

## FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE IN CONTEXT #1

The following excerpts from literary texts contain different types of figurative language. For each excerpt, identify whether the writer uses **simile**, **metaphor**, **idiom**, or **personification**. Explain how the figurative language is used to develop meaning in the excerpt.

- ① Miss Thomas said, "Let me tell you you're going to have lots of chores and things to take care of around there, Bud. You'll be expected to pull your own weight the best you can."

– Adapted from Christopher Paul Curtis, *Bud, Not Buddy*, Copyright 1999 by Christopher Paul Curtis

<p><b>Type of figurative language:</b>  <b>idiom</b></p>	<p><b>How it is used:</b> <u>Curtis has Miss Thomas use the idiom "pull your own weight" to show that Bud will be expected to work as hard as everyone else.</u></p> <hr/> <hr/>
--	--

- ② Captain Hook: Pan, who and what art thou?  
Peter: I'm youth, I'm joy, I'm a little bird that has broken out of the egg.

– Adapted from J.M. Barrie, *Peter Pan*

<p><b>Type of figurative language:</b>  <b>metaphor</b></p>	<p><b>How it is used:</b> <u>Barrie uses Peter's comparison of himself to adventure, fun, and youth to emphasize what Peter Pan represents in the story.</u></p> <hr/> <hr/>
---	--

- ③ Once we were safe outside, I checked the dog over real careful and he didn't look that good. He was big, but skinny; you could see his ribs. And there were bald patches all over him, places where he didn't have any fur at all. Mostly, he looked like a big piece of old brown carpet that had been left out in the rain.

– Adapted from Kate DiCamillo, *Because of Winn-Dixie*, Copyright 2000 by Kate DiCamillo

<p><b>Type of figurative language:</b>  <b>simile</b></p>	<p><b>How it is used:</b> <u>DiCamillo uses a simile ("He looked like a big piece of old brown carpet that had been left out in the rain") to help paint a picture of the dog for the reader and to emphasize the sorry state in which he was found.</u></p> <hr/> <hr/>
---	--

- ④ "It's just the boy's gotten out of hand and it doesn't seem like anyone is doin' anything 'bout it."

– Adapted from Mildred Taylor, *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*, Copyright 1976 by Mildred Taylor

<p><b>Type of figurative language:</b>  <b>idiom</b></p>	<p><b>How it is used:</b> <u>Mildred Taylor uses the idiom "gotten out of hand" to help the reader understand that the character's behavior is unable to be controlled by anyone else.</u></p> <hr/> <hr/>
--	--

## FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE IN CONTEXT #1

Keep going! Identify whether the writer uses a **simile**, **metaphor**, **idiom**, or **personification**. Explain how the figurative language is used to develop meaning in the excerpt.

- ⑤ The very winds whispered in soothing accents, and maternal Nature bade me weep no more. . . . The unstained snowy mountain-top, the glittering pinnacle, the pine woods, and ragged bare ravine, the eagle, soaring amidst the clouds—they all gathered round me and bade me be at peace.

– Adapted from Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*

**Type of figurative language:**  
personification

**How it is used:** Shelley personifies natural elements, like the “whispering” winds and “maternal” Nature “gathering” around the narrator and “bidding” him to stop weeping and be at peace, to show how his time in nature helped him heal his sadness.

- ⑥ [After the children are granted a wish to be as beautiful as the day]  
It was a horrible afternoon. . . . True, they were all as beautiful as the day, but that is a poor comfort when you are as hungry as a hunter and as thirsty as a sponge.

– Adapted from E. Nesbit, *Five Children and It*

**Type of figurative language:**  
simile

**How it is used:** Nesbit uses similes to provide vivid descriptions to show the extreme comparison between the children’s appearance (“beautiful as the day”) and feelings (“hungry as a hunter” and “thirsty as a sponge”).

- ⑦ The sun in the west was a drop of burning gold that slid nearer and nearer the sill of the world. All at once they were aware of the evening as the end of light and warmth.

– Adapted from William Golding, *Lord of the Flies*, Copyright 1954 by William Golding

**Type of figurative language:**  
metaphor

**How it is used:** Golding uses a metaphor to compare the sunset (“the sun in the west”) to “a drop of burning gold” and refers to the horizon as the “sill of the world.” These comparisons emphasize that the sun, which brings light and warmth, will soon disappear.

- ⑧ [Describing the experience of being a steamboat pilot on the Mississippi River]  
There is neither light nor buoy to be found anywhere in all this three or four thousand miles of villainous river.

– Adapted from Mark Twain, *Life on the Mississippi*

**Type of figurative language:**  
personification

**How it is used:** Twain uses personification of the “villainous” river to emphasize the difficulty of piloting on the Mississippi River, which has no lights or buoys to help guide the way.