

15 COMMON LITERARY DEVICES REFERENCE SHEET

A reference sheet for the 15 most common literary devices. Includes definition and example for each device.

Devices include onomatopoeia, personification, alliteration, symbolism, paradox, hyperbole, simile, metaphor, allusion, imagery, idiom, oxymoron, euphemism, cliché, and pun.



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Literary Device	Definition	Example
ONOMATOPOEIA	is a word that <u>imitates</u> the sound it represents.	<i>crunch</i> <i>zap</i> <i>tick-tock</i> <i>whoosh</i>
PERSONIFICATION	is when a writer gives <u>human</u> qualities to animals or objects.	<i>My car <u>drank</u> the gasoline in one gulp.</i> <i>The cat <u>laughed</u>.</i> <i>The newspaper headline <u>glared</u> at me.</i>
ALLITERATION	is the repetition of the same <u>consonant</u> sound in words occurring near one another.	<i>Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.</i> <i>Sally sells seashells by the seashore.</i>
SYMBOLISM	is using an object or action that <u>means</u> something more than its literal meaning.	<i>Pink symbolizes the fight against breast cancer.</i> <i>The Statue of Liberty symbolizes freedom.</i>
PARADOX	reveals a truth which at first seems <u>contradictory</u> .	<i>He was cowardly and brave at the same time.</i> <i>When you win all the time, you lose.</i>
HYPERBOLE	is an obvious <u>exaggeration</u> or overstatement.	<i>I'm so hungry I could eat the entire buffet at Golden Corral right now!</i>
SIMILE	is an expression comparing one thing to another using the words " <u>like</u> " or " <u>as</u> ".	<i>He ran like a cat, lightly and quietly.</i> <i>Her blue mood passed as quickly as an afternoon rain shower.</i>
METAPHOR	is a comparison of two unlike things without using the words " <u>like</u> " or " <u>as</u> ".	<i>He was a statue, waiting to hear the news.</i> <i>She was a mother hen, trying to take care of everyone around her.</i>
ALLUSION	is a casual <u>reference</u> to a famous historical or literary figure or event.	<i>If it doesn't stop raining, I'm going to build an ark.</i> <i>My sister has so many pets I'm going to call myself Old McDonald.</i>
IMAGERY	is when a writer invokes the five <u>senses</u> .	<i>The smell reminded him of rotting tomatoes.</i> <i>The fence was uneven, like baby teeth growing awkwardly in. (also a simile!)</i>
IDIOM	is an expression with a meaning different from the <u>literal</u> meaning of the words.	<i>I got cold feet before my big date = I was scared</i> <i>My boss gave me the green light = My boss said yes</i>
OXYMORON	is the juxtaposition of two <u>opposite</u> terms.	<i>a peaceful war</i> <i>a generous tightwad</i> <i>dark sunshine</i>
EUPHEMISM	is a <u>polite</u> word or phrase used in place of one that may be too direct, unpleasant, or embarrassing.	<i>pass away = die</i> <i>vertically challenged = short</i>
CLICHÉ	is an expression that has lost its power or originality from <u>overuse</u> .	<i>talking a mile a minute</i> <i>quiet as a mouse</i> <i>easy as pie</i>
PUN	is a humorous play on words, often involving <u>double</u> meanings	<i>There was a shootout in the Gap. There were many <u>casual-tees</u>.</i> <i>A man stole a case of soap from the corner store. He made a <u>clean</u> getaway.</i>





MZ S ENGLISH TEACHER

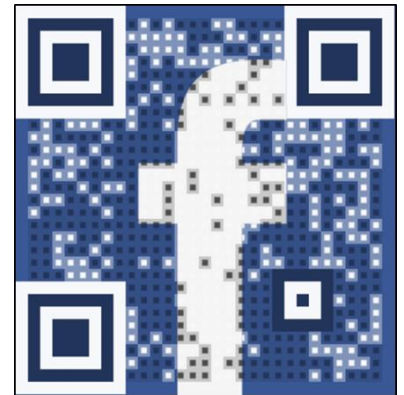


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