## **Definition of Figure of Speech**

A figure of speech is a word or [phrase](https://literarydevices.net/phrase/) that is used in a non-literal way to create an effect. This effect may be rhetorical as in the deliberate arrangement of words to achieve something poetic, or [imagery](https://literarydevices.net/imagery/) as in the use of language to suggest a visual picture or make an idea more vivid. Overall, [figures of speech](https://literarydevices.net/figure-of-speech/) function as [literary devices](https://literarydevices.net/literary-devices/) because of their expressive use of language. Words are used in other ways than their literal meanings or typical manner of application.

### **Hyperbole**

[Hyperbole](https://literarydevices.net/hyperbole/) is a figure of speech that utilizes extreme [exaggeration](https://literarydevices.net/exaggeration/) to emphasize a certain quality or feature.

* I have a million things to do.
* This suitcase weighs a ton.
* This room is an ice-box.
* I’ll die if he doesn’t [ask](https://literarydevices.net/community/ask/) me on a date.
* I’m too poor to pay attention.

### **Oxymoron**

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* open secret
* [Alone](https://literarydevices.net/alone/) together
* true lies
* controlled chaos
* pretty ugly

### **Simile**

[Simile](https://literarydevices.net/simile/) is a figure of speech in which two dissimilar things are compared to each other using the terms “like” or “as.”

* She’s as pretty as a picture.
* I’m pleased as punch.
* He’s strong like an ox.
* You are sly like a fox.
* I’m happy as a clam.

### **Metaphor**

A [metaphor](https://literarydevices.net/metaphor/) is a figure of speech that compares two different things without the use of the terms “like” or “as.”

* He is a fish out of water.
* She is a star in the sky.

### **Euphemism**

[Euphemism](https://literarydevices.net/euphemism/) is a figure of speech that refers to figurative language designed to replace words or phrases that would otherwise be considered harsh, impolite, or unpleasant.

* Last [night](https://literarydevices.net/night/), Joe’s grandfather passed away (died).
* She was starting to feel over the hill (old).
* Young adults are curious about the birds and bees (sex).
* I need to powder my nose (go to the bathroom).
* Our company has decided to let you go (fire you).

### **Personification**

[Personification](https://literarydevices.net/personification/) is a figure of speech that attributes human characteristics to something that is not human.

* I heard the wind whistling.
* The water danced across my window.
* My dog is telling me to start dinner.
* The moon is smiling at me.
* Her alarm hummed in the background.

**Alliteration** is the repetition of the beginning sounds of neighboring words. Examples include:

She sells seashells. Walter wondered where Winnie was.

Blue baby bonnets bobbed through the bayou. Nick needed new notebooks.

Fred fried frogs' legs on Friday.

**Anaphora** is a technique where several phrases or verses begin with the same word or words. For example:

"I came, I saw, I conquered." - Julius Caesar

"Mad world! Mad kings! Mad composition!" - King John II, William Shakespeare

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness." - A Tale of Two

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