Based on my design philosophy, traditional worksheets are discouraged because they often promote passive compliance rather than active engagement[1]. Worksheets tend to have single right answers and prioritize consumption over creation, which is the opposite of what drives deep learning[2222].

Instead, here is an "un-worksheet"—a digital learning experience designed as a **Figurative Language Playground**. This is a collaborative Google Slides activity meant for small groups to complete, aligning with the **Explore** and **Elaborate** phases of the lesson plan. It places the cognitive work on the students and prioritizes discovery, creativity, and critical thinking.

Figurative Language Playground 🕵️‍♀️🎨

Your Mission: Language isn't just a set of rules; it's a toolbox for creating pictures and feelings in a reader's mind. Today, you are the detectives and the artists. Your job is to first uncover the secret patterns of powerful language and then use those patterns to turn the boring into the brilliant.

Part 1: The Sort & Label Challenge (10 minutes)

Instructions: Below are 12 examples of literary language. Your group's task is to sort them into categories that make sense to you. There is no single right answer to start. Drag and drop the text boxes into groups based on the patterns you see.

Once you have your groups, create a "Rule" that defines each category. What do all the items in a pile have in common?

Her voice was a velvet blanket.	The old car coughed and sputtered to a stop.	He was as strong as an ox.
The sun smiled down on the field.	I've told you a million times to clean your room.	My backpack weighs a ton.

The news was a dagger to his heart.	The wind whispered through the trees.	She runs like a cheetah.
This is the best pizza in the entire universe.	Life is a roller coaster.	The tired floorboards groaned under his weight.

Our Discovered Groups & Rules:

(Create a title for each group you sorted and write the rule your team created for it.)

Group Title 1: _____

- **Our Rule:** _____

Group Title 2: _____

- **Our Rule:** _____

Group Title 3: _____

- **Our Rule:** _____

Group Title 4: _____

- **Our Rule:** _____

> **Why this works:** This task promotes **critical thinking** by asking students to identify similarities and differences to find patterns, a research-based strategy for improving learning[3]. Instead of being told the definitions, students discover them, which is a key principle of inquiry-based learning and the 5E model[4444]. Authentic, cognitively involving work like this has been shown to increase student engagement across different learners[5].

Part 2: From Mundane to Magical (10 minutes)

Instructions: Now that you've discovered the patterns and given them names with your class, it's time to be the artist. Your group's challenge is to take the boring sentence below and rewrite it using each of the figurative language tools you've learned. The goal is to be as

creative and powerful as possible. Don't just decorate the sentence—make us feel it!

The Mundane Sentence: The classroom was quiet.

Our Magical Rewrites:

- **Simile (like/as): _____**
- **Metaphor (is/was): _____**
- **Personification (giving human qualities): _____**
- **Hyperbole (extreme exaggeration): _____**

Why this works: This activity moves students from analysis to **creation**, a cornerstone of true engagement[6]. It provides a "low risk of failure" environment where students can experiment with language without the pressure of a high-stakes grade[7]. This type of active, collaborative problem-solving encourages students to process and apply new information, leading to deeper comprehension[8]. It transforms a potentially compliant task into one that is

interested or even **absorbed**, as students challenge each other's creativity[9999].