

## ENG 102 FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

**IMAGE** - representation in words of sense experience; words which appeal to one or more of the senses; a visual image may be called a mental picture.

- "under the hood purred the steady engine" -William Stafford
- "then with cracked hands that ached  
from labor in the weekday weather made  
banked fires blaze." -Robert Hayden

**METAPHOR** - an implied comparison of two unlike things; a direct verbal equation of two or more things that may at first seem unlike

- "Let us eat and drink for tomorrow we shall die"
- "I will speak daggers to her but use none." -Shakespeare, *Hamlet*
- "Life the hound  
Equivocal" -Robert Francis

**SIMILE** - comparison of two unlike things using "like" with nouns and "as" with clauses

- "Like to the falling of a star, . . . Even such is man," -Henry King

**SYMBOL** - a specific idea or object that may stand for ideas, values, persons or ways of life; something that means more than what it is

- "The Road Not Taken"
- "The Tyger"

**PERSONIFICATION** - giving human characteristics to an animal, object, or concept (something nonhuman); a subtype of metaphor in which the figurative term is always a human being

- "Because I could not stop for Death--  
He kindly stopped for me--"

**APOSTROPHE** - addressing someone absent or something nonhuman as if it were alive or present and could respond

- "Tyger, Tyger, burning bright" -Blake

**PARADOX** - an apparent contradiction which is actually true

- "Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise."

**OVERSTATEMENT** or **HYPERBOLE** - exaggeration used to achieve emphasis

- "All night I made my bed to swim; with my tears I dissolved my couch." -Psalms 6:6
- "I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence." -Frost

**UNDERSTATEMENT** - saying less than what is true; the deliberate undervaluing of a thing to create emphasis (may exist in what one says or in how one says it)

- "For destruction ice is also great and would suffice" -Frost

**VERBAL IRONY** - saying the opposite of what is meant

- "My Papa's Waltz" -Roethke
- "Was he free? Was he happy" The question is absurd." -Auden, "The Unknown Citizen"

**IMAGE** -means only what it is

**METAPHOR** - means other than what it is

**SYMBOL** - means what it is and something more, too