

The Fabulous 15 Literary Devices



ONOMATOPOEIA

is a word that imitates the sound it represents.

*Examples:*crunch

zap

tick-tock

whoosh



PERSONIFICATION

is when a writer gives human qualities to animals or objects.

Examples: My car drank the gasoline in one gulp.

The cat laughed.

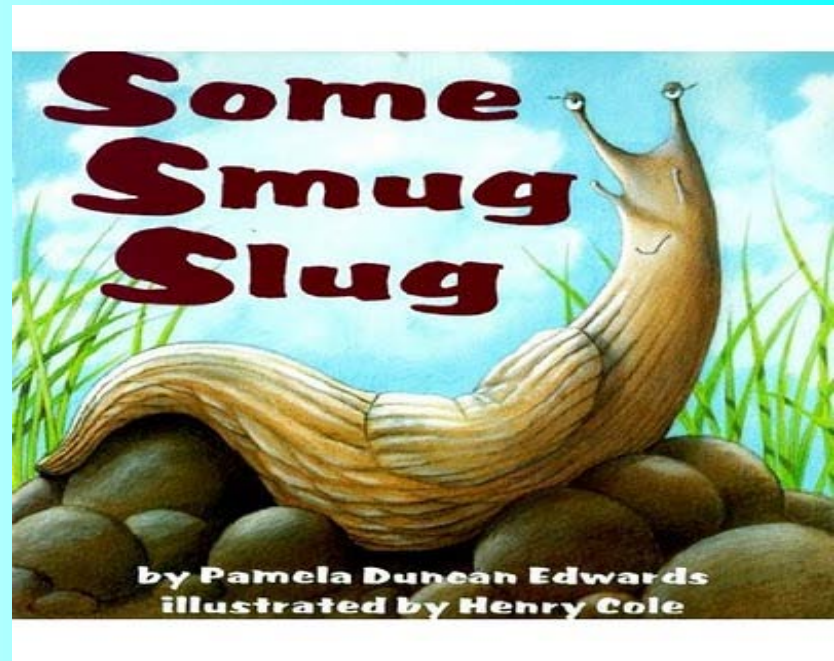
The newspaper headline glared at me.



ALLITERATION

is the repetition of the same consonant sound in words occurring near one another.

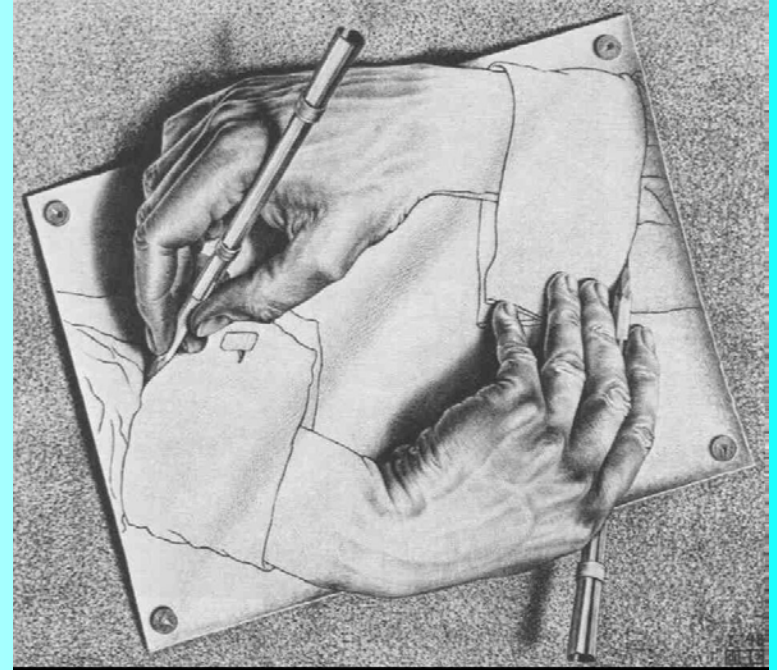
Examples: Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers. Sally sells seashells by the seashore.



PARADOX

reveals a truth which at first seems
contradictory.

Examples: He was cowardly and
brave at the same time.
When you win all the time, you lose.



HYPERBOLE

is an obvious exaggeration or
overstatement.

Examples: I'm so hungry I could
eat the entire buffet at Golden Corral
right now!

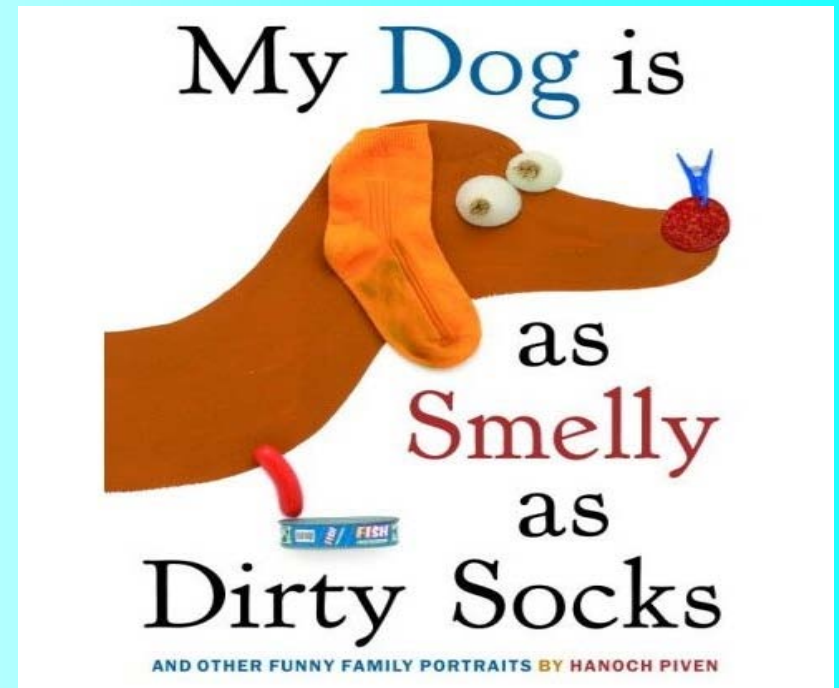
A blue square containing white text. The text reads "HYPERBOLE IS" on the top line, "The BEST" on the second line (with "The" in a small circle), and "THING EVER!" on the third line. The word "BEST" is significantly larger than the other words.

SIMILE

is an expression comparing one thing to another using the words “like” or “as”.

Examples: He ran like a cat, lightly and quietly.

Her blue mood passed as quickly as an afternoon rain shower.

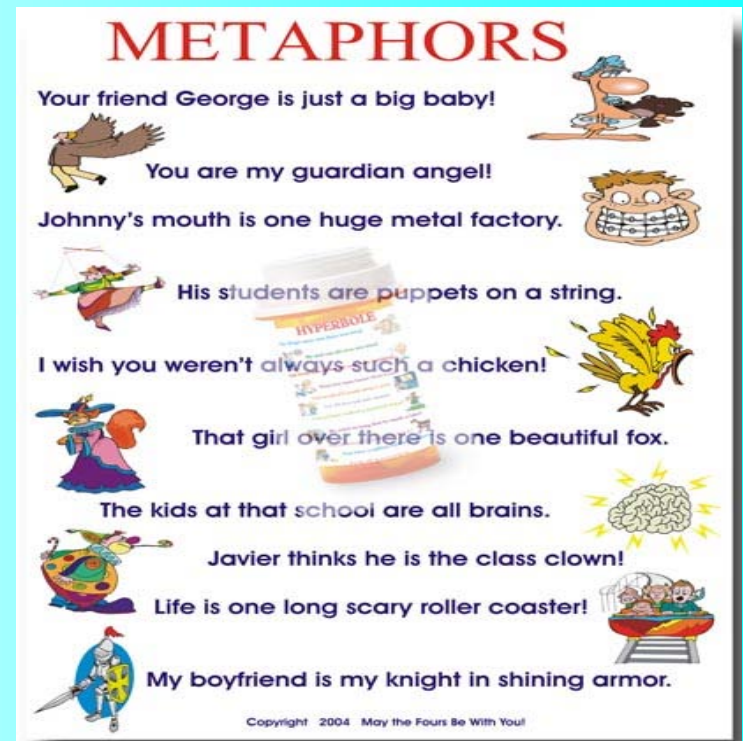


METAPHOR

is a comparison of two unlike things without using the words “like” or “as”.

Examples: He was a statue, waiting to hear the news.

She was a mother hen, trying to take care of everyone around her.



ALLUSION

is a casual reference to a famous historical or literary figure or event.

Examples: If it doesn't stop raining, I'm going to build an ark.

My sister has so many pets I'm going to call myself Old McDonald.

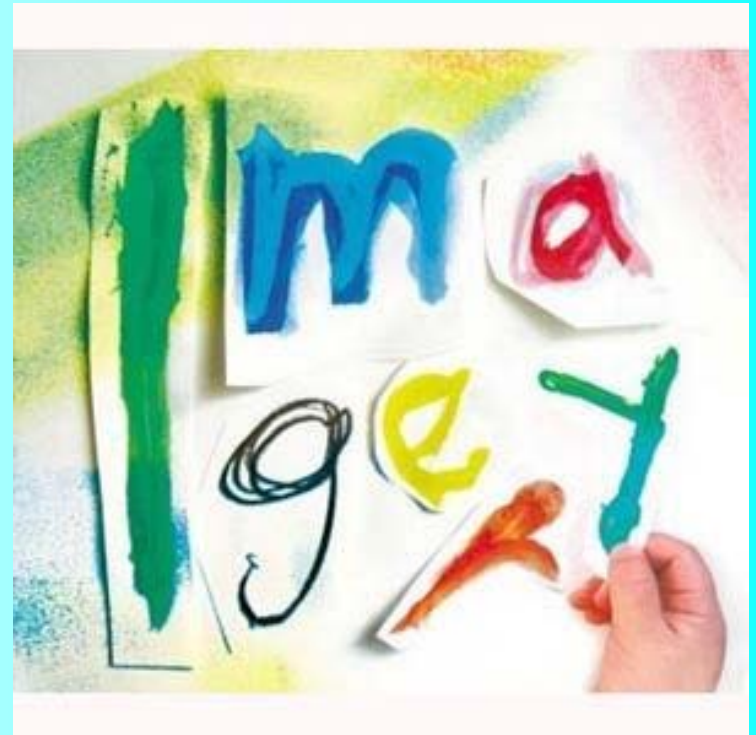


IMAGERY

is when a writer invokes the five
senses.

Examples: The smell reminded
him of rotting tomatoes.

The fence was uneven, like baby
teeth growing awkwardly in. (also a
simile!)



IDIOM

is an expression with a meaning different from the literal meaning of the words.

Examples: I got cold feet before my big date = I was scared

My boss gave me the green light = My boss said yes



OXYMORON

is the juxtaposition of two opposite terms.

Examples: a peaceful war
a generous tightwad
dark sunshine



EUPHEMISM

is a polite word or phrase used in place of one that may be too direct, unpleasant, or embarrassing.

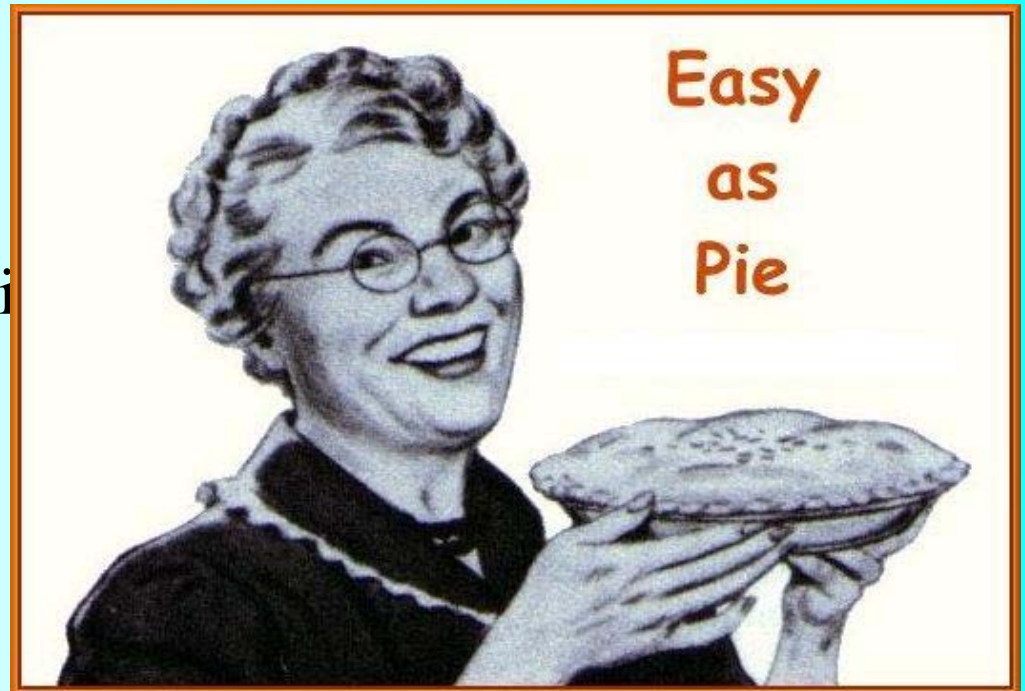
Examples: pass away = die
vertically challenged = short



CLICHÉ

is an expression that has lost its power or originality from overuse.

Examples: talking a mile a minute
quiet as a mouse
easy as pie



PUN

is a humorous play on words, often involving double meanings

Examples: There was a shootout in the Gap. There were many casual-tees.

A man stole a case of soap from the corner store. He made a clean getaway.

