

Riddle Poem Features

Figurative Language

Imagery: Creating pictures through words by appealing to the senses, usually done with figurative language. “Fog rolled across the valley.” “The rain came down in buckets.”

Metaphor: A figure of speech that uses associates to state that two unlike things are similar. “She ripped through that book.” “The surfer rode his stead of the waves.” “My cat is a lamb.”

Metonymy: A figure of speech that substitutes the name of one object or concept with the name of a thing closely associated with it. In “The pen is mightier than the sword,” pen represents words and sword represents violence. In “The White House promotes T-Ball,” the White House is substituted for the president.

Onomatopoeia: Words that sound like what they mean. “The snake hissed.” “The glass cracked.”

Personification: A figure of speech in which human qualities are given to non-human objects and concepts. “The trees whispered in the wind.” “The wind grabbed my hat and ran away with it.”

Simile: A comparison of two unlike things using *like* or *as*. “My cat is as gentle as a lamb.” “His words stung like bee stings.”

Synecdoche: A figure of speech in which a part of something is used to represent the whole or in which the whole is used to represent a part. In “We must work for our bread,” bread (the part) stands for food (the whole), and in “The law caught up with the bank robber,” law (the whole) stands in for the police (the part).

Rhetorical Devices

Asyndeton: A rhetorical device in which conjunctions are omitted. “I came, I saw, I conquered.”

Antithesis: A rhetorical device in which parallelism is used to express two ideas which are directly opposed. “It was the best of times. It was the worst of times.”

Chiasmus: A rhetorical device in which the grammatical structure of the first clause is reversed in the second, sometimes repeating the same words. “What can your country do for you? What can you do for your country?” “Darkness comes, creeping shadows.”

Parallelism: A rhetorical device used to emphasize ideas through using similar grammatical constructions. “Still, I am like a mirror. Fast, I am stronger than stone.”

Zeugma: A rhetorical device in which a word is used once and governs other words or phrases which follow. In the riddle “Voiceless it cries,/Wingless flutters,/Toothless bites,/Mouthless mutters,” it is the noun which governs each of the following phrases.

Sound Techniques

Alliteration: The repetition of a consonant sound at the beginning of words, and, in some traditions, at beginning of strongly stressed syllables. “In the **m**iddle of the **m**oon.” “Rubber **b**aby **b**uggy **b**umpers” or “rubber **b**aby **b**uggy **b**umpers.”

Assonance: The repetition of vowel sounds, followed by different consonant sounds so that the words don’t rhyme. “Fate took me to the lake.” “

Consonance: The repetition of middle or final consonant sound or sounds following different vowel sounds so that the words do not rhyme. “Litter and letter.” “Skate and scoot.”