Mr. Jones is snowed under for the moment. May I take a message?”
Featured Figures of Speech

Simile: A simile compares two things using the words like or as.

*Dad is as grouchy as a sleepy bear before he has his morning coffee. My sister jumped around in the snow like a happy grasshopper.*

Metaphor: A metaphor says that a person or thing is something other than what it really is. Metaphors make comparisons or suggest similarities between two unlike things without using the words like or as.

*Dad is a bear before his morning coffee. His bedroom floor is a sea of dirty laundry and abandoned toys.*

Personification: Personification is a figure of speech in which nonhuman objects, organisms, or events are given human characteristics.

*A bicycle tire peered at us from beneath the rubble. Blades of tall grass waved to each other in the breeze. A blizzard howled through the streets for hours.*

Hyperbole: A hyperbole uses exaggeration or overstatement for emphasis.

*There must be a million cars parked at the mall. I answered the phone about a thousand times today.*

Idiom: An idiom is a group of two or more words that mean something quite different from their individual, literal (real) definitions.

*That noise is driving me up the wall. (The noise is irritating.) You’re skating on thin ice. (What you are doing could get you into trouble.)*
January is a busy month. It ushers in the New Year along with some of the Northern Hemisphere’s most eventful wintry weather. It brings parades, the Rose Bowl Game, and National Chocolate Covered Cherry Day (January 3).

On the third Monday, we celebrate the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Among the distinguished designations for January are National Soup Month, Bath Safety Month, National Get Organized Month, and National Skating Month.

Other notable days include:
- Drinking Straw Day (January 3)
- Elvis Presley’s birthday (January 8)
- National Clean Off Your Desk Day (January 10)
- Rubber Duckie Day (January 13)
- Dress Up Your Pet Day (January 14)
- Inauguration Day (January 20)
- National Pie Day (January 23)
- National Puzzle Day (January 29)
- Bubble Wrap Appreciation Day (January 31)

With so many extraordinary attributes, it’s only fitting that January also be celebrated in figurative language. All of the following italicized sentences and quotes are connected to January weather, celebrations, or events. Each item contains a figure of speech with an accompanying question. Write the letter of the correct answer in the blank to the left.

1. **Colin’s drinking straw bent like a tiny elbow, causing the last of the orange juice to gurgle as it slipped past.**
   The comparison of Colin’s drinking straw to an elbow is an example of (A) a simile, (B) a metaphor, (C) a hyperbole, (D) an idiom.

2. **Arable’s desk is covered with about a million old papers and magazines.**
   The figure of speech in the above sentence is (A) a simile, (B) a hyperbole, (C) personification, (D) an idiom.

3. **Falling snow slowly wrapped the whole neighborhood in a blanket of white.**
   This sentence contains an example of (A) a simile, (B) a metaphor, (C) an idiom, (C) personification.

4. **It was so cold that if you spit, the slob would be an ice cube before it hit the ground. It was about a zillion degrees below zero.** *(The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963* by Christopher Paul Curtis)*
   Which of the following phrases from the passage is a hyperbole? (A) a zillion degrees below zero, (B) if you spit, (C) hit the ground, (D) It was so cold.

5. **The wind was as loud as a freight train roaring past the windows.**
   Which phrase, if substituted for the underlined simile in the sentence, would change it to a metaphor? (A) quickly, (B) a loud freight train, (C) blowing like a freight train, (D) like a monster.

6. **Hazardous driving conditions threw cold water on our week-end plans.**
   Threw cold water on is (A) a simile, (B) a metaphor, (C) a hyperbole, (D) an idiom.
January in Figurative Language—Part One—continued

_____ 7. **A pot of soup sat on the stovetop bubbling and steaming __________.**
Which of the following phrases can be placed in the blank above so that the sentence illustrates the use of a simile? (A) loudly, (B) like a small volcano, (C) out of the pot and down the sides, (D) for several hours.

_____ 8. **Uncle Otis is a Scrooge about sharing his stash of chocolate covered cherries.**
According to the metaphor above, Uncle Otis (A) doesn’t like candy, (B) gives most of his candy away, (C) will share with a few chosen people, (D) is stingy about sharing his supply of candy.

_____ 9. **Smiling politely and introducing yourself is a good way to break the ice in a room full of strangers.**
Which phrase could be substituted for the idiom break the ice in the above sentence without changing its meaning? (A) get attention, (B) get over being shy, (C) make a lot of new friends, (D) fool people.

_____ 10. **Five hundred jigsaw puzzle pieces fell to the floor like a swirling blizzard.**
The figure of speech in the above sentence is (A) a simile, (B) a metaphor, (C) a hyperbole, (D) personification.

_____ 11. **All bundled up in his ski gear, Mason was _____________.**
Choose the metaphor that will correctly complete the sentence. (A) uncomfortable and hot, (B) a big, round walking parade balloon, (C) barely able to move, (D) as big as a gorilla.

_____ 12. **Tyler always puts his desk in apple pie order after he finishes his homework.**
The idiom in this sentence means that Tyler (A) eats apple pie after he finishes his homework, (B) stacks things up on his desk like the layers of a pie, (C) organizes his desk rather than leaving it messy, (D) leaves his homework on top of anything that might be on his desk.

_____ 13. **Icy twigs sparkled like diamonds in the morning sun.**
The simile in this sentence compares (A) the morning sun to diamonds, (B) diamonds to sparkle, (C) ice to the morning sun, (D) icy twigs to diamonds.

_____ 14. **Mom’s New Year’s resolution to read more and watch TV less lasted about two seconds.**
Which phrase is the hyperbole? (A) New Year’s resolution, (B) about two seconds, (C) to read more, (D) watch TV less.

_____ 15. **War is a poor chisel for carving out peaceful tomorrows.** (Martin Luther King, Jr.)
Dr. King’s statement about war is an example of (A) a hyperbole, (B) an idiom, (C) a simile, (D) a metaphor.

_____ 16. **The sheet of bubble wrap went off like a string of firecrackers when I tried to stuff it in the trashcan.**
The simile in this sentence indicates that the bubble wrap (A) made popping and cracking noises, (B) did not fit into the trashcan, (C) was not safe to handle, (C) caught fire.

_____ 17. **Tops of half-buried cars ____________ out from under the snow.**
Which of the following words can be placed in the blank to create personification? (A) protruded, (B) stuck, (C) popped, (D) peeped.

_____ 18. **Bradley was a bouncing football traveling down the hill beside his sled.**
Bradley’s unusual trip down a snowy hill is presented in the sentence as (A) a simile, (B) a metaphor, (C) personification, (D) a hyperbole.

_____ 19. **Sleet whispered in the air before it fell to the rooftops and streets below.**
Which of the following word groups from the sentence is personification? (A) fell to the rooftops, (B) in the air, (C) Sleet whispered, (D) in the air before it fell.
20. Well bless my soul
What’s wrong with me?
I’m itching like a man on a fuzzy tree.
My friends say I’m actin’ wild as a bug.
I’m in love.
I’m all shook up.

from All Shook Up
Words and Music by Otis Blackwell.
Recorded by Elvis Presley 1956.

In the partial lyrics above, Otis Blackwell included two (A) similes, (B) hyperboles, (C) idioms, (D) metaphors.

21. A rubber duckie sat on the edge of the tub eagerly awaiting its next bubble bath adventure.
What object is personified in the sentence? (A) a bathtub, (B) a bubble bath, (C) an adventure, (D) a rubber duckie.

22. If a cluttered desk is a sign of a cluttered mind, of what then, is an empty desk? (Albert Einstein)
What figure of speech did Albert Einstein use in this statement? (A) a simile, (B) a metaphor, (C) a hyperbole, (D) personification.

23. Bosco’s tail stuck up like an antenna from beneath his doggie snow suit.
Which of the following phrases can be substituted for the underlined simile so that it is changed to a metaphor?
(A) is like a periscope emerging
(B) is as straight as an antenna poking out
(C) is an antenna poking out
(D) works like an antenna

24. The team’s star player was running a hundred miles an hour when he crossed the goal line.
The description of the star player’s speedy touchdown is an example of (A) a simile, (B) a metaphor, (C) a hyperbole, (D) an idiom.

25. Facts are stubborn things. (Ronald Reagan)
President Regan’s example of personification means that facts, like stubborn people, (A) don’t always state the truth, (B) are fixed and difficult to deal with, (C) will change without warning, (D) have to be forced to change.
The January Figurative Language celebration continues with Part Two! Here is a reminder list of January events:

- Wintry weather
- New Year’s Day
- Parades
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (third Monday)
- National Soup Month
- Bath Safety Month
- National Get Organized Month
- National Skating Month.
- Chocolate Covered Cherry Day (January 3)
- Drinking Straw Day (January 3)
- Elvis Presley’s birthday (January 8)
- National Clean Off Your Desk Day (January 10)
- Rubber Duckie Day (January 13)
- Dress Up Your Pet Day (January 14)
- Inauguration Day (January 20)
- National Pie Day (January 23)
- National Puzzle Day (January 29)
- Bubble Wrap Appreciation Day (January 31)

All of the following italicized sentences and quotes, based on the January events listed above, contain figures of speech. Study the question after each one and write the letter of the correct answer in the blank provided.

______ 1. Can we soup up this computer so it will run a little faster?
The figure of speech illustrated in this sentence is (A) a simile, (B) a metaphor, (C) a hyperbole, (D) an idiom.

______ 2. The browns and whites and reds in Jaden’s new room look like the inside of a chocolate covered cherry.
What figure of speech creates an image of Jaden’s new room? (A) a simile, (B) a metaphor, (C) a hyperbole, (D) personification.

______ 3. I am __________ with homework this afternoon.
Which of the following is an idiom that correctly completes the sentence? (A) having to deal, (B) snowed under, (C) not helping, (D) completely finished.

______ 4. Two scoops of ice cream were stacked on top of the pie like a little snowman.
Which phrase from the sentence is a simile? (A) two scoops, (B) stacked on top, (C) top of the pie, (D) like a little snowman.

______ 5. Soapy foam puffed up in the tub like mounds of bubble wrap.
The two things being compared are (A) soapy foam and bubble wrap, (B) the tub and bubble wrap, (C) bubble wrap and the mounds, (D) soapy foam and the tub.

______ 6 Fluffy was a little princess for a few seconds before she hissed and shook the tiara off her head.
The sentence about Fluffy’s experience with a tiara is an example of (A) a simile, (B) a metaphor, (C) a hyperbole, (D) personification.
January in Figurative Language—Part Two—continued

7. There must be about a million chewed-up, flattened drinking straws sticking to the floor under my brother's bed.
   The hyperbole in the sentence is (A) chewed-up, flattened drinking straws, (B) sticking to the floor, (C) about a million, (D) under my brother's bed.

8. The skater's performance was ___________________.
   Which of the following is a metaphor that will correctly complete the sentence? (A) a symphony of graceful moves, (B) as smooth as ice, (C) as beautiful as a ballet, (D) about a million twirls.

9. My clothes are crawling out of my closet, so I suppose I need to do some organizing.
   Which figure of speech is used to describe the state of the messy closet? (A) a simile, (B) a metaphor, (C) personification, (D) a hyperbole.

10. Ambition is a dream with a V8 engine. (Elvis Presley)
    Elvis Presley's definition of ambition is an example of (A) a simile, (B) a metaphor, (C) a hyperbole, (D) an idiom.

11. Many investors took a bath when the stock market plunged.
    The idiom took a bath in the above sentence means that the investors (A) were in a comfortable place, (B) organized all their accounts, (C) suffered bad financial losses, (D) temporarily stepped aside and waited for change.

12. Liberty, when it begins to take root, is a plant of rapid growth. (George Washington)
    What figure of speech did George Washing use to make a statement about liberty? (A) a simile, (B) a metaphor, (C) a hyperbole, (D) an idiom.

13. Like an unchecked cancer, hate corrodes the personality. . . (Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., 1963)
    Dr. King’s comparison of hate to cancer is an example of (A) a simile, (B) a metaphor, (C) personification, (D) a hyperbole.

14. The last sliver of pie disappeared from the plate as quick as a wink.
    The idiom in this sentence suggests that the pie disappeared (A) while nobody was watching, (B) in plain sight, (C) within a few minutes, (D) in a matter of seconds,

15. Two large icicles hung ______ over the front door.
    Which of the following phrases is a simile that can be placed in the blank and correctly complete the sentence? (A) side by side, (B) from the gutter, (C) dangerously low, (D) like fangs.

16. It was so cold that if you were stupid enough to go outside your eyes would automatically blink a thousand times. . . so the juice inside of them wouldn't freeze up.
    (The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963 by Christopher Paul Curtis)
    The figure of speech in this passage is (A) a simile, (B) a metaphor, (C) personification, (D) a hyperbole.

17. Our neighbor is a warrior with a shovel ready to do battle against the snow.
    Which of the following phrases can be substituted for the underlined metaphor to change it into a simile? (A) like a warrior, (B) an angry warrior, (C) a human shovel, (D) a weather soldier.

18. My fingers stuck to the frosty window pane like flies on flypaper.
    In this sentence, the two things being compared are (A) the window pane and flypaper, (A) fingers and flies (C) fingers and flypaper, (D) windows and flies.
January in Figurative Language—Part Two—continued

19. **The bathroom’s tile floor was a slippery skating rink when I stepped out of the tub.**
   Which of the following word groups from the sentence is a metaphor? (A) out of the tub, (B) bathroom’s tile floor, (C) I stepped out, (D) a slippery skating rink.

20. **What Washington needs is adult supervision.** (Barack Obama)
   In this example of **personification**, President Obama is suggesting that the government (A) needs a bigger police force, (B) is behaving like an unruly child, (C) should do more for its older residents, (C) is not following all the rules.

21. **Trying to finish my homework with my little brother around is like eating soup with a fork.**
   The underlined words in the sentence form (A) a simile, (B) a metaphor, (C) a hyperbole, (D) personification.

22. **Strings of clouds reached out and embraced the moon.**
   In this example of **personification**, clouds are given the human ability to (A) love, (B) form friendships, (C) hug, (D) conceal something from view.

23. **The parade dragged on for ________________ before Dad finally allowed me to change channels.**
   Which of the following phrases is a hyperbole that can be written in the blank to correctly complete the sentence? (A) quite a while, (B) about two hundred miles (C) almost an hour, (D) several miles.

24. **A tall stack of papers tipped over and slid off the desk like an avalanche down a mountainside.**
   The two things being compared in this sentence are (A) falling papers and an avalanche, (B) a desk and a mountainside, (C) falling papers and a desk, (D) sliding and falling.

25. **Tyler is as nutty as a fruitcake if he thinks I’m going to loan him my cell phone.**
   Which of the following is the best substitution for the underlined idiom? (A) mistaken, (B) unrealistic, (C) crazy, (D) reasonable.
# Answer Keys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part One</th>
<th>Part Two</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. A</td>
<td>1. C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. B</td>
<td>2. A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. A</td>
<td>4. D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. B</td>
<td>5. A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. B</td>
<td>7. C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. D</td>
<td>8. A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. A</td>
<td>10. B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. D</td>
<td>13. A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. D</td>
<td>15. D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. D</td>
<td>17. A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. C</td>
<td>19. D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. A</td>
<td>20. B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. D</td>
<td>21. A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. B</td>
<td>22. C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. C</td>
<td>23. B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. C</td>
<td>24. A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. B</td>
<td>25. C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thanks for downloading my *January in Figurative Language*. I really enjoyed putting this one together, especially when I realized that *All Shook Up* has similes.

Guess that kinda’ gives away my age group. We like to think of ourselves as Silver Rockers!

**More January and Seasonal Resources from My Store**

Here’s a direct link to another **FREE** January activity. This one is vocabulary oriented:

For $3.00, you can get **In First Place**, a nine-page, three part file of researchable trivia about people, places, and things that are the first in their categories:
http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/JanuaryNew-Years-Activities-In-First-Place

For a whole book of seasonal activities, check out
http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Seasonal-Brain-Teasers-and-Vocabulary-Builders-for-Young-Scholars

**February Literature Resources from My Store**

*The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963: A Novel Teaching Pack*

*Bud, Not Buddy: A Novel Teaching Pack*

*Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry: A Novel Teaching Pack*
Sounder: A Novel Teaching Pack

The Hundred Penny Box: A Teaching Pack

Philip Hall Likes Me. I Reckon Maybe: Objective Tests Pack

Seasonal Items

February Brain Teasers and Vocabulary Builders (Free)
http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/February-Brain-Teasers-and-Vocabulary-Builders

February Presidents Day/Valentines Day Activity
http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/February-Presidents-DayValentines-Day-Activities