

Figurative Language

Words that mean more than they say. Authors use them to paint a picture.

SIMILE

Compares two things using **like** or **as**.

The lake was as smooth as glass.

METAPHOR

Says one thing **is** another thing.

The classroom was a zoo.

PERSONIFICATION

Gives human actions to something that is not human.

The wind whispered through the trees.

HYPERBOLE

A big exaggeration that is not meant to be true.

My backpack weighs a ton.

IDIOM

A common saying that does not mean what the words say.

The test was a piece of cake.

ONOMATOPOEIA

A word that sounds like the noise it names.

The bacon sizzled in the pan.

How to read figurative language

- 1 Spot it.** Does the sentence make sense if you read it word for word? If not, it may be figurative.
- 2 Picture it.** What two things are being compared, or what is being exaggerated?
- 3 Say what it really means.** Put the idea in plain words.

Try it: “After the race, my legs were jelly.” Legs cannot be jelly, so this is a **metaphor**. Jelly is soft and wobbly. It really means: *my legs felt weak and shaky*.