

Figurative Language

When a writer or speaker uses figurative language, he is describing something through the use of unusual comparisons. This is often done to make a point, generate interest in the topic, or to make something clearer.

One example of figurative speech is: It was raining cats and dogs. Of course, since cats and dogs were not falling from the sky, this sentence could be rewritten as It was raining very hard.

Read each of the following sentences.

Underline the figurative language in each sentence.

Rewrite the sentence with the same meaning omitting the figurative language.

1. The athlete was as strong as an ox.

2. The children were covered with dirt from head to toe.

3. Susan could run like the wind.

4. The message was as clear as a whistle.

5. Grandmother insisted that the house be spick and span.

6. Mother made enough dinner to feed an army.

7. His feet were as big as a house.

8. Grandfather is as sharp as a tack.

9. That watermelon is as big as a barn.

10. I got home late and my parents snapped my head off.

11. The ball bounced and hit the sky.

12. The ice cream sundae had toppings that were a mile high.

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Answer key notes

The following sentences are given as examples only.

There may be a variety of ways to rewrite many of the sentences and still stay within the assignment guidelines.

1. The athlete was as strong as an ox.
The athlete was very strong.
2. The children were covered with dirt from head to toe.
The children were completely covered with dirt.
3. Susan could run like the wind.
Susan could run very fast.
4. The message was as clear as a whistle.
The message was easy to understand.
5. Grandmother insisted that the house be spick and span.
Grandmother insisted that the house be very clean.
6. Mother made enough dinner to feed an army.
Mother made a very large dinner.
7. His feet were as big as a house.
His feet were big.
8. Grandfather is as sharp as a tack.
Grandfather is very smart.
9. That watermelon is as big as a barn.
That watermelon is very large.
10. I got home late and my parents snapped my head off.
I got home late and my parents scolded me.
11. The ball bounced and hit the sky.
The ball bounced very high.
12. The ice cream sundae had toppings that were a mile high.
The ice cream sundae had a lot of toppings.