

Grade 7 Playlist: Figurative Language

Aligns with *CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.4*:

- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.

Welcome

Writers often use **figurative language** in their texts. Figurative language is a word or phrase that means something different from what it actually says. Some people may wonder why writers use figurative language instead of simply saying what they mean. One way to understand this is by thinking of an artist painting a picture. Which is more interesting: a picture that is only one color and one shape, or a picture that uses multiple colors and shapes to show a person or a place?

All the types of figurative language are like the shapes and colors that an artist uses to paint a picture. Instead of using actual paints and canvases to create a picture, writers use figurative language to create a picture in the reader's mind.

Watch!

Watch this video to understand how figurative language differs from literal language:

- <https://www.opened.com/video/figurative-and-literal-screencast/490459>

Objectives

In this playlist, students will learn and practice how to:

- identify different types of figurative language.
- determine the meaning of figurative language in a text.

Review

Key Words

- **Figurative language:** words and phrases that mean something other than what they say
- **Simile:** a comparison using the words *like* or *as*
- **Metaphor:** a direct comparison that does not use the words *like* or *as*
- **Hyperbole:** an exaggerated statement



- **Idiom:** a phrase whose meaning is not based on the meaning of the individual words
- **Connotation:** an idea or feeling associated with a word

Listen!

Listen to this rap song about different types of figurative language to understand how each is used:

- <https://www.opened.com/video/figurative-language-rap-song/64173>

In the play *Pygmalion*, a language professor named Henry Higgins meets a lower-class flower girl named Eliza Doolittle. Higgins bets a friend that he can teach Eliza to be a proper lady by making her speak with a proper English accent.

Major Characters in *Pygmalion*

- Eliza Doolittle: A flower girl from a lower economic class who does not speak what is considered proper English.
- Henry Higgins: A professor who studies languages and accents of people in different parts of the world. He teaches people how to speak proper English.
- Colonel Pickering: A language scholar who wants to learn more about Higgins' work and persuades him to teach Eliza.
- Mrs. Higgins: Henry Higgins' mother
- Freddy Eynsford Hill: Falls in love with Eliza, writes letters to her, and becomes a marriage option for her by the end of the play

Exploring the Standard

When analyzing the meaning of figurative language in a text, it helps to think about these questions:

- Who is using the figurative language? What is that speaker's point of view?
- What is the figurative language describing?
- Are there any context clues that help to show the meaning of the phrase?



Teaching Notes: Figurative Language

In this playlist, students focus on identifying and explaining figurative language in a text. The following information contains ideas that teachers can incorporate into their classrooms as well as additional resources to peruse and integrate into instruction as appropriate.

Activities

1. Have students listen to the song “Why Can’t the English?” from the *My Fair Lady* soundtrack and read the song lyrics. Then, have a class discussion where students explain the figurative language in the song as well as the connotations and denotations of the words.
 - a. Metaphor: “her, a prisoner of the gutter”
 - b. Simile: “chickens, cackling in a barn, just like this one [pointing to Eliza]”
 - c. Hyperbole: “The Scotch and the Irish leave you close to tears”
2. Divide the class into groups and have each group create two sentences that use figurative language. Then, have each group create a poster that shows the literal meaning of the sentences and the figurative meaning. Encourage students to make the sentences about *Pygmalion*.

Writing Prompts

1. Ask students to find an example of figurative language from a book, musical, TV show, movie, or cartoon. Have them write a paragraph explaining what the figurative language is and what it means. What are the connotations and denotations of the words used? Does this example of figurative language have a greater meaning in the overall story? If so, what is it?
2. Ask students to write their own scene of *Pygmalion* using at least three examples of figurative language.

Additional Resources

Consider these additional resources when teaching RL.7.4:

Connotation & Tone Lesson This 16-minute video can help students understand how words in a poem or story create certain feelings. It provides many good examples of words with positive and negative connotations.

- <https://www.opened.com/video/connotation-tone-lesson/1528997>

Figurative Language Lesson Plan

In this lesson plan, students analyze poems and a short story to explore how figurative language engages readers and makes a text more powerful.

- <http://www.pdesas.org/module/content/resources/13066/view.ashx>

