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Types of Figurative Language

Definition

Figurative language uses words beyond their literal meaning to create emphasis, comparison, or special effects. It makes writing more vivid, creates imagery, evokes emotions, and expresses complex ideas.

Example

Type	Definition	Example
Simile	Compares using "like" or "as"	"Her smile was as bright as the sun."
Metaphor	Directly compares without "like" or "as"	"Time is money."
Personification	Gives human qualities to non-human things	"The wind whispered."
Hyperbole	Uses extreme exaggeration	"I've told you a million times."
Idiom	Phrase with non-literal meaning	"It's raining cats and dogs."

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PART 1: Identify the Figurative Language

Read each sentence about the Inca Road System. Identify which type of figurative language is used.

1. The Inca roads were the lifelines of the empire, carrying messages, goods, and soldiers throughout the vast territory.

- a) simile
- b) metaphor
- c) personification
- d) hyperbole
- e) idiom

2. The stone paths of the Inca roads snake through the steep Andes mountains like giant ribbons.

- a) simile
- b) metaphor
- c) personification
- d) hyperbole
- e) idiom

3. The ancient suspension bridges spanning deep canyons laughed at the raging rivers below.

- a) simile
- b) metaphor
- c) personification
- d) hyperbole
- e) idiom

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4. The Inca messengers, called chasquis, ran like the wind to deliver important information across the empire.

- a) simile
- b) metaphor
- c) personification
- d) hyperbole
- e) idiom

5. When it came to building roads through the mountains, the Inca engineers hit the nail on the head with their techniques.

- a) simile
- b) metaphor
- c) personification
- d) hyperbole
- e) idiom

PART 2: Multiple Choice

Choose the sentence that best demonstrates the type of figurative language indicated.

1. Which sentence contains a METAPHOR about the Inca Road System?

- a) The Inca roads connected the empire like threads in a finely woven tapestry.
- b) The Inca Highway is a remarkable feat of ancient engineering.
- c) The steep mountain paths are stone rivers flowing through the Andes.
- d) The chasquis could run incredibly fast along the roads.

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2. Which sentence contains PERSONIFICATION about the Inca Road System?

- a) The roads were built with precisely fitted stones.
- b) The ancient paths still guard their secrets about Inca engineering methods.
- c) The Inca roads were like veins carrying lifeblood through the empire.
- d) Workers moved massive stones without wheeled vehicles.

3. Which sentence contains a HYPERBOLE about the Inca Road System?

- a) The road system stretched across mountains higher than the clouds.
- b) The Inca roads connected distant parts of the empire.
- c) Some suspension bridges were made from woven grass.
- d) The chasquis ran for days without sleeping to deliver messages.

4. Which sentence contains a SIMILE about the Inca Road System?

- a) The Inca road is a marvel of ancient engineering.
- b) The ancient paths whisper stories of the past to modern travelers.
- c) The stone steps climbed the mountain faces as steadily as determined soldiers.
- d) The entire empire depended on the road system.

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PART 3: Create Your Own

Write your own examples of figurative language about the Inca Road System. Create one example for each type.

1. Simile:

2. Metaphor:

3. Personification:

4. Hyperbole:

5. Idiom:

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PART 4: Match the Meaning

Match each figurative expression about the Inca Road System with its literal meaning.

___ "The Inca highways were the backbone of the empire."

___ "The chasquis moved as fast as lightning along the roads."

___ "The ancient stones whisper tales of Inca messengers."

___ "The road system stretched to the ends of the earth."

___ "Building the mountain roads was an uphill battle."

a) The road system extended to the distant borders of the empire.

b) The road system was essential for the empire's function and support.

c) The messengers traveled very quickly on the road system.

d) The roads seem to preserve the history of the people who used them.

e) Constructing roads in mountainous terrain was very difficult.

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Types of Figurative Language – Answer Key

ANSWER KEY

PART 1: Identify the Figurative Language

1. b) metaphor
2. a) simile
3. c) personification
4. a) simile
5. e) idiom

PART 2: Multiple Choice

1. c) The steep mountain paths are stone rivers flowing through the Andes.
2. b) The ancient paths still guard their secrets about Inca engineering methods.
3. a) The road system stretched across mountains higher than the clouds.
4. c) The stone steps climbed the mountain faces as steadily as determined soldiers.

PART 3: Create Your Own

Sample answers (student answers will vary):

1. Simile: The precisely fitted stones of the Inca roads locked together like puzzle pieces.
2. Metaphor: The Inca road network was a spider web connecting all corners of the empire.
3. Personification: The ancient pathways beckon travelers to discover the secrets of Inca civilization.

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Types of Figurative Language – Answer Key

4. Hyperbole: The Inca messengers could run faster than the mountain winds across the empire.

5. Idiom: When it came to building roads that last, the Inca engineers were always on the ball.

PART 4: Match the Meaning

b) The road system was essential for the empire's function and support.

c) The messengers traveled very quickly on the road system.

d) The roads seem to preserve the history of the people who used them.

a) The road system extended to the distant borders of the empire.

e) Constructing roads in mountainous terrain was very difficult.