
METAPHOR

What Is a Metaphor?

A metaphor is a figure of speech that is used to make a comparison, but in a way different from a simile. It makes the comparison as if it was literally true. In other words, it can be said that a metaphor is an implied comparison.

Now, let us also take a look at how different dictionaries define a metaphor to have a clearer understanding of the same.

Definition of a Metaphor

A metaphor, according to the Cambridge Dictionary, is defined as “an expression, often found in literature, that describes a person or object by referring to something that is considered to have similar characteristics to that person or object.” According to the Oxford Learner’s Dictionary, a metaphor is defined as “a word or phrase used to describe somebody/something else, in a way that is different from its normal use, in order to show that the two things have the same qualities and to make the description more powerful.” The Collins Dictionary defines a metaphor as “an imaginative way of describing something by referring to something else which is the same in a particular way”, and according to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, a metaphor is “a figure of speech in which a word or phrase literally denoting one kind of object or idea is used in place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy between them.”

How to Use a Metaphor in a Sentence? Points to Keep in Mind

Every figure of speech is meant to create some effect in the mind of your audience. In order to produce the desired effect on your audience, you should know for sure how to make use of each and every figure of speech. Now, have a look at the following points to learn how to make good use of metaphors in your sentences.

- When you are using a metaphor, double check if the metaphor is actually conveying the meaning you want to convey to your target audience.
- There might be circumstances where you will have to make comparisons between two like or unlike qualities or things. In such cases, do not deliberately make use of a metaphor. If you think a simile would give the desired effect on your audience better than a metaphor would do, then use a simile and not a metaphor.
- Read it twice or thrice to make sure you are making the right choice.

What Makes a Metaphor Different from a Simile?

Though metaphors and similes are meant to make comparisons and show resemblances, they differ on some levels. Look at the table below to understand how a metaphor differs from a simile. Also, take a look at the examples given to know their usage as well.

Metaphor	Simile
It is an implied comparison.	It is a direct comparison.
Does not use any specific words to make a comparison.	Uses words such as 'like' or 'as' to make a comparison.
For example: Susan was a cheetah in the race today.	For example: Susan ran as fast as a cheetah in the race today.

Examples of Metaphors

Given below are a few examples of metaphors for your reference.

- My mom has a heart of gold.
- My friend's sister, Sharon, is a night owl.
- My hands were icicles because of the cold weather.
- You just have to consider the world a stage and act accordingly.
- Dileep has a stone heart.
- You have ideas flowing one after the other. Your mind is an ocean.
- She was an autumn leaf.
- He is a lion when he comes to the field.
- Phoebe is a nightingale. Everyone waited eagerly for her to come up on stage.
- She is such a firecracker.