

The Figurative Language Family Tree



COMPARISONS

The triplets of the family who, although not identical, are always being compared to each other.

- **Metaphor** – Create a direct comparison between two unlike things.
- **Simile** – Create an indirect comparison between two things using “like” or “as.”
- **Personification** – Describe an inanimate object with human characteristics.



CONTRADICTIONS

The four teenagers of the family that constantly contradict one another.

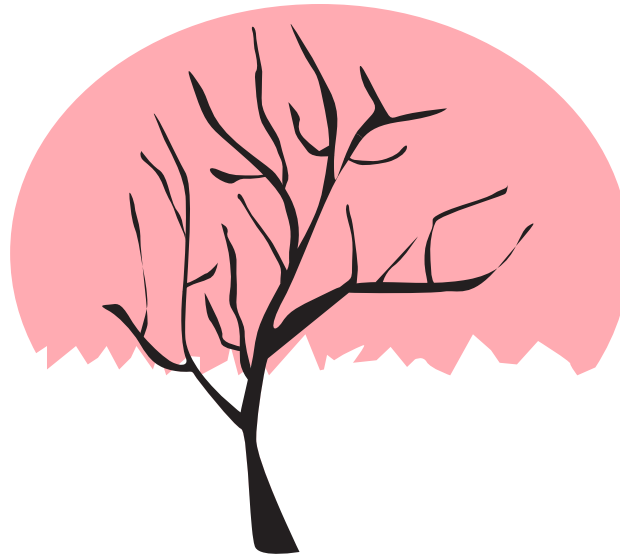
- **Irony** – Create an unexpected twist in a situation.
- **Pun** – Create a humorous play on words based on a double meaning.
- **Oxymoron** – Place opposite or contradictory terms side by side to create a different meaning.
- **Paradox** – Present contradictory statements to reveal a hidden truth.



OVER/UNDER STATEMENTS

The over-the-top uncle and the say-it-right aunt.

- **Hyperbole** – Use extreme exaggeration for emphasis—not to be taken literally.
- **Euphemism** – Replace a blunt or offensive term with a milder or humorous word or phrase.



More than identifying types of figurative language, consider *when* and *why* an author would include a particular technique in his writing.



REFERENCES

The two gossiping aunts who know all the connections.

- **Allusion** – Reference something familiar to explain a more complex idea.
- **Analogy** – Demonstrate how two unlike things have multiple characteristics in common.



EXPRESSIONS

The wise grandparents with their old-fashioned sayings.

- **Idiom** – Include expressions where the words mean something different from the literal.
- **Adage/Proverb** – Share words of wisdom considered true by many.



SOUND DEVICES

The family pets and their noisemaking.

- **Sound Devices – Onomatopoeia** – Insert words that mimic sounds.
- **Alliteration** – Repeat the same initial sound in several words within a sentence.