

TEACHER'S GUIDE

The Jonas Brothers—"Burning Up" Songwriting Skill - Using Figurative Language

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

- Distinguish between literal and figurative language
- Recognize elements of figurative language
- Identify and analyze examples of figurative language
- Revise writing to strengthen use of figurative language
- Evaluate the effect of figurative language on personal writing

RESOURCES AND PREPARATION

- Guided Lyrics – It Figures!
- Student Activity – Figure It Out!

Additional Online Support:

- www.holtmcdougal.hmhco.com
- www.BlueNoseEd.com

Teach

1. **Introducing Figurative Language:** Remind students that when they write songs, their task is the same as when they are writing poems, stories, or essays. First, they need to find the right words and phrases to communicate their thoughts and feelings. Second, they need to do so in a way that readers and listeners will find appealing and memorable.

- Ask students to vote on which of the following sentences best conveys an idea about traffic on a highway. Ask: which is more exact? Which paints a more vivid picture?

EXAMPLE (A) Traffic moved slowly around the curve.

(B) Like a monstrous boa constrictor, the traffic coiled around the curve.

- Even without using terms such as *imagery*, *figurative language*, and *simile*, volunteers should be able to explain why the second example is more effective.
- Explain that when words are used in an imaginative way to convey emotions and connotations beyond their literal meaning, this is called **figurative language**.
- Point out that the visual image of the snake coiling makes the description even more powerful. Explain that the use of sensory details such as this is known as **imagery**.

2. **Teaching Figurative Language:** Start by making sure students understand the difference between literal and figurative language. Review the students' knowledge of *simile* and *metaphor*. Also remind them that some figures of speech have become overused, and have become *clichés*. Draw the following chart on the board. As a fun, creative exercise, fill in the headings with their suggestions.

Literal Versus Figurative Language

Literal Statement	Simile	Metaphor	Cliché
1. Rowdy was a nice dog, but sometimes he could be hard to get along with.	1. <i>Like</i> a rare tapestry, Rowdy was comprised of many tones and colors.	1. At times, even to his closest friends, Rowdy was a riddle.	1. Rowdy was a diamond in the rough.

Add Zing With Figurative Language!

Point out that song lyrics lie somewhere between prose and poetry. They are literal sometimes, and figurative at other times. Many of the best lyrics manage to capture the strong parts of both modes. They use ordinary speech (often in the verses), but they also include flights of highly figurative language for the parts of the song that carry the most emotion (usually the chorus). Tell students that when one of their lyrics seems lifeless, they often can give it new energy by rewriting it in figurative terms.

EXAMPLE Draw the following diagram on the board. Start with the lyrics in the left column. Ask the students to use *metaphors*, *similes*, *hyperbole*, or other types of figurative language to rewrite the phrase in a way that contains the same thought, but which adds a little zing.

Original Lyric	Lyric With Zing
1. I don't want no more advice / Right or wrong, I'll pay the price	1.
2. They say absence makes the heart grow fonder / Oh, why did you have to go and wander?	2.
3. You make me feel so taken for granted / I'm just so sad and disenchanting!	3.

3. **Guided Practice:** How to use the Guided Practice Worksheet

Step 1 Hand out a copy of the worksheet to each student

Step 2 Guide students through the call-out questions. Encourage them to come up with more than one answer to each question.

Step 3 Use Figurative Language! Have students fill in the It Figures! chart, using "Burning Up" as an inspiration to write lyrics that contain vivid figures of speech.

Use the "You Try It!" worksheet to help students revise their lyrics to include figurative language.

QUICK CHECK Ask students to define figurative language. Have them give examples of metaphors, similes, hyperbole, imagery, and other figures of speech. Finally, have them explain how they can add emotional energy to their song lyrics by revising them to include more figurative language.

GUIDED PRACTICE

**The Jonas Brothers—“Burning Up”
Songwriting Skill — Using Figurative Language**

It Figures!

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

Cliché: an overly familiar expression, including many common figures of speech.
Figurative Language: words used in an imaginative way to express ideas that are not literally true, but which carry emotional meaning.
Figure of speech: a type of figurative language that describes something by comparing it directly or indirectly to something else.
Hyperbole: a figure of speech in which the truth is exaggerated for emphasis or humorous effect.
Imagery: sensory details that create a picture or sensation in the reader’s mind.
Metaphor: a figure of speech that makes an indirect comparison between two unlike things that have some quality in common. A metaphor differs from a simile in that a metaphor omits a word such as like or as. It says that one thing is another thing.
Personification: a figure of speech that gives human qualities to ideas, objects, or animals.
Simile: a figure of speech that makes a direct comparison—using words such as like, seems, resembles, or as—to highlight the common quality in two unlike things.
Understatement: a figure of speech that makes something sound less important or extreme than it actually is.

DIRECTIONS Read the lyrics to “Burning Up” by The Jonas Brothers. Where does this song use figurative language? How does the use of these figures of speech affect the emotional content of the song?

**The Jonas Brothers
“Burning Up”**

(Verse 1)
I'm hot
You're cold
You go around
Like you know
Who I am
But you don't
You've got me, on my toes

1: Using Figurative Language—1st Verse Are there any examples of figurative language in the first verse? What impact do these figures of speech have on the song?

(Chorus)
I'm slipping into the lava
And I'm trying to keep from going under
Baby
You turn the temperature hotter
Cause I'm burning up
Burning up
For you baby

2: Using Figurative Language—Chorus What are the main metaphors in the song? What impact does returning to these metaphors have on the song?

Come On Girl

(Verse 2)
I fell(I fell)
So fast(so fast)
can't hold
Myself, back
High heels(high heels)
Red dress(red dress)
All by yourself
Gotta catch my breath

3: Using Figurative Language—2nd Verse What imagery is important in this second verse? How does it affect the vividness of the song? What other images might the songwriters have used?

(Chorus)
I'm slipping into the lava
And I'm trying keep from going under
Baby
You turn the temperature hotter
Cause I'm burning up
Burning up
for you baby

(Bridge)
I walk in the room
All I can see is you
You're staring me down
I know you feel it too

(Chorus)
I'm slipping into the lava
And I'm trying keep from going under
Baby
You turn the temperature hotter
Cause I'm burning up
Burning up
For you baby

I'm slipping into the lava
And I'm trying keep from going under
Baby
You turn the temperature hotter
Cause I'm burning up
Burning up
For you baby

(Bridge)
We're burning up In this place tonight
You brothers sing it loud(and we're feeling right)
Get up and dance don't try to fight
Big Rob for real (and that's no lie)
stop drop and roll (and touch the floor)
(To keep from burning up)

More and More
I got J.B with me(we're it laying down)
Come on boys
let's bring the chorus around

(Chrous)
I'm slipping into the lava (Burning Up, Burning Up)
And I'm trying keep from going under(Yeah)
Baby
You turn the temperature hotter (Come On)
I'm burning up
Burning up
for you baby
I'm burning up
Burning up
For you baby

It Figures!

DIRECTIONS

First, choose most figurative lyrics from “Burning Up” and use them as models to help you brainstorm ideas for your own lyrics.

Figurative Lyrics from “Burning Up”	My Own Figurative Lyrics

Second, choose lyrics from “Burning Up” that are **not** figurative, and revise them in a more figurative way. Does your revision add more emotion to the lyrics?

Non-Figurative Lyrics from “Burning Up”	My Revision of These Lyrics

YOU TRY IT!

Songwriting Skill — Using Figurative Language

Figure It Out!

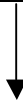
GOAL

Figurative Language is language used in an imaginative way to express emotions and connotations that go beyond the words' literal meaning. Figurative language, such as similes, metaphors, and personification, is extremely useful for songwriting, because it packs more emotion than everyday language. Using figurative language is a great way to energize your lyrics.

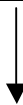
DIRECTIONS Do you have any song lyrics from previous exercises that aren't quite what you'd like them to be? Sometimes lyrics don't work if they are too literal—too “dead on.” This exercise will help you give new life to your lyrics by having you translate your thoughts into figurative language. Use the graphic organizer to help you.

Select a Lyric

From previous exercises, list a lyric or verse that you want to use in a song, but which does not seem as lively as it could be.



Revise - Using a *Simile*, *Metaphor* or *Heightened Imagery*



Evaluate – What is the impact of figurative language?

Did this exercise help to breathe new life into your songs?