

Class I = Figures based on similarities

1. Smile

As Dr. Johnson says – ‘A simile is the discovery of likeness between two objects or actions in their general nature dissimilar, or of causes terminating by different operations in some resemblance of effect.

A simile is, therefore, always introduced by such words as – like, as etc.

Example: 1. The child shows the man, as morning shows the day – Milton

2. As every climate has its peculiar disease, so every walk of life has its peculiar temptations

3. True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,

As they move easiest who have learnt to dance. – Pope

2. Metaphor

(a thing regarded as representative or symbolic of something else)

By this figure, a word is transformed from the object to which it properly belongs to another, in such a manner that a comparison is implied, though not formerly expressed.

Example: 1. Hope is brightest when it downs from fear – Scott.

2. The Lord is my rock & my forest.

A metaphor, therefore, differs from a simile only in ‘form’ not in ‘substance’. In the latter, the two subjects of comparison are kept distinct in thought as well as in expression; while in the former, they are kept distinct in thought only, not in

expression. A metaphor is usually a more lively and more pleasing mode of illustrations than a simile, as it is more suggestive and leaves room for an agreeable exercise of the mind in detecting the point of resemblance implied in it.

The coining of metaphors has considerably enriched the vocabulary and phraseology of the English language. We use, in our daily speech a large number of phrases which on account of their wide adoption have almost ceased to be regarded as metaphorical. Thus we often speak of a clear head, a ray of hope, a shade of doubt, the head of a family, without being conscious of that we are using any figure of speech.

A metaphor is only a compressed simile, the best test of its purity is that it should be capable of being expanded into a faultless simile, as –

Metaphor

1. The ship ploughs the sea.
so the ship acts on the ship.

2. The word is a lamp to my feet.
Footsteps in the dark, so the word
guides my obscure way of the
world.

3. Allegory

(Allegory, in Greek, is the speech having a meaning other than the literal.)

Allegory is the figure of speech in which abstract ideas and principles are described in terms of characters, figures and events. This is a figure by which a lengthy and detailed comparison is instituted between two unallied subjects, usually for the purpose of conveying some moral instruction.

Simile

1. As a plough turns the land,

2. As a lamp guides the travellers

It can be employed in prose and poetry to tell a story, with a purpose of teaching or explaining an idea or a principle. The objective of its use is to teach some kind of moral.

An allegory, therefore, is nothing but a detailed description of one thing under the image of another.

For example: In Paradise Lost II, the sin's speech to Satan:

‘Out of thy head I sprang, Amazement seized

All the host of Heaven; back they recoiled afraid

.....

The most averse.”

In the above lines The birth and the nature of sin are here allegorically described. Satan is the author of sin. At first, it seems very repulsive to us, but when often committed, it makes our heart callous and becomes quite attractive. Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress is one of the best allegories in English prose literature.

4. Parable.

A short story that teaches a moral or spiritual lesson especially: one of the stories told by Jesus Christ and recorded in the Bible. Hence, Parable is an allegorical story intended to enforce some high moral and religious lesson. It is so called because the story and its meaning lie side by side in it.

Parables are also employed in Scripture, as mentioned above, to explain an abstract idea or truth. For example, Jesus frequently employed parables to explain God's longsuffering and the Kingdom of God. Arguably, the most famous of Jesus' parables is the prodigal son found in Luke 15:11-32.

It has been noted, since the late nineteenth century, that the parables in the Gospels fall into three groups. These are usually given the names (1) similitude, (2) parable, and (3) exemplary story (sometimes called illustration).

5. Fable

Fable is a literary genre: a succinct fictional story, in prose or verse, that features animals, legendary creatures, plants, inanimate objects, or forces of nature that are anthropomorphized, and that illustrates or leads to a particular moral lesson (a "moral"), which may at the end be added explicitly as a pithy.

A fable is a short fictitious story that teaches a lesson or conveys a moral but it is not always allegorical like a Parable. Moreover, irrational animals are generally introduced or personified in fables, like talking turtles and wise spiders. Children tend to find this appealing, making the moral of the story more relevant. Fables are closely associated with fairy tales.

Features of a Fable

- A fable is intended to provide a moral story.
- Fables often use animals as the main characters. They are presented with anthropomorphic characteristics, such as the ability to speak and to reason.
- An outdoor, countryside setting.