

Lesson 15**Figurative Language in Literature****15**

Figurative language is often used to compare one thing to something else the reader is probably familiar with. For example, read the following sentence.

Arlene must not be a very good camp counselor since she lets the kids treat her *like a human doormat*.

Arlene is compared to a doormat. You are probably familiar with doormats. What are they used for? What happens to them? Of course, the kids are not literally wiping their feet on Arlene or stepping on her. But the figurative language lets us understand that the campers do not treat their counselor very nicely.

Exercise

Read the following excerpt about a girl who enjoys looking at things through a microscope. As you read, look for examples of figurative language that let you understand what she sees under the microscope. Then, answer the questions that follow.

from **A DREAM OF GHOSTS**

by Frank Bonham

She flipped a braid back over her shoulder and got to work. With an eyedropper, she placed some pond water on a slide and shielded it with a thin cover-slip. Carefully she fastened the slide in place and bent over the eyepieces. At first all was pearly and blurred, but as she sharpened the focus dozens of tiny wriggling animals materialized. Protozoans! Some were mere blobs *like wriggling ink stains*; but others *were suns with wiggly rays*, or *little worms with whirring propellers*. Many had brilliant ruby eyespots.

Raptly she focused down still further to find the dainty little diatoms, like snowflakes carved from jewels of many colors. She had entered a silent world populated by living things shaped like pieces of Christmas candy, telstars, planets, hourglasses, and pillboxes.

She sighed happily. It was difficult to believe that this magic world was as real as her own! A dishpan was an ocean to a diatom—it might take days to cross. Life-and-death battles were going on in every teaspoonful of water. And some of these little creatures, like the amoeba, could actually enter people's bodies and kill them.

A thought tickled her brain like a small charge of electricity. Her eyes widened in wonder.

In a way, these little creatures were like ghosts. If you could not see them, they did not exist—yet of course they did. The thing was, you had to see them under special conditions.

1. In the first paragraph, three examples of figurative language are italicized. Choose one of these and in your own words describe what that particular protozoan looks like.

2. Which of the following best explains the figurative language use in the second paragraph to describe the tiny living things called diatoms? Circle your choice.
- a. Diatoms are very sweet and make the pond water taste good.
 - b. Diatoms are delicate, colorful miniature living things in many different shapes.
 - c. Diatoms are tiny living things that crowd together in water but that do not speak to each other.

3. Explain what is meant by the phrase "a dishpan was an ocean to a diatom."

4. Rewrite the figurative language in the fourth paragraph using either literal language or a different figurative expression.

5. In your own words, explain how the "little creatures were like ghosts."

Lesson 29

Subject and Object Pronouns

Subject pronouns are used as subjects of sentences. Object pronouns can be used as direct objects, indirect objects, or objects of prepositions.

When a pronoun is used as the subject of a sentence, the pronoun is in the nominative case and is called a **subject pronoun**. Notice the pronouns in the chart and then read the sentences.

Subject Pronouns			
Singular	I	you	he, she, it
Plural	we	you	they

I borrowed Marta's bike.

Bill and I rode bikes.

The sentence on the right has a compound subject. To check that you are using the correct pronoun in a compound subject, use the pronoun by itself with the verb. For the compound subject *Bill and I*, you would say *I rode*, which makes sense (Not: *me rode*).

Personal pronouns can also be used as direct and indirect objects and objects of prepositions. Then the pronoun is in the objective case and is called an **object pronoun**. Study the object pronouns in the chart and then read the sentences.

Object Pronouns			
Singular	me	you	him, her, it
Plural	us	you	them

When the sandwiches were ready, Kay ate **them**. (direct object)

Mrs. Rosario gave **me** and **her** some orange juice too. (indirect objects)

When Nolan arrived, we ate lunch with Mrs. Rosario and **him**. (object of preposition)

To check that you are using the correct pronoun in a compound object, say the sentence with just one pronoun as the object.

Exercise A

Circle the correct pronoun.

Example: Jill and (I, me) are in the same history class.

Answer: (I)

1. Our teacher gave an assignment to (she, her) and (I, me)—a report on peasant life in the Middle Ages.
2. Toni and (they, them) are studying medieval home life.
3. (He, Him) and Manuel are researching knighthood.
4. Our teacher gave Jill and (I, me) a good grade.
5. She congratulated Toni and (they, them) on their report.

Exercise B

Write the pronoun that can be substituted for the underlined word or groups of words.

Example: France was an important center for painters.

Answer: It

1. Women were not accepted as artists until quite recently. _____
2. People ignored Mary Cassatt for years. _____
3. Mary's parents raised Mary and her brothers and sisters. _____
4. Eventually, Mary and her family settled in Pennsylvania. _____
5. Mary surprised her parents when she decided to become an artist. _____
6. The decision was unusual for a woman of her time. _____
7. Mary's decision was supported by Mr. Cassatt and her older brother. _____
8. In 1866 Mary went to France with her parents and her sister. _____
9. In Paris Mary studied art done by Impressionists. _____
10. These painters experimented with the effects of light and color. _____
11. Edgar Degas, an Impressionist, and Mary became friends. _____
12. Degas introduced Mary to other painters and sculptors. _____
13. Her paintings show the influence of the French Impressionists. _____
14. Today people from around the world know Mary Cassatt and her paintings.

Lesson 30

Pronouns as Subject Complements

A subject pronoun is used as a subject complement.

When a word follows a linking verb and refers to the subject, it is called a **subject complement**. A pronoun that follows a linking verb such as *am*, *is*, *are*, *was*, and *were* and identifies the subject is used as a subject complement. A subject pronoun is always used as a subject complement in formal English. Compare the following pairs of sentences. The subjects are underlined; the subject complements are in dark type.

She is the judge.

The judge is **she**.

They are the players.

The players are **they**.

Tim and I are alternates.

The alternates are **Tim and I**.

In the sentences on the left, the subject complement *judge* refers to the subject *she*, the subject complement *players* refers to the subject *they*, and the complement *alternates* refers to the subject *Tim and I*. The subject and subject complement in each sentence refer to the same people. Therefore, the sentences can be turned around as they are on the right without changing the meaning. Notice that the pronoun forms do not change when the sentences are turned around. The same pronoun form—a subject pronoun—is used as subject and as subject complement.

If someone asks you “Who is it?” you probably use an object pronoun and say “It is me” or “It’s me” rather than “It is I.” When you are speaking to family or friends, “It’s me” is acceptable. However, in writing or in more formal situations such as a job interview, use “It is I.” Also use “It is she,” “It is we,” and so on.

Exercise A

Circle the correct form of the pronoun in parentheses to use in formal situations.

Example: It was (she, her) who had the idea.

Answer: (she)

1. It was (they, them) who made the posters.
2. It was Lucia and (I, me) who distributed them.
3. They thanked Lucia and (I, me).
4. It was (we, us) who helped.
5. The person who benefited most was (he, him).

Exercise B

Write **S** if the underlined pronoun in each sentence is used as a subject or **SC** if it is used as a subject complement.

Example: According to Scooter, he and I must prepare a report.

Answer: S

1. We were puzzled about being chosen to do a report. _____
2. The only two students that were selected were Scooter and I. _____
3. He and I both like the novelist Daniel Defoe. _____
4. It was he that we chose for our report. _____
5. We had both enjoyed reading *Robinson Crusoe*. _____
6. It is the novel based on the life of Alexander Selkirk. _____
7. It was he whom Defoe used to create Crusoe. _____
8. The main characters are Friday and he. _____
9. Scooter thought it was he who made the novel interesting. _____
10. I wrote about the lives of Selkirk and Defoe. _____

Exercise C

Circle the correct pronoun to complete each sentence. Write **SP** if it is a subject complement or **OP** if it is an object complement.

Example: Between Scooter and (I, me), we finished the report.

Answer: (me) —OP

1. Scooter and (I, me) practiced giving our report many times. _____
2. It was (I, me) who was nervous, not Scooter. _____
3. It was (he, him) who introduced the report. _____
4. The only two speakers today are Scooter and (I, me). _____
5. First, (he, him) will speak about the life of Daniel Defoe. _____
6. (I, Me) will also say something about Defoe. _____
7. About (he, him) we know very little. _____
8. (We, Us) know, however, that Defoe was a novelist, journalist, and secret agent. _____
9. It was (he, him) that Queen Anne threw in prison in 1702. _____
10. To Scooter and (I, me), *Robinson Crusoe* is his best novel. _____

Vocabulary Practice 11: Word Roots

Word Roots: -gen-

Word roots form the basic part of the word and give the word its primary meaning. Prefixes and suffixes add specific meanings to roots. If you know the meaning of a root, you can often figure out the meaning of a whole word.

Example: The word root -gen- can mean "birth" or "kind." Adding the suffix -erate to the root -gen-, meaning "birth," makes *generate*, meaning "to bring into existence."

Think about the meaning of each word below. Decide whether the word is related to the root meaning of "birth" or the root meaning of "kind." Explain your answer.

1. gender—male or female

Related to the root meaning _____ because _____

2. genealogy—an account of a person, family, or group from an ancestor or older forms

Related to the root meaning _____ because _____

3. generation—group of living beings who represent a single line in the descent from a common ancestor; an entire group living at the same time

Related to the root meaning _____ because _____

4. genesis—the beginning or coming into being of something

Related to the root meaning _____ because _____

5. genetic—related to or determined by one's genes, origins, or development

Related to the root meaning _____ because _____

6. gentry—upper class; those with rank or status

Related to the root meaning _____ because _____

7. heterogeneous—having a mixed makeup or ingredients

Related to the root meaning _____ because _____

8. progeny—offspring, children

Related to the root meaning _____ because _____

9. generic—related generally to a whole class; not having a specific brand

Related to the root meaning _____ because _____

10. regenerate—to grow back again; to produce again

Related to the root meaning _____ because _____