Personification

Giving something, nonhuman or an object, human characteristics

Hyperbole

An exaggeration so dramatic that no one would believe its true

Metaphor

A statement that is a comparison of two things that are not alike.

Allegory

a story, poem, or picture that can be interpreted to reveal a hidden meaning, typically a moral or political one.

Analogy

A comparison between like features of two things, such as a heart and a pump.

Alliteration

When a set of words uses the same sound or letters repeatedly

in a line of verse

Assonance

The repetition of similar or identical vowel sounds in words which follow one another

Simile

A comparison of two things that are not alike, uses "like" or "as"

Onomatopoeia

The use of words that imitate sound such as “whoosh”, “chirp”

Idioms

A set of words that can have more than one meaning behind them

Meter

The basic rhythmic structure of a verse

Stanza

A grouped set of lines within a poem

Rhyme scheme

The sequence in which the rhyme occurs at the end of each line. AABB, ABAB, etc.

Imagery

Words or phrases that appeal to any sense of combination of senses

Satire

the use of humor, irony, exaggeration, or

ridicule to expose and criticize people's

stupidity or vices, particularly in the context

of contemporary politics and other topical issues.

Fable

Now that we know [metaphors can be powerful persuasion tools](http://www.copyblogger.com/become-a-master-of-metaphor-and-multiply-your-blogging-effectiveness/), let’s make sure everyone is on the same page from a definitional standpoint. Common sources of confusion for the metaphorically inclined include the simile and the analogy.

While all three are closely related, it’s smart to understand the differences. The distinctions among metaphors, similes and analogies will also help to underscore why you may want to use one and not the other in certain situations.

Let’s take a look at definitions:

Metaphor

A metaphor is a figure of speech that uses one thing to mean another and makes a comparison between the two. The key words here are “one thing to meananother.” So, when someone says “He’s become a shell of a man,” we know not to take this literally, even though it’s stated directly as if this person had actually lost his internal substance.

Simile

A simile compares two different things in order to create a new meaning. In this case, we are made explicitly aware that a comparison is being made due to the use of “like” or “as” (He’s like a shell of a man). For fun, the next time someone corrects you and says “That’s a simile, not a metaphor,” you can respond by letting them know that a simile is a type of metaphor, just like sarcasm is a type of irony. Resist the urge to be sarcastic in your delivery.

Analogy

An analogy is comparable to metaphor and simile in that it shows how two different things are similar, but it’s a bit more complex. Rather than a figure of speech, an analogy is more of a logical argument. The presenter of an analogy will often demonstrate how two things are alike by pointing out shared characteristics, with the goal of showing that if two things are similar in some ways, they are similar in other ways as well.

Why metaphor?

There are circumstances where either a simile or analogy is the more appropriate vehicle for getting your point across. But coming up with a great metaphor may be your best bet in many situations.

A metaphor carries so much more power than a simile, because it’s direct. Using “like” or “as” to make an open comparison will often diminish the vivid visual you’re trying to paint in the reader’s mind. Likewise, a spot-on metaphor will spark instant understanding for a reader, without the elaboration that an analogy requires.

From here we’ll examine specific ways to use metaphor in your blog posts. Headlines, openings, themes, calls to action and more can all benefit from the use of metaphor, as long as the metaphors don’t suck. We’ll look at ways to avoid that, too.