

Words Beyond Words

Decide when words mean exactly what they say.

ELA.5.V.1.3 “Use context clues, figurative language, word relationships, reference materials, and/or background knowledge to determine the meaning of multiple-meaning and unknown words and phrases, appropriate to grade level.”

NAME _____

DATE _____

LITERAL MEANING

Literal words mean exactly what they say. They describe something that can really happen as stated.

A turtle crossed the road.

FIGURATIVE MEANING

Figurative words create a picture or compare ideas. They do not mean exactly what they say.

Her smile was sunshine.

1 SORT _____ 8 items

Circle LITERAL or FIGURATIVE for each sentence, then in Part 2 choose two items and explain which words helped you decide.

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. The baby slept like a log. | ☐ LITERAL | ☐ FIGURATIVE |
| 2. After the test, Marcus had a mountain of homework. | ☐ LITERAL | ☐ FIGURATIVE |
| 3. The log floated down the river. | ☐ LITERAL | ☐ FIGURATIVE |
| 4. The old car coughed as it started. | ☐ LITERAL | ☐ FIGURATIVE |
| 5. We climbed the mountain before lunch. | ☐ LITERAL | ☐ FIGURATIVE |
| 6. A frog jumped from the lily pad. | ☐ LITERAL | ☐ FIGURATIVE |
| 7. The wind whispered through the trees. | ☐ LITERAL | ☐ FIGURATIVE |
| 8. The librarian placed the book on a shelf. | ☐ LITERAL | ☐ FIGURATIVE |

2 PROVE IT Explain your thinking

Pick two items from Part 1. For each one, tell how you knew where it belonged.

ITEM # _____ HOW I KNEW _____

ITEM # _____ HOW I KNEW _____

3 MAKE YOUR OWN One of each

Write one new literal sentence and one new figurative sentence.

LITERAL _____

FIGURATIVE _____

CHALLENGE

Write a two-sentence mini-scene that uses a figurative phrase and includes a context clue that helps a reader understand the phrase.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The baby slept like a log.	FIGURATIVE	The baby did not become a log. The comparison means the baby slept very deeply.
2	After the test, Marcus had a mountain of homework.	FIGURATIVE	Marcus did not have a real mountain. The phrase means he had a very large amount of homework.
3	The log floated down the river.	LITERAL	A real log can float down a river.
4	The old car coughed as it started.	FIGURATIVE	Cars cannot cough. The phrase describes the sputtering sound of the engine.
5	We climbed the mountain before lunch.	LITERAL	People can really climb a mountain.
6	A frog jumped from the lily pad.	LITERAL	A frog can really jump from a lily pad.
7	The wind whispered through the trees.	FIGURATIVE	Wind cannot whisper. The phrase describes a soft sound in the trees.
8	The librarian placed the book on a shelf.	LITERAL	A librarian can really place a book on a shelf.

PART 2 • PROVE IT

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item.

PART 3 • MAKE YOUR OWN (SAMPLE ANSWERS)

- **LITERAL:** The kitten curled up in the basket.
- **FIGURATIVE:** The thunder was a drumbeat above our house.

Challenge: When the final bell rang, Darnell's feet were rockets as he raced to the bus. He ran very fast because rain was beginning to fall.

Sort answers: 1 FIGURATIVE, 2 FIGURATIVE, 3 LITERAL, 4 FIGURATIVE, 5 LITERAL, 6 LITERAL, 7 FIGURATIVE, 8 LITERAL. For Part 2, accept explanations that name words showing an exact meaning or a comparison that cannot happen literally.