Name: _____ **Date:** _____



Literal and Figurative Language

One common element used to enhance imagery in writing is the use of ***figurative language***; phrases that don't have a literal meaning, but rather suggests something with the use of creative language. Metaphors and idioms, for instance, are forms of figurative writing.

Figurative language is the opposite of ***literal language***, whereas the text means exactly what it says. Literal language can be read literally, word for word.

Literal Language

If you're doing something highly technical, like assembling a computer or baking a cake, you'll want to know exactly what the instructions say without any possible confusion. In an instance like this, literal language is essential, because it explains exactly what should be done through the course of the assembling and cooking. Of course, literal language is used in all types of writing, not just instructional texts. You can find it in everything from a book report to the pages of your favorite novel. Let's look at an example of a literal sentence:

"*The hot flames roasted the scales of the fish until it had dark grill marks*."

Here, there is no potential confusion, and the language is very straightforward. The fish has dark grill marks from being roasted over the hot flame.

Because it's very straightforward, literal writing can be a bit dry and even downright boring; but it doesn't have to be. Especially when used in stories and other creative pieces, a strong command of syntax and vocabulary can help you craft an entertaining and detailed piece.

Figurative Language

Figurative language is generally more colorful. Literature is full of figurative language. Instead of using an exact description of what is happening in the text, figurative language creates comparisons and uses suggestive language to paint a picture in the mind of the reader. There are many forms of figurative language. This worksheet will be focusing on idioms. One such example of idiom would be:

"*The non-binary student took their classmate's insults like water off a duck's back."*

Water off a duck's back is an idiomatic expression that originated in the 1800s. It comes from the literal characteristic that duck feathers have for resisting water. If you have ever observed a duck, you may have noticed that no matter how often the duck dives under the water, it comes back up looking quite dry. This is because duck feathers are coated in special oil that repels water. For that reason, water droplets quite literally roll off of ducks' backs.

People often use this to describe insults or negative actions that others do against them as things that do not harm them. The sentence above implies that the non-binary student isn't affected by their classmate's insults.

English idioms, proverbs, and expressions are an important part of everyday English. They come up all the time in both written and spoken English. Because idioms don't always make sense literally, you'll need to familiarize yourself with the meaning and usage of each idiom. That may seem like a lot of work, but learning idioms is fun, especially when you compare English idioms to the idioms in your own language.

Here's a list of 20 common idioms used in sentences and their implied meanings:

1. Samantha was *tickled pink* by the good news. made very happy
2. His performance was *hands down* the best among the contestants seen tonight. there's no competition/there's an overwhelming difference
3. The suspected COVID carrier was *sick as a dog.* very sick
4. I've been feeling *under the weather* lately. unwell
5. He's been *down in the dumps* ever since the quarantine. sad/depressed
6. Your guess was *close, but no cigar*. almost there but didn't make it
7. I was told that I could play on the phone *until the cows come home*. for a very long time
8. People who grow white hair at a young age are *dime a dozen* something common
9. The sound of demolition drills on the road is *driving* me *up the wall* annoying/distressing
10. Don't be angry at her cause she was *just pulling* your *leg*. just joking
11. The chemistry lesson is *all Greek* to me. cannot be understood/incomprehensible
12. This new laptop *costs* me *an arm and a leg*. very expensive
13. The minors who broke the curfew were given *a slap on the wrist* by the authorities mild punishment
14. *Keep your chin up*, this pandemic will soon be over. be happy/have hope
15. He said that he's on the way *so hold your horses*. wait/be patient
16. They said that the new recruit was a *loose cannon*. unpredictable
17. It will snow in the Philippines *when pigs fly*. never
18. Do your best in the competition and *break a leg*. wishing good luck
19. The project was scrapped so it's time to *go back to the drawing board*. start over
20. It's past midnight so I should *hit the sack*. go to sleep



A. Directions: Determine what the following sentences are trying to convey. Choose the letter of the correct answer.

1. My mother's face was **tickled pink** when she came home to see a bouquet of her favorite flowers on the table.
   A. Mother was very happy.

B. Someone tickled mother.
C. Mother's skin turned pink.
D. Mother became angry at the flowers.

2. Tony said that he will only apologize to Steve **when pigs fly**.
   A. Tony wants to apologize to Steve.
   B. Tony will attempt to make pigs fly.
   C. Pigs will be jumping after Tony apologizes.
   D. Toby has no intention of ever apologizing to Steve.

3. Sarah's friend texted her to **hit the sack** when they saw her still online at 1 in the morning.
   A. Sarah's friend told her to sleep.
   B. Sarah's friend hates sacks and wants her to kick them.
   C. Sarah was texted because she was violent towards sacks.
   D. Sarah will be punching the sack and send a video of it online.

4. Father got drenched from yesterday's sudden rain and now he's **feeling under the weather**.
   A. Father is feeling very good.
   B. Father is very ill because of the rain.
   C. Father wants to be wet in the rain again.
   D. Father wants to feel the weather outside.

5. Mercy told Lina that the rare taro jam in Manila were a **dime a dozen** in Baguio.
   A. Taro jams were very cheap in Baguio.
   B. Mercy wants Lina to go with her to Baguio.
   C. It costs a dime for a dozen bottles of taro jam in Baguio.
   D. Taro jams are common goods and easy to find in Baguio.

B. Directions: Choose the most appropriate idiom to complete the sentences below. Be guided by the intended meaning in parenthesis. Write your answers on a separate sheet of paper.

6. You don't have to pay, my friend. This drink is (free)_____.

   A. on the house B. stick in the mud C. stepping on legos

7. Many people from the province dream of going to the cities, believing that they will (make it big) _____ once they get there.

   A. break a leg **B**. strike it rich **C**. paid in peanuts

8. Philippine mouse-deer is said to be critically endangered and can only be spotted in the wilderness of the islands of Palawan (a few times only) _____.

   A. on fire **B.** under the weather **C**. once in a blue moon

9. By the rate we are going, we will only beat the game's super-hard nemesis (impossible) _____.

   A. when pigs fly **B**. a sweet-tooth **C**. by the skin of our teeth

10. Manny is (indecisive) _____ on whether he would run for class president or keep a low profile.

    A. tightening his belt **B**. opening a can of worms **C**. on the fence

C. Directions: Read the sentences carefully. Identify if it has **LITERAL** or **FIGURATIVE** meaning. Write your answers on a separate sheet of paper.

11. The field is calm and quiet.
12. The dawn crept across the sky in pink clothing.
13. The darkness surrounded them with a cold embrace.
14. The sky is pale blue with few clouds.
15. I'm so hungry I could eat a horse!



Directions: Choose the letter of the best answer. Write the chosen letter on a separate sheet of paper.

1. Which among the following is the sentence below trying to convey?
"Many people believe that *2020 is the picture of a perfect storm* when subsequent natural calamities, a brewing world war, massive irreparable environmental damage and an ongoing global pandemic happened one after another in quick succession."
A. 202 has the worst possible situations happening.
B. 2020 is the last year of humanity.
C. There is no hope in 2020.
D. 2020 is a safe year.

2. Which among the following sentences uses literal language?
A. The older sibling went bananas upon knowing that his phone was broken.
B. A salary worker licks the shoes of his or her boss to curry favor.
C. A very skilled player can carry the whole team to victory.
D. I will go wherever you will go at a drop of a hat.

3. Which among the following sentences uses figurative language?
A. Twenty-four students attending an online class.
B. A student saying that the recent exam was a piece of cake.
C. A black-furred cat passed across John on his way to school.
D. The president proclaiming that he will not tolerate illegal drug users.

4. What figure of speech is used in the sentence below?
"They say that ***the ship has sailed*** when Romel returned to his hometown only to find his childhood sweetheart already got married to another man."
A. Metaphor
B. Personification
C. Simile
D. Idiom

5. Which of the following sentences uses an idiom?
A. Many say that Trump is a clown for passing policies that worsened the economy of America.
B. A father was on cloud-nine after receiving cash assistance during the ECQ period.
C. The tomatoes left inside the fridge for a week developed freezer-burn.
D. The clouds were racing across the sky.



Directions: Read the short story and answer the questions that follow.

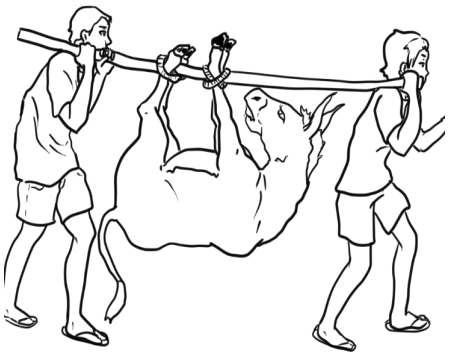
A Donkey to Market (*A Cambodian Folktale)*



Long ago, there was a man named Khek who with his son raised a donkey's calf. When the calf grew up, it became a handsome and plump donkey with brown and smooth hair.

On seeing the fine grown-up donkey, the man said to his son, "Now our donkey has become fat and nice. If we sell it now, we can get a good price for it. But when I asked around and *left no stone unturned* in our village, there is no one who needs a donkey, and the village where someone needs one is very far from here. If we make the donkey walk to that far away village, it may get thin by fatigue, and its price will go down and we will be *paid in peanuts*. How can we get a good price for it?"

Finally, the man and his son decided what to do. They caught the donkey, fastened each pair of its feet tightly together, passed a pole between the pairs of feet, and shouldered its two ends. Thus, they began to carry it to the far away village where they hoped to get a good price.



While going on their way, they were seen by villagers who were much amused to see such a sight. They burst into laughter and said, "Hey, what a strange thing! Two men carrying a donkey!" They chided the man: "Old man, do not do so. The horse, the ox, the elephant and the donkey have never been carried by men. It is they which have to carry men on their backs."

On hearing this, the father and the son took down the donkey and untied it. The father then said to the son, "We cannot ride all at once, for our donkey is not strong enough to carry both of us. So, ride alone on it and I will follow you." And so, the young man did.

As they were passing through another village, the young man was asked, "Where are you riding, boy?" "I ride to a village called Kompang," answered the young man. And pointing to the old man, they asked, "Who is this old man behind you?" "He is my father," the young man replied. On hearing this, the villagers *went mental* and said, "What an ungrateful son you are! You are strong enough to walk while your old father is not so. You had better get down at once and let your old father ride the donkey." On hearing the *sharp-tongued* villagers, the young man at once got down from the donkey and the old man took his place. Then they continued their journey.



The young man walked behind the donkey carrying his father. After some time, they came near a well at the end of a certain village. Around this well there was a throng of young women who came to draw water from there. Some were noisily pouring water on their body for a bath. Looking at the handsome young man walking slowly behind the donkey, they felt a great sympathy for him. They envied the old man who was riding so comfortably on the donkey while the young man walked behind him with much hardship. The young women approached the donkey and said roughly to the old man, "This young donkey is fat and pretty; it is worthy of the young man who is in the same happy state; an old man like you is not fit to ride on it!" When the old man and his son heard such unkind words, they discussed the matter. "We will both ride together on the donkey, you in front and I behind you," decided the old man. And sitting like that, they continued the journey.

After crossing some distance, they reached a customhouse. They were then seen by the officer of the customhouse, who asked, "Where are you going, men?" "We are going to the village of Kompang," they answered. And the officer scolded them: "Your donkey is not strong and old enough to carry both of you. If you keep on riding along as far as the village of Kompang, it will become thin and its price will go down. How foolish you are! Why don't you let it walk?" Again, they got off the donkey and led it by means of a rope.

When they arrived at a field, there was no road for them to go any further. So, they began to cross it to find another way. The owner of the field who was working there cried out from a distance, "Walk carefully, old man! My field is full of thorns for it is not yet cleaned up. But you have a donkey, why don't you ride it to avoid the thorns? Why do you treat it as your ruler? How foolish you are!" The father and son looked at each other.

"We cannot *see eye to eye* with all people. Whatever we do, we get a scolding from someone." At last they agreed: "We will just have to travel as we see fit, and put up with the blame as it comes." They went on and finally reached the village of Kompang. There, they sold their donkey for a very good price and returned home without further loss of time.

Process Questions:

1. What does it mean when Khek said that he *left no stone unturned*?

A. He stole all the stones in the village.
B. He searched everywhere in the village.
C. He examined every stone that the village has.
D. He turned every stone in the village upside-down.

2. Khek was worried that the donkey will become thin and they will be *paid in peanuts* for it. What does this imply?

A. The donkey will be sold very cheaply.
B. They will be paid the equivalent weight of the donkey in peanuts.
C. They will buy peanuts with the money they get from selling the donkey.
D. The village that they're about sell the donkey to uses peanuts as money.

3. What does it entail when it was said that the villagers *went mental*?

A. The villagers did mental math to determine how much the donkey costs.
B. The villagers became mentally disturbed.
C. The villagers went to the mental hospital.
D. The villagers got very angry.

4. It had been described that the villagers were *sharp-tongued*. What does this tell?

A. The words that the villagers said hurt Khek and his son.
B. The villagers cut their vegetables with their tongues.
C. The villagers use their tongues like knives.
D. The villagers' tongues are pointed.

5. Near the end of the story, Khek said that they *cannot see eye to eye* with the people they met on the road. What does this phrase mean?

A. Khek and his son are shy.
B. They cannot agree on anything.
C. They avoid the gaze of the villagers.
D. They cannot look at the people's eyes.

B. Directions: Identify whether the following sentences uses ***literal*** or ***figurative*** language.

1. The donkey grew up to be plump.

2. Khek and his son encountered colorful individuals on the way to sell their donkey.

3. Khek was afraid that the donkey will become thin and they will be paid in peanuts.

4. The field is full of thorns for it is not yet cleaned up.

5. A throng of young women came to draw water from the well.

6. People thought that Khek and his son had a few screws loose when they saw the two carrying their donkey on a pole.

C. Directions: Cut out five (5) editorial cartoons from print or online media sources and paste them on a separate sheet of paper. Use idioms or figurative language to convey its message and explain how the issue relates to you as a student.

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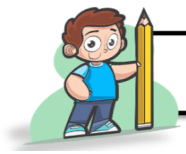
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ANSWER KEY

Literal and Figurative Language

Fly High: Activity A:

1. B
2. A
3. B
4. A
5. B

Activity B:

1. Literal
2. figurative
3. figurative
4. literal
5. Literal
6. figurative

Activity C:

Answers may vary.

Take Off:

1. A
2. C
3. B
4. D
5. B

Starter:

1. D
2. B
3. A
4. B
5. D

6. A
7. B
8. C
9. A
10. C

11. LITERAL
12. FIGURATIVE
13. FIGURATIVE
14. LITERAL
15. FIGURATIVE