



Interpreting figurative language

Reading Comprehension Worksheet

Practice

Authors use **figurative language** to make descriptions *more interesting*.
Figurative language *does not mean exactly what the words say*.

- A **simile** compares two things in a creative way, *using the words "like" or "as."* Similes are thought of as artistic ways to describe things.
- A **metaphor** compares two things in a creative way *without using the words "like" or "as."* Metaphors are thought of as artistic ways to describe things.
- An **idiom** is a simile or a metaphor that *many people often use to describe something*.

Here are some short descriptions. Think about what kind of **figurative language** the author is using to make the descriptions *more interesting*.

Crow tapped Miss Hickory's hickory nut head with his long yellow beak. "Don't be so hard-headed," Miss Hickory," he said. "It is just as I have told you. The family is leaving, and you should start getting ready to move."

1. What kind of figurative language is the underlined phrase?
 - A. a simile
 - B. a metaphor
 - C. an idiom

Miss Hickory held on tight as Crow flew her to the new house he had found for her. He set her down on the edge of a large bird's nest. She looked around for a while, and decided to make the best of things. "Why, it is a penthouse!" she exclaimed.

2. What kind of figurative language is the underlined phrase?
 - A. a simile
 - B. a metaphor
 - C. an idiom

Squirrel looked embarrassed. "The reason that I keep forgetting where I buried my nuts is that I was an only child."

Miss Hickory gave Squirrel a stern look. "That is no excuse at all," she said. "Just look at you hopping about like a flea! You really should be more responsible."

3. What kind of figurative language is the underlined phrase?
- A. a simile
 - B. a metaphor
 - C. an idiom

When spring came, Miss Hickory used some soft new leaves to sew herself a skirt, and she knitted a sweater out of blades of grass. She had made it through the winter, and she was feeling more and more at home in the forest. She was as happy as a clam.

4. What kind of figurative language use in this description?
- A. a simile
 - B. a metaphor
 - C. an idiom

Each wolf cub was named for what it would do for the pack. They had names like Leader, and Thinker. But the littlest cub was just named Runt. As he grew older, Runt feared that his name was a prophecy—that he would never do anything useful for the pack.

1. What kind of figurative language is the underlined phrase?
- A. a simile
 - B. a metaphor
 - C. an idiom

One day when Runt was exploring the forest, he noticed that a storm was coming. He decided to stay out in the storm to prove that he was brave. But the storm came, and Runt was terrified. He ran like the wind, not knowing or caring where he was going.

2. What kind of figurative language is the underlined phrase?
- A. a simile
 - B. a metaphor
 - C. an idiom

The storm passed, and Runt saw a strange place in front of him. From the stories he had heard, he knew it was a place where humans lived. It smelled like danger.

3. What kind of figurative language is the underlined phrase?
- A. a simile
 - B. a metaphor
 - C. idiom

Runt looked at the human place. He saw a dog chained inside a fence. Suddenly Runt felt brave. He had stayed out in the storm. He was name-worthy. He lifted his head to let out his cub-wolf cry of "Yip-yip-yip." He heard something strange, and he stopped. It was a howl that he had heard—a wolf's howl—his own howl.

4. What kind of figurative language is the underlined phrase?
- A. a simile
 - B. a metaphor
 - C. idiom