

The Top 20 Figures

1. **Alliteration**
Repetition of an initial consonant sound.
2. **Anaphora**
Repetition of the same word or phrase at the beginning of successive clauses or verses.
3. **Antithesis**
The juxtaposition of contrasting ideas in balanced phrases.
4. **Apostrophe**
Breaking off discourse to address some absent person or thing, some abstract quality, an inanimate object, or a nonexistent character.
5. **Assonance**
Identity or similarity in sound between internal vowels in neighboring words.
6. **Chiasmus**
A verbal pattern in which the second half of an expression is balanced against the first but with the parts reversed.
7. **Euphemism**
The substitution of an inoffensive term for one considered offensively explicit.
8. **Hyperbole**
An extravagant statement; the use of exaggerated terms for the purpose of emphasis or heightened effect.
9. **Irony**
The use of words to convey the opposite of their literal meaning. A statement or situation where the meaning is contradicted by the appearance or presentation of the idea.

The Top 20 Figures

10. **Litotes**
A figure of speech consisting of an understatement in which an affirmative is expressed by negating its opposite.

11. **Metaphor**
An implied comparison between two unlike things that actually have something important in common.

12. **Metonymy**
A figure of speech in which one word or phrase is substituted for another with which it is closely associated; also, the rhetorical strategy of describing something indirectly by referring to things around it.

13. **Onomatopoeia**
The formation or use of words that imitate the sounds associated with the objects or actions they refer to.

14. **Oxymoron**
A figure of speech in which incongruous or contradictory terms appear side by side.

15. **Paradox**
A statement that appears to contradict itself.

16. **Personification**
A figure of speech in which an inanimate object or abstraction is endowed with human qualities or abilities.

17. **Pun**
A play on words, sometimes on different senses of the same word and sometimes on the similar sense or sound of different words.

18. **Simile**
A stated comparison (usually formed with "like" or "as") between two fundamentally dissimilar things that have certain qualities in common.

The Top 20 Figures

19. **Synechdoche**

A figure of speech in which a part is used to represent the whole, the whole for a part, the specific for the general, the general for the specific, or the material for the thing made from it.

20. **Understatement**

A figure of speech in which a writer or a speaker deliberately makes a situation seem less important or serious than it is.