

Figures of speech - Simile and Metaphor

A figure of speech is a departure from the ordinary form of expression. It is employed to produce a greater effect.

There are four different kinds of figures of speech.

1. Those based on resemblance

Examples are: simile, metaphor, personification and apostrophe

2. Those based on contrast

Examples are: antithesis and epigram

3. Those based on association

Examples are: metonymy and synecdoche

4. Those depending on the construction of the plot

Examples are: climax and anticlimax

Simile

In a simile we make a comparison between two objects of different kinds. These two objects will have at least one point in common.

The righteous shall flourish as the palm tree. (Here a comparison is made between the righteous and the palm tree.)

Life is as tedious as a twice-told tale.

O my Love's like a red, red rose

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That's newly sprung in June;
O my Love's like a melodie
That's sweetly played in tune.

Here are some similes common in everyday speech.

as proud as a peacock
as cool as a cucumber
as hard as nails
as good as gold
as old as the hills
as clear as crystal

Note

A comparison of two things of the same kind is not a simile.

Metaphor

A metaphor is an implied simile. It doesn't state that one thing is like another or acts as another. Instead it says that the two things are one and the same. A simile, on the other hand, says that one thing is like another.

Thus, when we say, 'She is like an angel' we use a simile, but when we say 'She is an angel', we use a metaphor.

Examples are:

Life is a dream. (Metaphor)

Life is like a dream. (Simile)

The camel is the ship of the desert. (Metaphor)