

# Identifying FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

in song lyrics

Answer Key



For each of the following extracts from songs, identify and explain the figurative language techniques used.

1 "It might seem crazy what I'm about to say / Sunshine she's here, you can take a break / I'm a hot air balloon that could go to space."

- Happy by Pharrell Williams

1) The singer isn't literally a hot air balloon. This is a metaphor and it means that he is so filled with happiness, he could float all the way to space - in the same way a hot air balloon floats over the world.

2 "Do you ever feel like a plastic bag / Drifting through the wind... / Do you know that there's still a chance for you / 'Cause there's a spark in you... / 'Cause baby you're a firework"

- Firework by Katy Perry

2) 'Do you feel like a plastic bag' is a simile as she is comparing how one feels, to a bag being tossed about. This simile is effective because she is saying that sometimes we feel as if we have no direction, we just go where we are told or where life takes us - just as a plastic bag is thrown around in the wind. Also, 'there's a spark in you' and 'you're a firework' are metaphors.

3 "I'd catch a grenade for you / Throw my head on a blade for you / I'd jump in front of a train for you."

- Grenade by Bruno Mars

3) These lyrics are a good example of hyperbole. He doesn't literally mean that he would catch a grenade. The singer is exaggerating to make a point - which is that he is willing to do a lot for her and her love.

4 "On the day that I was born / The cards were dealt, the dice were thrown / I think my destiny was drawn."

- Only You by Keith Urban

4) 'The cards were dealt' and 'the dice were thrown' are metaphors, which mean that his fate was decided for him. Also the repeated 'd' sounds are an example of alliteration.

5 "Yeah, you can be the greatest, you can be the best / You can be the King Kong banging on your chest / You can beat the world, you can win the war / You can talk to God, go banging on his door."

- Hall of Fame by The Script

5) The reference to King Kong here is an example of allusion, as the singer is alluding to the story of King Kong, and meaning that you can be large and powerful. Also when he references 'the world', it is an example of synecdoche. He means the part of the world which one inhabits.