

# **Shedding Light on Figurative Language: Unlocking Meaning for Student Success**







## Reading Across Genres: R.3.1 Interpreting Figurative Language

ELA.5.R.3.1	<b>Analyze</b> how figurative language contributes to meaning in text(s).
ELA.4.R.3.1	Explain <b>how figurative language contributes to meaning</b> in text(s).
ELA.3.R.3.1	Identify and explain <b>metaphors, personification, and hyperbole</b> in text(s).
ELA.2.R.3.1	Identify and explain <b>similes, idioms, and alliteration</b> in text(s).
ELA.1.R.3.1	Identify and explain descriptive words <b>and phrases</b> in text(s).
ELA.K.R.3.1	<b>Identify and explain descriptive words in text(s).</b>

## ELA Expectations

ELA.K12.EE.1.1	Cite evidence to explain and justify reasoning.
ELA.K12.EE.2.1	Read and comprehend grade-level complex texts proficiently.
ELA.K12.EE.3.1	Make inferences to support comprehension.



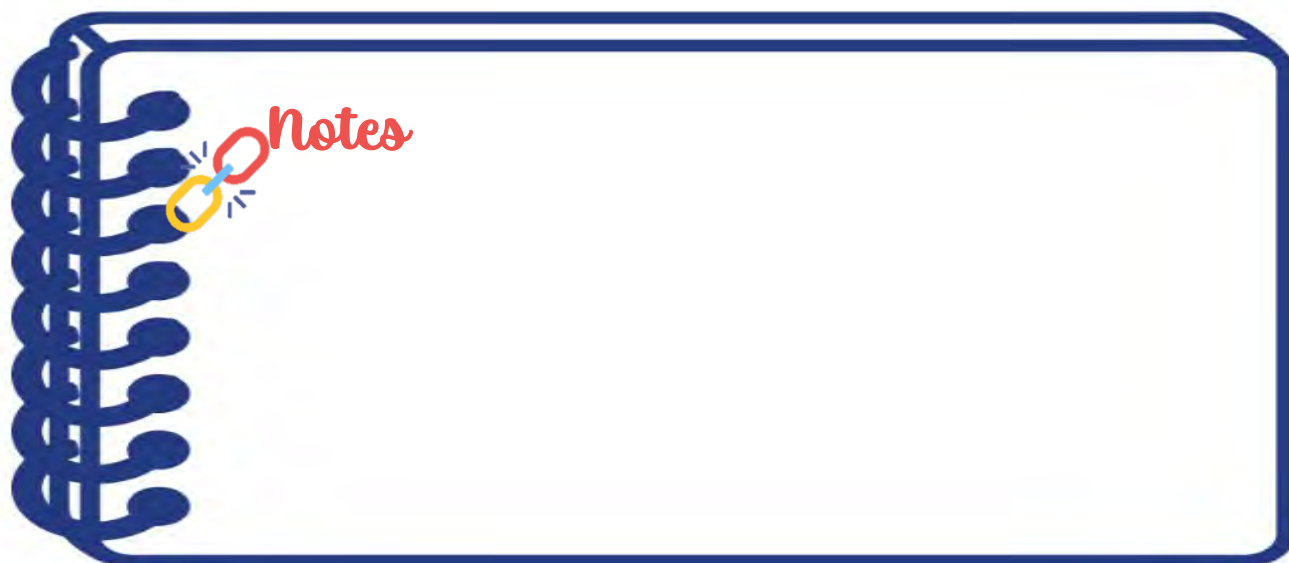


## Finding Meaning: V.1.3 Context and Connotation

ELA.5.V.1.3	Use context clues, figurative language, word relationships, reference materials, and/or background knowledge to determine the meaning of multiple-meaning and unknown words and phrases, appropriate to grade level.
ELA.4.V.1.3	Use context clues, figurative language, word relationships, reference materials, and/or background knowledge to determine the meaning of multiple-meaning and unknown words and phrases, appropriate to grade level.
ELA.3.V.1.3	Use context clues, <b>figurative language</b> , word relationships, reference materials, and/or background knowledge to determine <b>the meaning of multiple-meaning</b> and unknown words <b>and phrases, appropriate to grade level</b> .
ELA.2.V.1.3	Identify and use context clues, word relationships, reference materials, and/or background knowledge to determine the meaning of unknown words.
ELA.1.V.1.3	Identify and <b>use picture clues, context clues, word relationships, reference materials, and/or background knowledge to determine the meaning of unknown words</b> .
ELA.K.V.1.3	<b>Identify and sort common words into basic categories, relating vocabulary to background knowledge.</b>

## Reading Prose and Poetry: R.1.4 Poetry

ELA.5.R.1.4	Explain how <b>figurative language and other poetic elements work together</b> in a poem.
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### R.1.4 Poetry

ELA.5.R.1.4 Explain how **figurative language and other poetic elements work together** in a poem.

### C.1.2 Narrative Writing

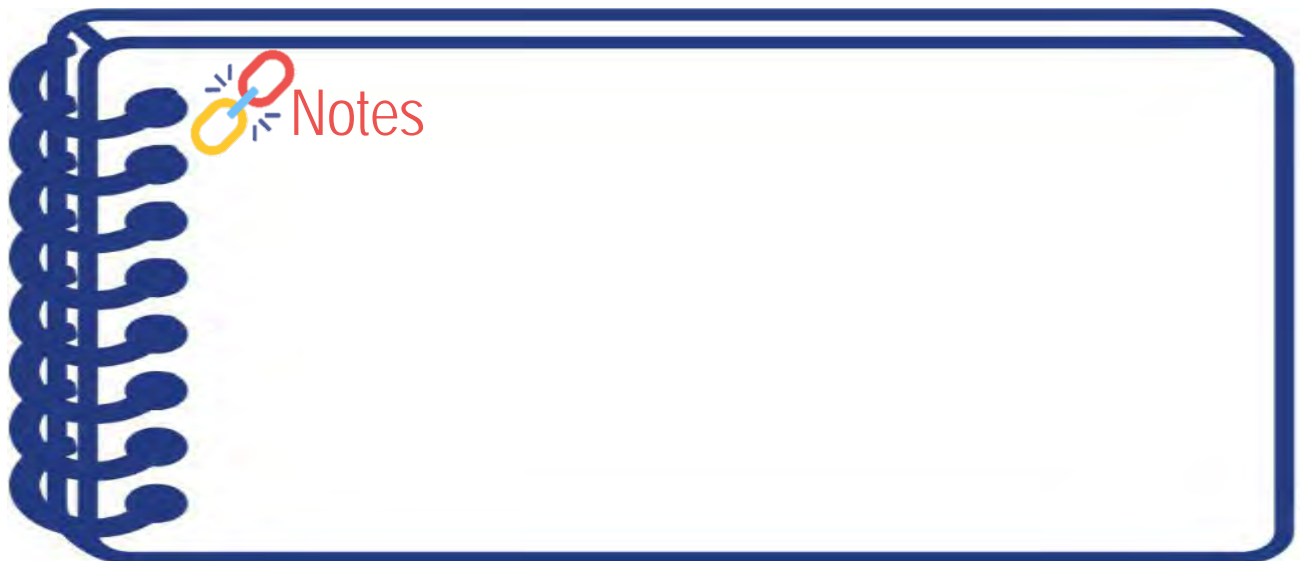
ELA.6.C.1.2 Write personal or fictional narratives using **narrative techniques, precise words and phrases, and figurative language.**

ELA.5.C.1.2 Write personal or fictional narratives using a logical sequence of events and demonstrating an **effective use** of techniques such as **dialogue**, description, and transitional words and phrases.

## Narrative Techniques

**Narrative techniques** refer to the methods writers use to tell a story, deliver content or convey a message. Narrative techniques are distinguished from literary elements as they are not *all* specific to literary text.

<u><b>Technique</b></u>	<u><b>Descriptor</b></u>	<u><b>Note</b></u>
Description	The details a writer uses to convey a message or develop literary elements.	Description includes (but is not limited to) sensory details, literal and figurative language.







## Handout #2 Figurative Language Chart and Text Complexity Rubric

### Figurative Language Chart

Figurative Language	Description	Example
alliteration	The repetition of usually initial consonant sounds in two or more neighboring words or syllables	Peter Piper picked peppers.
hyperbole	Exaggerated statements or claims not meant to be taken literally	This backpack weighs a ton.
idiom	An expression that cannot be understood from the meanings of its separate words but must be learned as a whole	Break a leg!
imagery	Writing about objects, actions, and ideas in such a way that it appeals to our five physical senses	The fresh and juicy orange is very cold and sweet.
metaphor	A word or phrase for one thing that is used to refer to another thing in order to show or suggest that they are similar	They have a heart of gold.
onomatopoeia	The forming of a word (as “buzz” or “hiss”) in imitation of a natural sound	Bam, whirl, thump, boom
personification	Representing a thing or idea as a person in art, literature	The cupcake is calling my name.
simile	A comparison of two unlike things, often introduced by like or as	The explanation was clear as mud.



### Text Complexity Rubric

Low Complexity	Mid Complexity	High Complexity
Qualitative		
The text has a single layer of meaning explicitly stated.	Blend of explicit and implicit details; few uses of multiple meanings; isolated instances of metaphor.	The text has multiple levels of meaning and there may be intentional ambiguity.
The language of the text is literal, although there may be some rhetorical devices.	Figurative language is used to build on what has already been stated plainly in the text.	Figurative language is used throughout the text; multiple interpretations may be possible.
The author's purpose or central idea of the text is immediately obvious and clear.	The author's purpose may not be explicitly stated but is readily inferred from a reading of the text.	The author's purpose is obscure and subject to interpretation.
The text is organized in a straightforward manner with explicit transitions to guide the reader.	The text is largely organized in a straightforward manner, but may contain isolated incidences of shifts in time/place, focus, or pacing.	The text is organized in a way that initially obscures meaning and has the reader build to an understanding.
Graphics are simple and restate what is written in the text.	Graphics are not essential to understanding the text but do expand on the information found in the text.	Graphics are essential to the understanding of the text and contain information not expressed in the written text.
Vocabulary consists primarily of commonly used words. These words are used literally, not figuratively.	The text uses some domain-specific words, academic vocabulary, archaic terms, or terms that can be read with ambiguity.	The text frequently uses domain-specific words, academic vocabulary, archaic terms, or terms that can be read with ambiguity.





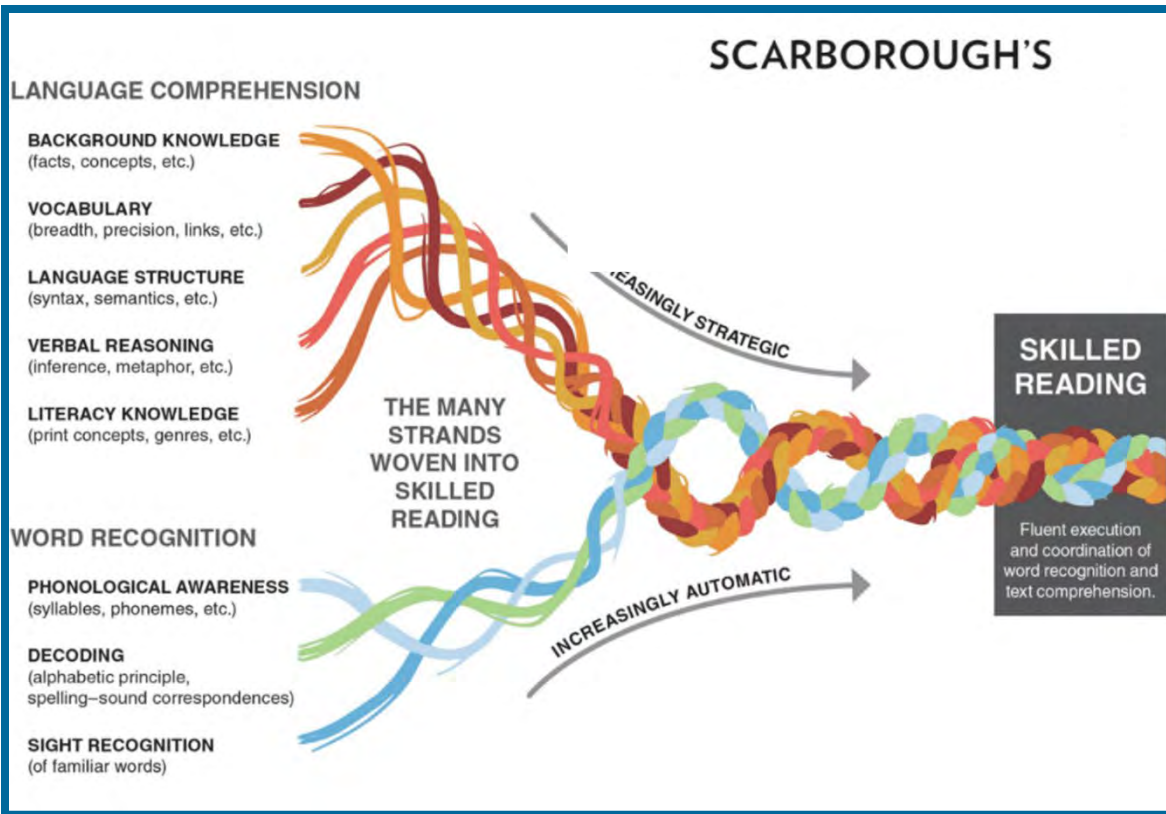


Score Point	Development
4	Effective elaboration may include original student writing combined with (but may not be limited to) paraphrasing, text evidence, examples, definitions, narrative, and/or rhetorical** techniques as appropriate to support the argument.
3	Adequate elaboration may include (but may not be limited to) a combination of original student writing with paraphrasing, text evidence, examples, definitions, narrative, and/or rhetorical** techniques as appropriate to support the argument.
2	Elaboration may attempt to develop the argument but may rely heavily on the sources, provide loosely related information, be repetitive or otherwise ineffective.
1	Elaboration may consist of confusing ideas or demonstrate lack of knowledge of elaborative techniques.

\*\*Grade 6



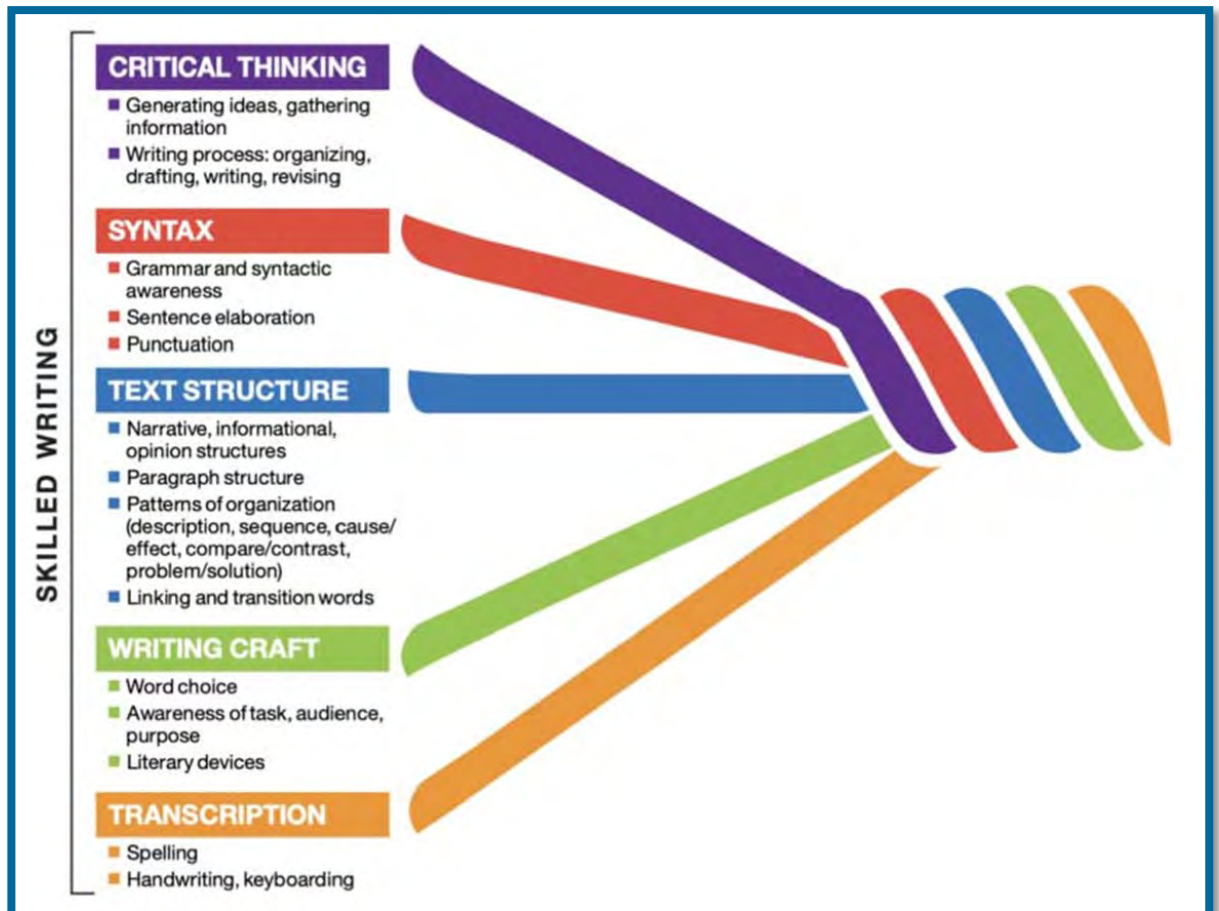




*The Reading Rope (2001)*



*The Writing Rope (2022)*





Use the following words to create a summary statement or paragraph detailing the connections between the Figurative Language Benchmarks (Handout #1), Figurative Language Chart and Text Complexity Rubric (Handout #2), Excerpts from the Grades 4-6 B.E.S.T. Writing Argumentation Rubric (Handout #3), and The Reading Rope and The Writing Rope (Handout #4).

<b>figurative language</b>	<b>benchmarks</b>	<b>reading</b>
<b>vocabulary</b>	<b>inference</b>	<b>complexity</b>
<b>elaboration</b>	<b>writing</b>	<b>language</b>
<b>verbal reasoning</b>		

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<b>Text Title</b>	<b>Sarah, Plain and Tall</b>	<b>Grade Level: 3</b>
<b>Targeted Figurative Language</b>	<b>Outside, the prairie reached out and touched the places where the sky came down.</b>	<b>Figurative Language Type:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Simile <input type="checkbox"/> Idiom <input type="checkbox"/> Alliteration <input type="checkbox"/> Metaphor <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Personification <input type="checkbox"/> Hyperbole <input type="checkbox"/> Other
<b>Guiding Questions for Instructional Implications</b>		
<b><i>Understanding the Figurative Language</i></b>		
Why did the author choose to utilize figurative language in this excerpt? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Tone/mood</i></li> <li>• <i>Imagery</i></li> <li>• <i>Emotional response</i></li> <li>• <i>Engage the reader</i></li> <li>• <i>Other</i></li> </ul>	<b>A. Imagery, as it helps the reader understand how big and vast the prairie is.</b>  <b>B. A comparison could be made between life and the prairie in the context of this passage. It seems big and unending, but it meets the sky/horizon, perhaps like “the light at the end of the tunnel.”</b>	
Does this use of figurative language build on what has already been stated plainly in the text, or are there multiple interpretations and inferences possible? If so, what are the other possibilities?	<b>The literal part describing the visual of the prairie is a more explicit detail. However, as stated above, it could allude to comparison to life.</b>	

## ***Instructional Considerations***

What instructional practices or activities would be best suited for this use of figurative language or type of figurative language?

Things to consider:

- *Is repeated use of this type of figurative language in the text?*
- *Is this an introductory lesson or review lesson for this type of figurative language?*

**There are other instances of personification within the same passage suggesting the author relies on this device for imagery. Use a two-column note organizer to compile the multiple examples, “I do/We do/You do.”**

Is the vocabulary used within the figurative language a barrier to the students’ comprehension? If so, what words need to be addressed?

**Prairie might need to be briefly explained as a type of landform.**

What writing tasks could stem from this example of figurative language?

**Have students write about a place, using personification as a tool for description.**

What do you want the students to be able to understand and learn by the end of the lesson (start with the end in mind)?

- *Exit ticket/student artifacts*
- *Formative assessment*
- *Success criteria*

**Understand that authors use personification to describe setting as well as mood and tone. The “You do” part of the two-column note would serve as a check for student understanding. You would want students to be able to either draw or write to represent the correct description of a place. An additional writing assignment could also serve as evidence of student mastery.**

Potential Misconceptions/Other Considerations



## Mentor Text Examples of Figurative Language

Type	Text	Text Excerpt
<i>Alliteration</i>	<b>The Sky Painter</b> by Margarita Engle <i>Kindergarten</i>	The owl poses calmly, looking so wise that I imagine he must know all sorts of owl secrets. When I sketch his round eyes, the narrow pencil in my hand feels as wide and free as a <b>wing in wild sky</b> . <i>page 6</i>
	<b>Drum Dream Girl</b> by Margarita Engle <i>Grade one</i>	On an island of music in a city of <b>drumbeats the drum dream girl dreamed</b> . <i>page 10</i>
<i>Idiom</i>	<b>In a Pickle and Other Funny Idioms</b> by Marvin Terban <i>Grade two</i>	Why, you are just a <b>chip off the old block!</b> <i>page 46</i>
	<b>Eleanor</b> by Barbara Cooney <i>Grade two</i>	Cousin Alice danced merrily by while Eleanor stood against the wall in misery. "Poor little soul," said Aunt Edith, "she is very plain. But <b>the ugly duckling</b> may turn out to be a swan." <i>page 28</i>
<i>Simile</i>	<b>The Sky Painter</b> by Margarita Engle <i>Kindergarten</i>	The owl poses calmly, looking so wise that I imagine he must know all sorts of owl secrets. When I sketch his round eyes, the narrow pencil in my hand <b>feels as wide and free</b> as a wing in wild sky. <i>page 6</i>
	<b>Chickens Don't Fly</b> by L. DiSiena & H. Eliot <i>Grade one</i>	One animal that's in no rush to get anywhere is the three-toed sloth, <b>which moves even slower than a snail!</b> Now that's SLOOOOOOOW. <i>page 6</i>
	<b>Moonshot: The Flight of Apollo 11</b> by Brian Floca <i>Grade three</i>	They cross the sky <b>like a torch, trailing a blaze tail</b> . <i>page 41</i>
	<b>Anne of Green Gables</b> by L.M. Montgomery <i>Grade five</i>	"Isn't that beautiful? What did that tree, leaning out from the bank, <b>all white and lacy</b> , make you think of?" she asked. "Well now, I dunno," said Matthew. "Why, a bride, of course—a <b>bride all in white with a lovely misty veil</b> ." <i>page 45</i>

Type	Type	Type
<b>Hyperbole</b>	<b>Esperanza Rising</b> by Pam Munoz Ryan <i>Grade four</i>	<b>The sun is going to eat you alive.</b> <i>page 63</i>
	<b>Little House on the Prairie</b> by Laura Ingalls Wilder <i>Grade four</i>	That prairie looked as if <b>no human eye had ever seen it before.</b> <i>page 20</i>
<b>Metaphor</b>	<b>Swimmy</b> by Leo Lionni <i>Grade one</i>	But the sea was full of wonderful creatures, and as he swam from marvel to marvel Swimmy was happy again. He saw a <b>medusa made of rainbow jelly....</b> <i>page 8</i>
	<b>Moonshot: The Flight of Apollo 11</b> by Brian Floca <i>Grade three</i>	And when the Earth has rolled beneath and rolled behind and let the astronauts go, the Saturn's last stage opens wide and releases Columbia, the small, silver ship that sat at the top of the rocket. And here, hidden till now, is <b>Eagle, too, a stranger ship, more bug than bird, a black and gold and folded spider.</b> <i>page 15</i>
	<b>Anne of Green Gables</b> by L.M. Montgomery <i>Grade five</i>	Well, that is another hope gone. ' <b>My life is a perfect graveyard of buried hopes.</b> ' That's a sentence I read in a book once, and I say it over to comfort myself whenever I'm disappointed in anything. <i>page 49</i>
<b>Personification</b>	<b>Sarah, Plain and Tall</b> by Patricia MacLachlan <i>Grade three</i>	I wiped my hands on my apron and went to the window. <b>Outside, the prairie reached out and touched the places where the sky came down.</b> Though winter was nearly over, there were patches of snow and ice everywhere. I looked at the long dirt road that crawled across the plains, remembering the morning that Mama had died, cruel and sunny. <i>pages 5-6</i>
	<b>Moonshot: The Flight of Apollo 11</b> by Brian Floca <i>Grade three</i>	<b>And when the Earth has rolled beneath and rolled behind and let the astronauts go,</b> the Saturn's last stage opens wide and releases Columbia, the small, silver ship that sat at the top of the rocket. And here, hidden till now, is Eagle, too, a stranger ship, more bug than bird, a black and gold and folded spider. <i>page 15</i>
	<b>Esperanza Rising</b> by Pam Munoz Ryan <i>Grade four</i>	Mama, my finger. <b>An angry thorn stabbed me.</b> <i>page 184</i>
	<b>Anne of Green Gables</b> by L.M. Montgomery <i>Grade five</i>	Listen to the <b>trees talking in their sleep.</b> <i>page 30</i>

Figurative Language Planning Guide		
Text Title		Grade Level:
Targeted Figurative Language		<b>Figurative Language Type:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Metaphor <input type="checkbox"/> Simile <input type="checkbox"/> Idiom <input type="checkbox"/> Alliteration <input type="checkbox"/> Personification <input type="checkbox"/> Hyperbole <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Guiding Questions for Instructional Implications		
<b><i>Understanding the Figurative Language</i></b>		
Why did the author choose to utilize figurative language in this excerpt? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Tone/mood</i></li> <li>• <i>Imagery</i></li> <li>• <i>Emotional response</i></li> <li>• <i>Engage the reader</i></li> <li>• <i>Other</i></li> </ul>		
Does this use of figurative language build on what has already been stated plainly in the text, or are there multiple interpretations and inferences possible? If so, what are the other possibilities?		

## ***Instructional Considerations***

What instructional practices or activities would be best suited for this use of figurative language or type of figurative language?

Things to consider:

- *Is repeated use of this type of figurative language in the text?*
- *Is this an introductory lesson or review lesson for this type of figurative language?*

Is the vocabulary used within the figurative language a barrier to the students' comprehension? If so, what words need to be addressed?









What writing tasks could stem from this example of figurative language?

What do you want the students to be able to understand and learn by the end of the lesson (start with the end in mind)?

- *Exit ticket/student artifacts*
- *Formative assessment*
- *Success criteria*

Potential Misconceptions/Other Considerations

# Figurative Language

Kindergarten—Identify and explain descriptive words in text(s).			
Grade 1—Identify and explain descriptive words and phrases in text(s).			
Grade 2—Identify and explain similes, idioms, and alliteration in text(s).			
<b>Alliteration</b>	the repetition of usually initial consonant sounds in two or more neighboring words or syllables	Peter Piper picked peppers.	
<b>Idiom</b>	an expression that cannot be understood from the meanings of its separate words but must be learned as a whole	Break a leg!	
<b>Simile</b>	a comparison of two unlike things, often introduced by like or as	The explanation was clear as mud.	
Grade 3—Identify and explain metaphors, personification, and hyperbole in text(s).			
<b>Hyperbole</b>	exaggerated statements or claims not meant to be taken literally	This backpack weighs a ton.	
<b>Metaphor</b>	a word or phrase for one thing that is used to refer to another thing in order to show or suggest that they are similar	They have a heart of gold.	
<b>Personification</b>	representing a thing or idea as a person in art, literature	The cupcake is calling my name.	
Grade 4—Explain how figurative language contributes to meaning in text(s).			
Grade 5—Analyze how figurative language contributes to meaning in text(s).			
Other types that may be utilized for instructional purposes:			
<b>Onomatopoeia</b>	the forming of a word (as “buzz” or “hiss”) in imitation of a natural sound	Bam, whirl, thump, boom	
<b>Imagery</b>	writing about objects, actions, and ideas in such a way that it appeals to our five physical senses	The fresh and juicy orange is very cold and sweet.	



Pause and silently reflect on what you might change or modify, what stood out as shining information and what you will do next with what you learned. Before you leave, you might even consider taking out a calendar or phone to set a reminder to begin the commitment to driving impactful change; in other words, *the ball is in now in your court!*



