

The Figure of Speech: A Tool for Improving Writing Skills will teach you how to write poetry, novels, stories, and articles like a pro. The [figure of speech](#) is the tool of writing, where the words are your ingredients. To create an effect in your writing comes after the usage of the figure of speech such as metaphor, simile, alliteration, irony, metaphor, personification, pun, and paradox. In schools, the students are supposed to learn some basic figures of speech to understand the poetry and stories which are written by the author to convey his/her meaning effectively.

Let us discuss some of the Figures of Speech which are useful for the students of secondary schools:

Definition of Figure of Speech

[Oxford Languages](#) defines the figure of speech as "a word or expression used not with its original meaning but in an imaginative way to make a special effect" Language can be written in two ways one is called "**figurative language**" and another is called "**literal language**".

- a Figurative language is a form of language that employs the figure of speech; often, poetry and novels are written using this technique.
- [Literal language](#) means exactly what it says on the page. For instance: "I took the bus because it was raining."

Types of Figure of Speech with Examples

We will discuss some important figures of speech with examples of poems from classes 10 and 12.

Imagery

Imagery is a figure of speech that "produces pictures in the minds of the people reading or listening"

Example of Imagery in "My Mother at Sixty-six" By Kamla Das

The poet uses the concept of death and youth by using imagery. "**Trees sprinting, merry children spilling.**" The poet explains this by comparing her mother's old age with trees and young children.

Simile

A simile is "a word or phrase that compares something to something else, using the words 'like' or 'as', for example, 'face like a mask' or 'white as snow; the use of such words and phrases"

Simile in My Mother's Sixty-six

“**face ashen like a corpse,**” “**as a late winter's moon.**” The poet compares her mother's old age with a corpse and winter's moon.

She uses words and phrases like “**doze, open-mouthed**”, “**wan, pale as a late winter's moon**”, to tell us that these are signs of aging. Winter's moon symbolizes the less shining moon.

Personification

In personification, the writer emphasizes humans and nonhumans by comparing them to produce the greatest effect on the reader.

Personification in My Mother at Sixty-six

The poet personifies the young trees and children. The young trees grow very fast as children are very active and are a symbol of youth, while their mother's face is pale, ashy, and corpse-like.

Metaphor

A metaphor is "a word or phrase that is used imaginatively to show that somebody/something has the same qualities as another thing"

Metaphor in My Mother at Sixty-six

“**Children spilling**” is an example of a metaphor in My Mother at Sixty-six. The action of a child is used for youth, while her mother symbolizes old age. There is a likeness between youth and children as both are in action.

Stephen Spender in his poem, An Elementary School Classroom in a Slum, uses a lot of metaphorical words to explain his point of view on social injustice and class inequalities:

- The rich schoolchildren are compared to “**gusty waves**”, which means they are healthy and energetic as compared to slum children.
- “**future painted with a fog**”: slum children's future is like a fog where nothing is visible. Their future is dark and bleak.

“**Similes and metaphors are both figures of speech that are used to make a comparison between two things that are not alike. The difference is that similes make the comparison by saying that something is like something else but metaphors make the comparison by saying that something is something else.**”

Symbols

The poet uses symbols to compare and contrast the different things in the poem, An Elementary School Classroom in a Slum

- **“squirrel’s game”**: Used for escapism from reality. The students want ‘squirrel’s game’ to escape from their pathetic conditions.
- **“civilized dome riding all cities”**: The rich people consider them civilized and are least bothered about the inhumane conditions of slums students

Repetition:

In the world of poetry, repetition is in the form of words, phrases, sentences, and stanzas. Repetition emphasizes the idea, and feeling, and creates rhythm in the poem, An Elementary School Classroom in a Slum

“Break O break open till they break the town,”

‘ Far, far’

Alliteration

"the use of the same letter or sound at the beginning of words that are close together, as in ‘he built a big boat’"

Holding a **u**nique **u**niverse **u**ndone by you

The letter "u" predominates in this sentence. This sentence utilizes alliteration effectively. Alliteration is a literary device that appears when the second or third letter's sound occurs multiple times. Additionally, in stressed syllables, alliteration is employed to emphasize a consonant note. It has a rhythmic effect, as can be observed.

Hyperbole

Hyperbole is an overstatement that can be used to emphasize a strong feeling without being taken literally.

For example:

"I was so cold I saw polar bears dancing in the night sky."

Polar bears can't dance (generally). Thus the reference of polar betos dancing in the night sky is an exaggeration of feeling extreme cold.

[Class 10 First Flight Poems Literary Devices](#)

Apostrophe

When a character addresses something or someone who isn't there or is unable to react, they use an apostrophe as a figure of speech.

Hyperbole

Exaggerating anything intentionally to enhance emphasis, urgency, or excitement is known as hyperbole.