

Understanding figurative language

Figurative language refers to using words or expressions in a different way from their usual, literal meaning. For example, speakers may use comparisons or exaggerations instead of simple facts to make their point more interesting or dramatic. *The room was as cold as ice* is an example of figurative language and means that the room was very cold, although probably not literally freezing.

6 Match the figurative phrases in bold to their meanings.

- 1 I'm afraid we might be **biting off more than we can chew**. _____
 - 2 I think it's a **potential goldmine**. _____
 - 3 That building is more **like a prison** than a potential shopping mall. _____
 - 4 We are going to give the old building **a new lease on life**. _____
- a a fresh beginning
 - b trying to do a bigger job than we can realistically do
 - c a building that no one wants to visit
 - d an opportunity to make a lot of money