Figurative Language

Figurative language is just a way for an author to make their writing more interesting or descriptive. Writers use this type of writing to add a little spice to their words. There are really many, many, many types of figurative language, but we will only go over the most commonly used types.

**Alliteration:** This is when a writer uses the same beginning sounds for several words, sort of like a tongue twister. Here is an example—Silly Sally slaps the spiders swiftly to the sink.

**Hyperbole:** This one should come pretty naturally for you because ALL teenagers do it. All of you. It is an exaggeration. For example, when someone wears the same outfit as their teacher, they might say, “I am so embarrassed I could just die.” Or when someone is in fifth period, waiting for lunch, they might say, “I am so hungry I could eat a horse!”

**Idiom:** These are common expressions that people use; however, when you really examine the words, they don’t make a lot of sense. Your parents probably use these a lot. They might tell you to “Hold your tongue” when they really mean for you to be quiet.

**Irony:** This is when you say one thing and mean another, or you say one thing and another happens, or when a character thinks one thing but the reader knows the opposite is true. When you are sarcastic, you are probably using irony.

**Metaphor:** This is a comparison between two unlike things that implies they are actually similar. It is used in poetry a lot, especially LOVE poetry. Here is an example: Your eyes are deep blue oceans that envelope me in their warmth. Blah, you get it.

**Onomatopoeia:** Words that are sounds. Snap. Pow. Bang. Boom.

**Personification:** This is when you make something not a person (like a wall or a cow) seem like a person. Here’s an example: The bright blue sky smiled down on me.

**Puns:** Words that are similar (sound the same or similar, look the same or similar, but have different meanings) used in place of one another to create humor. Here’s an example: What kind of bugs live on the moon? Lunar tics! It really should be lunatics, but lunar means moon. Get it? Okay.

**Simile:** This is a type of metaphor that uses “like” or “as” in the comparison. Like this: Your forehead is like a highway, stretching into infinity.

Now, you too can add spice to your writing or find it in your favorite books. You are welcome.