

6 **Figurative Language**

Read It, Write It, Tell It Episode: “Johnny Appleseed”

Lesson Overview

The purpose of the lessons in this unit is to help Ohio students in grades 3-7 learn the characteristics of the literary text FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE indicators that they must master for their respective Ohio achievement tests. Special care has been taken to dovetail the lessons with the indicators and the types of questions commonly asked on Ohio tests.

Ohio Academic Content Indicators

- 2001.EL.S05.G04-07.BG.L05.I08 Identify and explain the use of figurative language in literary works, including **idioms, similes, hyperboles, metaphors** and **personification**.
- 2001.EL.S05.G04-07.BG.L06.I07 Distinguish how an author establishes mood and meaning through word choice, figurative language and syntax.
- 2001.EL.S05.G04-07.BG.G07.I07 Interpret how mood or meaning is conveyed through word choice, figurative language and syntax.

Ohio Achievement/Proficiency Tests Figurative Language Question Types

- The author used the words “xxx.” What do the words mean?
- The author used the words “xxx.” What is the author describing?
- Choose the feeling expressed in Quotation X from the selection.
- The author wrote “xxx” about Character Y. What do the words suggest about Character Y?
- Given a list of quotations from the figurative language used in the selection, choose the quotation that means “xxx.”
- The author used the words “xxx.” Given a list of different types of figurative language, chose the type represented by the author’s words.
- What feeling is expressed by the words “xxx?” Support you answer with y number of details from the selection.

Johnny Appleseed

Episode Overview

The episode begins with some factual information about Johnny Appleseed who traveled through Ohio selling and giving away apple trees and apple seeds. The tall tale portion of the episode finds Johnny dealing with a giant bear with a thorn bush stuck in its paw – and then the jealous Ant brothers, Ignor Ant and Arrog Ant.

Facts:

- Johnny Appleseed’s (1775-1845) real name was John Chapman.
- He knew the ways of nature and apples, he was a constant traveler, and he dressed very simply.
- He was a friend to all and a stranger to none.
- During the War of 1812, Chapman ran 30 miles to get reinforcement to help Mansfield, Ohio, and to warn other settlers of impending Indian attacks. (The attacking Indians were allies of the British.)

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Fiction:

- Fiction: Johnny Appleseed wore a pan for a hat. Fact: A *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* article from November, 1871 states that Appleseed tried wearing the tin vessel he cooked his mush in as a hat. The pan did not keep the sun out of his eyes so he made a pasteboard hat that "became his permanent fashion." <http://mason.gmu.edu/~drwillia/apple/ja4sm.html>
- The episode gives the impression that earning money was not a part of John Chapman's life. He believed in helping others but he was also an entrepreneur. Chapman tried to predict where the pioneers were likely to settle in the early days of the Northwest Territory. He would get there before most of the settlers with his apple seeds, find a fertile piece of land to claim or buy, plant he seeds, and wait. By the time the bulk of settlers arrived, he would have an orchard of two- to three-year old apple trees ready to sell at five or six cents apiece. <http://www.straightdope.com/mailbag/mjappleseed.html>

Tall Tale:

- Johnny Appleseed was a friend of Paul Bunyan and Daniel Boone.
- A giant bear with an injured paw threatens a town until Johnny, with the help of giant birds and tiny honey bees, helps the grateful bear.
- Ignor Ant and Arrog Ant try to attack Johnny because they are jealous of his hero status. The giant bear returns to help Johnny.

Vocabulary

The following words used by the storyteller in the *Read It, Write It, Tell It* episode "Johnny Appleseed" may be unfamiliar to some students.

familiar	harvest	trance
fierce	hive	vanished
	ignorant	

Figurative Language in Johnny Appleseed

hyperbole	eat a whole tree of apples all at the same time
hyperbole	a giant bear – at least 100 feet tall
hyperbole	they were so scared and shaky that they shook their rifles apart
idiom.....	live off the land
idiom.....	fit to be tied
idiom.....	know them like the back of my hand
personification	nature played out all four seasons
slang.....	hornswoggled (deceived, tricked, cheated)
slang.....	horsefeathers (nonsense, worthless, insincere talk)
simile	they were as quiet as a mouse

Before Viewing

1. Ask: What does the idiom “fit to be tied” really mean?
“Fit to be tied” means “to be very angry.”
2. Say: An idiom is one type of figurative language. Tell me about other types of figurative language.
By the end of Grade 5, Ohio students should be able to identify and use the following types of figurative language: idiom, simile, metaphor, personification, and hyperbole. Students in grades six and seven are expected to analyze and interpret figurative language.
3. Ask: Why does a storyteller or a writer use figurative language?
Answers will vary. Writers and storytellers use figurative language for a variety of reasons. They may wish to be playful or poetic or to add layers of meaning or beauty to a text. Using figurative language allows the storyteller/writer to demonstrate their mastery of language, i.e. to be inventive, creative, polished and personal.
4. Listen for examples of figurative language while you watch the *Read It, Write It, Tell It* episode, “Johnny Appleseed.”
You may wish to display or give the students a list of some or all of the figurative language identified in the episode information above.

After Viewing

Pre/Post Questions: If the students cannot easily answer the following questions, you may wish to use the Lessons (Section 4) and/or the Extensions (Section 5) about figurative language.

1. What type of figurative language is the phrase, “know them like the back of my hand.”
Know them like the back of my hand is an idiom.
2. What does the phrase “know them like the back of my hand” mean?
Know them like the back of my hand means that the speaker knows them very well.
3. The storyteller used the words “born ignorant and loosing ground ever since.” What is the author saying about the Ant brothers?
The story teller is saying that the brothers started life knowing nothing and they know less and less as time goes by. His use of the word ignorant infers that the brothers would be capable of learning.
4. The author used the words “live off the land.” What do the words suggest about the character mentioned in the quotation?
Answers will vary. Accept responses that the student can support. For example: The phrase “live off the land” suggests that Johnny Appleseed knows how to get food, clothing, and shelter entirely on his own with no assistance and few outside supplies. Students might infer that he is resourceful, self-sufficient, hard-working, and intelligent.
5. The author used the words “nature played out all four seasons.” Is the phrase an example of alliteration, simile, metaphor, personification, or hyperbole?
The phrase “nature played out all four seasons” is an example of personification.

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6. experiencing – fear, anger, confusion, contentment, or excitement?

When Johnny Appleseed said “I’ll be hornswoggled” he meant that he was feeling confusion. The townspeople had disappeared. Johnny says “I’ll be horswoggled. If I didn’t know better, I’d say that everyone ran off somewheres.” Hornswoggled means deceived, bamboozled, hoaxed, or cheated.

4 Lessons

Hyperbole

Materials:

- Internet access (Optional)

Procedure:

1. Have the students define hyperbole and explain its use in literary text. Help the students if they need help with the definition or the explanation.
2. Visit the Worley School’s website on Hyperbole.
 - a. <http://www.worsleyschool.net/socialarts/hyperbole/hyperbole2.html>
 - b. The site lists contributions by visitors who have completed sentences with hyperboles. A few of the sentence starters are “My sister uses so much makeup...,” “My teacher is so old...,” “My dog is so ugly...”
 - c. Other sites with hyperbole examples are:
 - Wikiapedia
 - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hyperbole>
 - Hyperbole
 - <http://www.examples-help.org.uk/hyperbole.htm>
3. Create you own sentence starter(s) and challenge the students to finish them creatively, vividly.
4. Hold a Hyperbole Throw Down to share student examples. Challenge listeners to identify hyperboles that are similes or metaphors.
5. Have the students create vivid hyperbole to replace the “Johnny Appleseed” storyteller’s description of:
 - a. The amount Paul Bunyan could eat – “Nobody, except maybe one of his GIANT friends like Paul Bunyan, could eat a whole tree of apples all at the same time.”
 - b. The size of a giant bear – “It was a GIANT bear that came into view. Larger than any bear Johnny had ever seen. He was so large, he was at least 100 FEET TALL and just as wide too!”

Personification

Materials:

- A brief literary text that demonstrates personification. See #2 below for ideas and suggestions.

Procedure:

1. Define personification (or have it students define it) and explain its use in literary text.
2. Choose a brief literary text that demonstrates personification. The following websites have examples:
 - a. "Two Sunflowers Move in the Yellow Room" by William Blake, "April Rain Song" by Langston Hughes, and "The Sky is Low" by Emily Dickinson
<http://library.thinkquest.org/J0112392/personificationclassics.html>
 - b. "Summer Grass" by Carl Sandburg at <http://www.misspott.com/personification.html>
 - c. Student Poems at <http://www.watertown.k12.ma.us/cunniff/4grdpoetry/personification.html>
 - d. Personification lesson and worksheet for grades 5 and above at:
<http://volweb.utk.edu/Schools/bedford/harrisms/lesson7.htm>

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3. Have the students locate examples of personification in the text and identify the object being personified.
4. Have the students select one or more of the examples and describe the object without using personification.

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Materials:

- Internet Access

Ideas and Suggestions: Each of the links below leads to a website that addresses more than one type of figurative language.

1. Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Figurative Language Assignment
 - Students are provided three readings and complete charts to identify two examples of symbolism, two examples of imagery, and two examples of hyperbole for each reading. The charts also require students to interpret the meaning (not applicable for imagery) and the author’s purpose of each.
 - Part I: a fictional journal entry
 - Part II: the short story “A Retrieved Reformation” by O. Henry
 - Part III: the poem “Discovery” by Marion Dane Bauer
 - http://dese.mo.gov/divimprove/curriculum/ModelCurriculum/mining_for_meaning/summative_assessment.htm
2. Examples of Figures of Speech, Terminology & Definitions. Scroll down the page to find the table. Select links from the table:
 - <http://www.examples-help.org.uk/>

Alliteration	Allegory	Allusion
Anacoluthon	Anadiplosis	Analogy
Anaphora	Anastrophe	Antithesis
Antonomasia	Apothesis	Aporia
Aposiopesis	Apostrophe	Chiasmus
Circumlocution	Climax	Ecphrasis
Epigram	Gemination	Hyperbole
Irony	Dramatic Irony	Situational Irony
Verbal Irony	Litotes	Malapropism
Meiosis	Metaphor	Metonymy
Onomatopoeia	Oxymoron	Personification
Pleonasm	Repetition	Sarcasm
Simile	Spoonerism	Synecdoche
Vision		Zeugma

3. “The Poetics of Robert Frost – Examples of Figurative Language”
 - <http://www.frostfriends.org/figurative.html>
4. “Mining for Meaning” – Figurative Language Grade 7 Lesson
 - http://dese.mo.gov/divimprove/curriculum/ModelCurriculum/mining_for_meaning/
5. “Figurative Language”
 - Separate pages for Alliteration, Metaphor, Hyperbole, Personification, Idiom, and Simile.
 - <http://www.misspott.com/figurativelanguage.html>

5 *Extension Activities*

Figurative Language • Online Resources

Ohio Information Management System

- <https://ims.ode.state.oh.us> Use the IMS Quick Search:
- Chose ☉ Lesson Plans, Content Area: , Grade Level: , Keyword: type part or all of the title of the lesson. Click Search.

“Descriptive Language and Theme – Grade Three”

- Students tune their ears to listen for and appreciate descriptive language within texts. They identify and synthesize description and consider how it shows, supports or enhances an author’s intended message.

“Visions of Poetry – Grade Four”

- See, feel, hear and experience mood! This lesson offers students an opportunity to internalize the meaning of mood and its expression in a variety of different media.

“The Right Mood – Grade Six”

- In this integrated lesson, students compare how the three disciplines of music, art and literature create mood. They use this information to produce a piece of descriptive writing based on a piece of art or music selected to evoke a particular mood. While the concept of mood is introduced to students in the fourth grade, it remains a challenging concept for many. This lesson helps make the concept come alive at the same time it requires students to take a more advanced look at the meaning of mood.

Ohio Resource Center • Reading http://www.ohiorc.org/search/search_adv.aspx

- Advanced Search: Choose Free Text and ORC Number from the drop down menus and type the ORC Lesson number in the center box. Scroll down and click Submit. For example:
Search for resources that...contain in the

“I Have a Metaphor” ORC Lesson #2674, Grades 4 - 7

- Topics: Reading – Reading-Strategies & Skills; Reading; Literature; Nonfiction
- Professional Commentary: Many teachers integrate the speeches of Martin Luther King Jr. into their classroom instruction.

“Figurative Language Awards Ceremony” ORC Lesson #2799, Grades 4 - 5

- Topics: Reading – Vocabulary; Children’s Literature; Reading; Writing; Writing Strategies; Communication; Speaking; Literature
- Professional Commentary: Using their knowledge of figurative language, students complete activities to identify examples of similes, metaphors, and personification heard during read aloud. Students compile a list of phrases, then nominate and vote on the best terms.

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“Lift Every Voice and Sing” ORC Lesson #4540, Grades 5 - 7

- Topics: Reading -- Vocabulary; Literature; Poetry
- Professional Commentary: How does a poem or a song express feelings and meanings? Using the book *Color Me Dark* and a poem by James Weldon Johnson entitled “Lift Every Voice and Sing”, this lesson explores the use of figurative language and imagery. Students explore the origins of the poem and come to understand how it conveys a sense of hope and unity despite hardship.

Other Figurative Language Internet Resources

“Directed Reading Activity Lewis Carroll’s Alice Adventures in Wonderland” Grades 6-7

- http://pirate.shu.edu/~koellnth/additional%20pages/directed_reading_activity.htm
- Online text: <http://home.earthlink.net/~lfdean/carroll/nursery/index.html>
- Audio version: <http://wiredforbooks.org/alice/>

“Pictures in Words: Poems of Tennyson and Noyes,” Grades 6-8

- http://edsitement.neh.gov/view_lesson_plan.asp?id=426

“Figurative Language Lesson Plans & Activities”

- <http://languagearts.mrdonn.org/figurative.html>

Hyperbole • Internet Resources

- “Hyperbole” by Celine Ellison
 - This lesson uses “Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout Would Not Take the Garbage Out” from Shel Silverstein’s *Where the Sidewalk Ends*.
 - http://faculty.rcoe.appstate.edu/smithtw/RE_3150_web/Craft_Minilessons/RE_3150_s03/Celine_Ellison_Hyperbole.htm

Idiom • Internet Resources

- “In Step with Idioms” Story and Interactive Quiz: <http://library.thinkquest.org/4382/idiom.html>
- “Face Idioms” Interactive activity. Match idioms with their definitions: <http://www.quia.com/jg/66234.html>
- “Figurative Language: Teaching Idioms,” Grades 3-5: http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=254
- Valentine's Day Hearts, ESL 3-12
 - Use Valentine's Day to give your students an interesting opportunity to learn and use figurative language in English.
 - http://www.everythingsl.net/lessons/valentine_hearts.php

Simile and Metaphor • Internet Resources

- “Poetry: Simile and Figurative Language,” Grades 3-4
 - eMINTS began in Missouri - eMINTS is an acronym for the project enhancing Missouri's Instructional Networked Teaching Strategies. eMINTS can be found in classrooms across the United States.
 - <http://www.emints.org/ethemes/resources/S00001448.shtml>
- Interactive Simile Practice
 - <http://international.ouc.bc.ca/cultureshock/simile.htm>

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- “Lonely as a Cloud: Using Poetry to Understand Similes”
 - Includes links to poems that have similes such as "Willow and Ginkgo" by Eve Merriam, "A Red, Red Rose" by Robert Burns, "spring is like a perhaps hand" by E.E. Cummings, "Lost" by Carl Sandburg, "People Who Must" by Carl Sandburg, "Since Hannah Moved Away" by Judith Viorst, and "The Daffodils" by William Wordsworth
 - http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=907
- “A Simile and Metaphor Sample Lesson Plan for Teaching Similes and Metaphors,” Grades 5-12
 - <http://volweb.utk.edu/Schools/bedford/harrisms/2poe.htm>
- “Writing: Similes and Metaphors”
 - <http://www.emints.org/ethemes/resources/S00000561.shtml>
- “The Bilingual Students: Understanding Language Imagery” by Ruth M. Wilson
 - <http://www.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units/1984/3/84.03.10.x.html>
- “Language Arts Lesson 1: Word Analysis, Fluency and Vocabulary Development,” Grades 4-6
 - http://etap.org/demo/langart4_6/langart1/instructiontutor_last.html
- Proteacher.net Discussion Threads
 - “Figurative Language”: <http://www.proteacher.net/discussions/showthread.php?t=26560>
 - “Teaching Similes and Metaphor,” Middle/School-Junior High: <http://www.proteacher.net/discussions/showthread.php?t=1686>
- “Creating Original Characters, Themes, and Visual Metaphors for Your Digital Short Film”
 - Scroll down the page to the Metaphor and Symbol Charts
 - <http://www.peachpit.com/articles/article.asp?p=174318&seqNum=3&rl=1>

Johnny Appleseed (Jonathan Chapman) Internet Resources

- Fact Monster.com: <http://www.factmonster.com/ce6/people/A0811384.html>
- Straight Dope.com: <http://www.straightdope.com/mailbag/mjappleseed.html>
- Apple of Your Pie.com: http://www.appleofyourpie.com/apples/johnny_appleseed.html
- Swedenborg.org: <http://www.swedenborg.org/jappleseed/history.html> (John Chapman was a missionary for the Swedenborg Church founded by the Swedish theologian Emanuel Swedenborg.)