

Figures of Speech

A figure of speech is a word or phrase that possesses a separate meaning from its literal definition.

Alliteration

Alliteration is a term to describe a literary device in which a series of words begin with the same consonant sound.

Examples:

1. From Aunt Jennifer's Tigers
 - Fingers fluttering
 - Chivalric certainty
 2. From keeping quiet
 - Sudden Strangeness
 - His hurt hands
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Hyperbole

Hyperbole uses exaggeration for emphasis or effect.

Examples include:

1. From keeping quiet
 - Victory With no survivors
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Irony

Irony occurs when there's a marked contrast between what is said and what is meant, or between appearance and reality.

Examples include:

From My mother at Sixty six

- The green trees racing (inanimate) while the mother like a corpse
-

Metaphor

A metaphor makes a comparison between two unlike things or ideas.

Examples include:

1. An Elementary school Classroom
 - The Paper-seeming boy, with rat's eyes
 - These windows, not this world, are world
 - Future painted with fog
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Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeia is the term for a word that sounds like what it is describing.

Example :

- The buzzing bee flew away.
 - The sack fell into the river with a splash.
 - The books fell on the table with a loud thump.
 - He looked at the roaring
 - The rustling leaves kept me awake
-

Oxymoron

An oxymoron is two contradictory terms used together.

Examples include:

1. From A Roadside stand
 - Greedy good doers
 - beneficent beasts of prey
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Personification

Personification gives human qualities to non-living things or ideas.

Examples include:

1. From My mother at Sixty six
 - ...young trees sprinting
 2. Keeping Quiet
 - Face of the earth
-

Simile

A simile is a comparison between two unlike things using the words "like" or "as."

Examples include:

1. From my mother at Sixty-six
 - ...face ashen like that of a corpse
 - ...pale as a late winter's moon
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APOSTROPHE

It is a direct address to some inanimate thing or some abstract idea as if it were living person or some absent person as if it were present.

Example,

- "Frailty, thy name is woman!"
 - Oh, rose, how sweet you smell and how bright you look!
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ANTITHESIS

In antithesis, a striking opposition or contrast of words is made in the same sentence in order to secure emphasis.

For example,

From An elementary School Classroom in a Slum

- Contrast between the "rootless", "stunted", "twisted", "gnarled", "dim" and "diseased" lives of the slum children with that represented in school books, maps, photographs of alpine valleys, or a bust of Shakespeare.
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Enjambment

Enjambment, derived from the French word enjambment, means to step over, or put legs across. In poetry it means moving over from one line to another without a terminating punctuation mark. It can be defined as a thought or sense, phrase or clause, in a line of poetry that does not come to an end at the line break, but moves over to the next line. In simple words, it is the running on of a sense from one couplet or line to the next without a major pause or syntactical break.

Features of an Enjambment

- Enjambment lines usually do not have a punctuation mark at the end.
- It is a running on of a thought from one line to another without final punctuation.

- It is used in poetry to trick a reader. Poets lead their readers to think of an idea, then move on the next line, giving an idea that conflicts with it.
- Multiple ideas can be expressed without using semi-colons, periods, or commas.
- It helps reinforce the main idea that might seem to be confusing with pauses.
- It helps readers to continue thinking about the idea, which is expressed in one line, and which continues through to the next.

Example:

1. From keeping quiet
 - Perhaps the Earth can teach
as when everything seems dead
And later proves to be alive.
 - If we were not single minded.....with death.
-

Repetition

Repetition is when words or phrases are repeated in a literary work. Repetition is often used in poetry or song, and it is used to create rhythm and bring attention to an idea. Repetition is also often used in speech, as a rhetorical device to bring attention to an idea.

Example:

1. From my mother at Sixty six
 - Smile and smile and smile
 2. An Elementary School Classroom
 - Far far from rivers,
 - Break O Break
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Imagery

Imagery means to use figurative language to represent objects, actions, and ideas in such a way that it appeals to our physical senses. Usually it is thought that imagery makes use of particular words that create visual representation of ideas in our minds. The word “imagery” is associated with mental pictures.

Example

1. From a thing of beauty

- flowery bands, shady boon, daffodils in green world, clear rills, cooling covert, grandeur of dooms, endless fountain of eternal drink