

# Expressions

**Expression** An expression is any word or group of words that describes a feeling or an idea.

**Figure of Speech** A figure of speech is an expression using words to mean something different than what they usually mean. The words in a figure of speech do not have their original meaning. Five different figures of speech described below are:

- Idiom
- Irony
- Metaphor
- Simile
- Slang

**Idiom** A figure of speech whose meaning can't be understood from the meanings of the individual words. Examples:

- Jump the gun [do something early, before the starting time: "The runner jumped the gun."]
- Out of the blue [happened unexpectedly: "My sister arrived out of the blue."]
- A piece of cake [easy to do: "That test was a piece of cake."]

**Irony** Using words that say the opposite of what you really think, often in order to be funny or sarcastic. Examples:

- "Today's weather sure is nice." (Actually, it is raining.)
- "This hotel room certainly has a nice view." (Actually, the view is terrible.)
- Saying "Oh, great!" after failing an exam.
- "His explanation was clear as mud." (Actually, it was very confusing.)

**Metaphor** Comparing two things that are different ("A" and "B") without using the word "like" or "as," often by saying "A is B." Examples:

- She is the light of my life. [She is someone who brings me happiness and joy.]
- The test was a walk in the park. [The test was really easy.]
- My son's room is a disaster area. [My son's room is really messy.]

**Simile** Comparing two things that are different by showing how they are similar, creating a new meaning and usually using the word "like" or "as." Examples:

- He is as slow as a snail.
- Her cheeks are like roses.

**Slang** Using different words instead of usual or formal words in order to be funny, and sometime offensive. Slang is used in casual or playful speech in some social situations, but is not appropriate for formal situations. Examples:

- My bad. [I made a mistake.]
- Bent out of shape [upset: "Hey, don't get bent out of shape because I was late!"]
- Bombed [drunk: "After the party he was really bombed."]
- Totaled [completely destroyed: "My car was totaled in the accident."]