Figurative Language Practice

Use this key to check answers and read the explanations.

1. A story says, ‘The folded tent lay like a wrinkled map.’ Which device compares the tent to the map?

A. Simile
B. Personification
C. Hyperbole
D. Onomatopoeia

Correct answer: A. Simile
The sentence compares two different things using the word like. The wrinkles help the reader picture the folded tent.

2. A student writes, ‘The crowded hallway was a river between classes.’ Which device turns the hallway into a comparison with flowing water?

A. Alliteration
B. Simile
C. Metaphor
D. Hyperbole

Correct answer: C. Metaphor
The student uses river figuratively to describe continuous movement through the hallway.

3. What device is used in the sentence ‘The hallway clock scolded me with each tick’?

A. Simile
B. Personification
C. Onomatopoeia
D. Oxymoron

Correct answer: B. Personification
The sentence gives a clock the human action of scolding. Its ticks make the narrator feel as if someone is reproaching them.

4. A character says, ‘I drew a million little sketches while I waited,’ after a single afternoon. Which device makes the wait sound especially long?

A. Onomatopoeia
B. Simile
C. Situational irony
D. Hyperbole

Correct answer: D. Hyperbole
The character exaggerates the number for emphasis. A reader should understand it as an impression of the wait.

5. In ‘Bright banners bobbed beside the bridge,’ which repeated initial sound produces the alliteration?

A. The r sound
B. The b sound
C. The d sound
D. The g sound

Correct answer: B. The b sound
Bright, banners, bobbed, beside, and bridge begin with the same consonant sound.

6. The sentence ‘The paper bag opened with a pop’ uses which word as an example of onomatopoeia?

A. Pop
B. Paper
C. Bag
D. Opened

Correct answer: A. Pop
Pop resembles the quick, sharp sound it names. That imitation makes it an example of onomatopoeia.

7. A coach writes, ‘Saturday’s practice time is still up in the air.’ What should players understand?

A. The players must arrive by plane.
B. Practice will take place outdoors.
C. The team has moved practice to Saturday morning.
D. The time has not been decided.

Correct answer: D. The time has not been decided.
Up in the air is an idiom for something still uncertain or unsettled. The coach has yet to settle the time.

8. Which phrase uses an oxymoron to describe a room that has suddenly fallen silent?

A. Complete quiet
B. Unusually quiet
C. Deafening quiet
D. A quiet room

Correct answer: C. Deafening quiet
Deafening usually describes very loud sound, while quiet suggests little sound. Putting the terms together emphasizes how striking the silence feels.

9. A club opens a lost-and-found desk. The volunteers soon misplace their own logbook for tracking lost objects. What makes this situation ironic?

A. The volunteers misplace the tool meant to help them track missing items.
B. The volunteers give a human voice to an object.
C. Two nearby words start with the same sound.
D. A narrator compares a logbook to a desk using like.

Correct answer: A. The volunteers misplace the tool meant to help them track missing items.
The volunteers are responsible for tracking missing items. Losing their own tracking record reverses what one would expect from that role.

10. A teacher tells the class, ‘Today’s ideas are seeds for next week’s project.’ What does seeds suggest about the ideas?

A. The class needs to buy actual seeds for the project.
B. Students should discard them before the project begins.
C. They are already complete solutions to the project.
D. They are starting points that the class can develop.

Correct answer: D. They are starting points that the class can develop.
A seed is the start of further growth. The metaphor uses that idea to describe how a rough idea can develop into a fuller project.

11. Which use of frozen describes a literal physical change?

A. The prices were frozen until spring.
B. The dancer was frozen with surprise.
C. The shallow puddle was frozen after a night below zero.
D. The debate was frozen in place by a disagreement.

Correct answer: C. The shallow puddle was frozen after a night below zero.
The puddle actually turned to ice. The other examples use frozen to describe something held still or unable to change.

12. A costume designer says, ‘We need more hands at the repair table.’ What do hands stand for in this example of synecdoche?

A. A box of gloves
B. People who can help
C. The handles on the table
D. Tools for cutting fabric

Correct answer: B. People who can help
Hands is a part of the people the speaker needs. Using a part to stand for the whole is synecdoche.

13. Which revision turns ‘The roof sounded like a drum in the rain’ into a metaphor while keeping the drum comparison?

A. The rain sounded louder than the music inside.
B. The roof sounded like a drum as soon as it rained.
C. The roof had a sharp sound whenever it rained.
D. The roof was a drum when the rain came.

Correct answer: D. The roof was a drum when the rain came.
The revision describes the roof directly as a drum. It keeps the comparison while changing how it is expressed.

14. Read these sentences. ‘The streetlights yawned awake. In the slow traffic, buses moved like turtles.’ Which two devices appear in order?

A. Personification, then simile
B. Simile, then personification
C. Hyperbole, then onomatopoeia
D. Alliteration, then metaphor

Correct answer: A. Personification, then simile
The lamps get the human action of yawning. The second sentence explicitly compares the slow buses to turtles using like.

15. A writer starts a passage with ‘My first draft is a rocky trail.’ Which next sentence continues that metaphor and shows what revision does?

A. The trail climbed higher after the rain.
B. Revision turns every sentence into a bright lantern.
C. Revision clears the stones that make readers stumble.
D. I printed the revised draft on a blue sheet.

Correct answer: C. Revision clears the stones that make readers stumble.
Clearing the stones continues the trail comparison. It stands for removing parts of the writing that would slow or confuse a reader.