nothing more.

by Edgar Allan Poe

Question 1

Reread the second line of stanza 2. Why does Poe use the word *ghost* instead of *shadow*? What analogy does he make in this line? How does it contribute to the mood of the poem?

Reveal Answer

Sample answer: Using the word *ghost* is a particularly effective way to create an eerie and ominous mood because it conveys the idea of a ghostly presence. By referring to the shadows of dying embers as ghosts, the narrator is making a clear analogy to the ghost of his dead wife who haunts him, and who he believes has come to visit him that night.

Question 2

How does the language Poe uses in the first line of the third stanza appeal to your senses and help you visualize what is happening? How does the language affect the meaning and mood of the scene?

Reveal Answer

Sample answer: The words *each purple curtain* and *uncertain rustling* help me see and hear the dark room with its heavy curtains making a “whispering” sound. The result is a very vivid and eerie image that clearly suggest the presence of a ghost or something unseen and uncertain that is causing the curtains to waver. The rhythm and alliteration in the phrase *silken, sad, uncertain* adds to the sensory impact by calling attention to the eeriness of the image, the sadness of the narrator, and the haunting thoughts that inhabit his mind.

Question 3

Interpret the use of the phrase *nothing more* as a paradox. How does the phrase affect the poem’s meaning?

Reveal Answer

Sample answer: The phrase *nothing more* conveys the idea of nothingness, but paradoxically, also of “somethingness.” At a deeper level, the speaker is also referring to the emptiness in his life and to the absence of his love. Each time he says “nothing more,” we clearly get the idea that there is something unseen and ghostly that is haunting him, whether or not it is in his mind.

Question 4

Reread the fourth stanza of the poem. How might the word *darkness* in this stanza be interpreted as a figure of speech? Analyze its use.

Reveal Answer

Sample answer: One interpretation is that Poe is using the word *darkness* to symbolize despair. This use allows him to create an ominous and eerie mood through the implied link between darkness and evil and the idea that an unseen presence is there but the darkness conceals it.

Question 5

Read the last stanza of the passage. Contrast the connotations of the words *whispered* and *murmured*. How do the connotative meanings of the words affect the mood of the scene?

Reveal Answer

Sample answer: While both words denote the action of producing a soft sound, *whispered* conveys the narrator's fear and uncertainty, while *murmured* conveys the idea of something muffled and unclear—something unseen but present. Both words point to soft sounds that accentuate the silent eeriness of the scene.

Language and Style: Apply

Show What You Know



Source: muhamad mizan bin ngateni. Shutterstock

Now, assess your application of additional learning goals from this unit by answering the questions about “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County.”

Question 1

Reread the first paragraph of the story and analyze its use of dramatic irony.

In compliance with the request of a friend of mine, who wrote me from the East, I called on good-natured, garrulous old Simon Wheeler, and inquired after my friend's friend, Leonidas W. Smiley, as requested to do, and I hereunto append the result. I have a lurking suspicion that Leonidas W. Smiley is a myth; that my friend never knew such a personage; and that he only conjectured that, if I asked old Wheeler about him, it would remind him of his infamous Jim Smiley, and he would go to work and bore me nearly to death with some infernal reminiscence of him as long and tedious as it should be useless to me. If that was the design, it certainly succeeded.

Reveal Answer

Sample answer: In the first paragraph, the narrator explains that the story of the jumping frog is tedious and pointless, yet he proceeds to convey the same story to readers.

Question 2

Explain the role of situational irony in the story and tell how it is used to create humor.

Reveal Answer

Sample answer: Situational irony is evident in the story in that the narrator builds up the frog's miraculous jumping ability, yet in the end, it never jumps. When the story reaches its conclusion, we realize the humor in this—and in the fact that we knew the story was pointless and still listened to it.

Question 3

How does Twain's use of hyperbole help to convey the historical and cultural context of the story?

Reveal Answer

Sample answer: The story is reminiscent of a tall tale, a story that was told during the years of western expansion and that uses hyperbole, or exaggeration, to stress the bigger and better quality of the West and everything in it. The town of Angel's Camp is a small town in California where old-timers sit around and tell stories, exaggerate things to make things interesting, and make playful fun of people's characters in order to amuse themselves and pass the time.

Question 4

Question 5

Reread this paragraph from the story:

Well, thish-yer Smiley had rat-tarriers, and chicken cocks, and tom- cats, and all of them kind of things, till you couldn't rest, and you couldn't fetch nothing for him to bet on but he'd match you. He ketched a frog one day, and took him home, and said he cal'klated to edercate him; and so he never done nothing for three months but set in his back yard and learn that frog to jump. And you bet you he did learn him, too. He'd give him a little punch behind, and the next minute you'd see that frog whirling in the air like a doughnut, see him turn one summerset, or may be a couple, if he got a good start, and come down flat-footed and all right, like a cat.

Choose one or more similes from the paragraph and explain how Twain uses them to create a vivid description of an image. Then, suggest how a metaphor might accomplish the same task.

Reveal Answer

Sample answer: In the last sentence, Twain includes two similes to convey to readers a precise image of what the frog looks like as it jumps and lands. “Whirling in the air like a doughnut” allows readers to visualize the frog’s body contracted into a ball as it flies through the air, while “come down flat-footed and all right, like a cat” helps readers imagine the frog landing in the exact way a cat might, with no loss of balance. Twain could have substituted metaphors to accomplish this task simply by removing the word *like*; for example, “you’d see that frog, a doughnut whirling in the air” or “come down a flat-footed cat.”

Self-Assess

Compare your answers to questions 1–10 with the sample answers. If you did well, move on to Try This. If you need more practice or review, use this chart to review the sections mentioned.

Table to Review

Question Missed	Section to Review
1	Figures of Speech, Comparisons
2	Mood and Sensory Language
3	Figures of Speech
4	Figures of Speech
5	Mood and Sensory Language
6	Irony
7	Irony
8	Figures of Speech, Context
9	Irony
10	Comparisons

Language and Style: Apply

Try This

Activity 1

Think about how you might describe the work of Edgar Allan Poe and Mark Twain in a figurative manner. Then, write one simile, one metaphor, and one analogy for each writer that gives readers a precise, vivid, and realistic image of their work or writing style.

Activity 2

Like all literary texts, both “The Raven” and “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County” are products of the time in which they were written. Both Edgar Allan Poe and Mark Twain were American writers; Poe, who published his poetic masterpiece in 1845, was raised in Virginia, while Twain, who famously grew up in Missouri (but who lived on the West coast for a time), published his short story in 1865.

In an essay of 300 to 500 words, analyze the literary styles of Poe and Twain by comparing and contrasting their use of language to create precise, vivid images and convey details regarding character, setting, and plot. Then, relate the figurative language used in each text to its historical and cultural context. (You may want to research additional information about these contexts.)

Use specific quotations and evidence from the texts to support your analysis. Organize your essay clearly and follow the rules of English grammar and punctuation.

Self-Assess

Use the rubric to decide whether your essay fulfills the standards of ideas/purpose; analysis; organization; comprehension; and grammar, conventions, and spelling.

Language and Style Apply Rubric

Language and Style Review

Unit Review

Today you will review all topics you've learned in this unit and complete a unit online practice. Review the unit introduction and the list of lessons in the course tree to engage with the topics from this unit. Make sure you feel confident about each topic before taking the assessment. If there are any topics that you forget or think you need to practice, go back and review those lessons now.

[View Learning Coach Guide](#)

Review

Read the information on the page with your student. Guide your student to review the major concepts in each unit by looking at the unit introduction and lessons.

Your student should identify the target concepts where additional practice may be needed before completing the unit's online practice.

Unit Reflect

Write a reflection about your learning in this unit. Your reflection should be at least five sentences in length. Use the following questions as a guide:

- What topics did you find most interesting in this unit?
- What skills or concepts were hard for you?
- What strategies or activities helped you to better understand a concept?
- What do you think you may need more practice with?
- What questions would you like to ask now that you have a better understanding of what you will find on the assessment?

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Reflect

Guide your student to reflect on how well they've mastered the content in the unit. Have your students use the questions provided as a guide for writing a reflection. Help your student to determine the next steps for review based on the responses given for the questions.

Study Tips

Once you have taken the unit online practice, use your results to determine if there are any topics that you need to go back and review. You may find the following approach useful while studying:

1. Review your results on lesson practice activities and assessments from throughout the unit.
2. As you review, make a list of the major concepts found in each lesson.
3. Write a summary of these concepts and place a star next to those you feel you have mastered.
4. Review the concepts that may need a bit more practice using strategies such as summarizing, making flash cards to test yourself, writing sentences with key vocabulary, working out problems or activities, or teaching a concept to a friend or family member. If other study methods work better for you, use those instead.
5. As you become more comfortable with each concept, place a star next to it and move on to the next until you are ready to complete the assessment.

[View Learning Coach Guide](#)

Study Tips

Read the study tips with your student and help identify what will be most helpful in reviewing the content from the unit. If needed, help your student brainstorm additional study tips that better fit their learning preference.

23/24 Honors English 11 A - Language and Style

Language and Style Unit Test