

ENRICHMENT WORK

Name: _____ Group: _____

Hyperboles

Directions: Hyperbole is a figure of speech that involves the deliberate use of exaggeration. (Example: It is 1,000 degrees out here!) The author of *The Watsons Go to Birmingham – 1963* uses hyperbole, often as a way of adding humor to the story.

Read the following list. Refer to the given page to find an example of hyperbole related to that item. Write the sentence that contains exaggeration.

1. the cold (pg. 1) _____

2. Byron's lips (pg. 18) _____

3. Momma's peanut butter sandwiches (pg. 34) _____

4. Momma's eyes (pg. 67) _____

5. Grandma Sands (pg. 156) _____

6. Grandma Sands and Byron (pg. 158) _____

7. the heat (-g. 162) _____

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Figurative Language

Talented writers such as Christopher Paul Curtis use figurative language to make scenes more vivid. In *The Watsons Go to Birmingham – 1963* he uses these figurative language devices:

hyperbole – an obvious exaggeration example – The garbage can was *the size of the Titanic*.

simile – a comparison using the words “like” or “as” example – The hungry boy ate *like a horse*. The soup was *as cold as ice*.

metaphor – an implied comparison in which one thing is called another example – The girl *was a scared rabbit*.

personification – giving human characteristics to a thing (plant, animal, or thing) example – The vine *clutched* at her leg and *refused* to let go.

Directions: Read each quote from the book. Decide whether it is an example of hyperbole (H), simile (S), metaphor (M), or personification (P), and write the abbreviation for your choice on the line provided. Then highlight or underline the words that indicated to you the type of figurative language being used.

_____ “That snake in the grass has got his phone off the hook.”

_____ “With Byron walking around me like that we must have looked like we were in the Wild West and I was a wagon train and Byron was the Indian circling, waiting to attack.”

_____ “The door jumped out of her way....”

_____ “Larry Dunn was the king of the kindergarten to fourth grade of Clark Elementary...but Byron was a god.”

_____ “Momma’s voice got strange, hissing like a snake...”

_____ “Momma said that last part like she was dropping a bomb on Grandma Sands.”

_____ “I knew this was a worm with a hook on it, but I bit anyway.” “I’ve got about a million (dinosaurs), but before LJ started coming over, I had two million.”

_____ “If there was a forest fire somewhere all Smokey the Bear would have to do is hold me upside down over it and the fire wouldn’t have a chance.”

_____ “All the kids were looking at me like I was a six-legged dog.”

_____ “....when his fingers found out it was them that were going to get burned, they let go of Byron’s throat and joined the rest of his body in deciding to wait at Buphead’s until Dad got home.”

_____ “Then he dropped the bomb on us.”

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Quotations

Directions: Choose 10 of the following quotes. Reread each one in the book so you know the context. Then thoroughly explain the meaning of each one on a separate piece of paper. Be sure to include the quotation number.

1. Chapter 2: “Mr. Alums might as well have tied me to a pole and said, ‘Ready, aim, fire!’”
2. Chapter 3: “LJ finally pulled the trick I knew he was going to, but he did it so cool that I didn’t even see it coming.”
3. Chapter 4: “Byron was the only person who could make you feel sorry for someone as mean as Larry Dunn.”
4. Chapter 4: “I couldn’t stand to see how the movie was going to end, so me and Rufus left.”
5. Chapter 5: “Leave it to Daddy Cool to torture human kids at school all day long and never have his conscience bother him but to feel sorry for a stupid little grayish brown bird.”
6. Chapter 7: “You think I’m hurt and you and every other punk Chihuahua in America is climbing out of the woodwork to try and get a bit out of me.”
7. Chapter 8: “It’s times like this when someone is talking to you like you are a grown-up that you have to be careful not to pick your nose or dig your drawers out of your butt.”
8. Chapter 10: “Having a little pee in your pants had to be better than being dinner for some redneck.”
9. Chapter 12: “I’d never seen Momma act like a little kid who just got yelled at but there she was, picking at a piece of paper towel and looking kind of embarrassed.”
10. Chapter 13: “Byron was shaking like he was getting electrocuted and crying like a baby and kissing the top of my head over and over!”
11. Chapter 14: “The light flickered and the smoke cleared, and I could see that hanging on to the other end of the shoe was a giant gray hand with cold, hard square fingers.”
12. Chapter 15: “I was waiting to see if the magic powers were going to treat me like a dog or a cat, or if when Byron or Joey woke up one morning they’d find a crumpled-up yellow towel where I was supposed to be.”
13. Chapter 15: “If he’d ever had his ankle grabbed by it, he’d know it was real, if

he'd seen the way it was crouched down, crawling around in the dust and the smoke of the church in Birmingham, he'd know it wasn't some made-up garbage, if he'd ever seen those horrible toes, he'd know the Wool Pooh was as serious as a heart attack."

14. Chapter 15: "And I'm sure there was an angel in Birmingham when Grandma Sands wrapped her little arms around all of the Weird Watsons and said, 'My fambly, my beautiful fambly.'"

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Creating Portmanteau Words

Skillful authors sometimes make new words when they feel there is no appropriate word in our language for what they want to say. These words are called portmanteau words. Portmanteau means combining two words to create a new word. Sometimes portmanteau words become a part of our language. Two portmanteau words you might already know are

- chortle (a combination of "chuckle" and "snort")
- scurrying (a combination of "hurrying" and scrambling")

Directions: Christopher Paul Curtis introduced several portmanteau words in *The Watsons Go to Birmingham – 1963*. Read these quotes. Highlight or underline the portmanteau word in each. On the lines provided, write the two words you believe the author combined.

_____ + _____ 1. "He noticed that when I talked to people I squinched my lazy eye kind of shut or that I put my hand on my face to cover it."

_____ + _____ 2. "Now all of you will help Rufus feel welcome, won't you? Someone sniggled."

_____ + _____ 3. "The toilet stopped glugging..."

_____ + _____ 4. "You really gonna make me go embarrass myself by signing a welfare list for some groceries like a blanged peon?"

Extension: Now that you understand the concept, try creating two portmanteau words yourself. Use your portmanteau words in a sentence so the reader has a context to understand the word. Challenge your classmates or teacher to figure out the two words you combined.

1. _____

2. _____

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Enrichment Work

Music Critiques

In Chapter 8 of the book, the Watsons get the Ultra-Glide, and we readers start to find out about the kinds of music they enjoy listening to. The “oldies” asterisks are mentioned by name in the book. The others are readily available songs by the artists that Kenny mentions his parents playing on the Ultra-Glide.

”Yakety Yak” by the Coasters (Kenny’s favorite)

*** “Under the Boardwalk” by the Drifters (Momma’s favorite)**

*** “Straighten Up and Fly Right” by Nat King Cole (Dad likes to whistle this)**

*** “Unforgettable” by Nat King Cole**

“I’ve Got You Under My Skin” by Dinah Washington

“What a Difference a Day Makes” by Dinah Washington

“Smoke Gets in Your Eyes” by Dinah Washington

- 2. If possible, access several 60’s songs on the internet; listen to the songs and read their lyrics.**

Below are several phrases taken directly from “Rolling Stone” magazine’s music critiques:

- “hokey, save-the-world” lyrics**
- “intensely rhythmic”**
- “too dull; sleep-inducing”**
- “likeable, danceable beat”**
- “singing sounds a little tired”**
- “bounces along on a perky melody”**
- “they harmonize well”**
- “sassiest rock-and-roll rhythms”**
- “plunges listeners into”**

- 3. Choose one song from the sixties; listen to it carefully and read the lyrics.**

Answer the following questions about your song; include the title and artist.

- 1. What do you like about the song?**

2. **What did the recording artist do especially well?**
3. **What do you dislike about the song?**
4. **What could the recording artist have done better?**
5. **How is this song different from the songs of today?**
6. **How is this song like the songs of today?**
7. **What age group do you think this song appeals to (children, teens, adults, senior citizens)?**
8. **Would you recommend that another person your age buy this song?**