






Imagery

- The use of vivid or figurative language to represent objects, actions, places, or ideas.

Sensory Detail

- A detail that draws on any of the five senses.

The FIVE Senses

- Sight—visual imagery 
- Sound—auditory imagery 
- Touch—tactile imagery 
- Smell—olfactory imagery 
- Taste—gustatory imagery 

Sight

- “Her head nodded and her wrists were active, showing off the jingling bracelets she had bought at the mall.”

Sound

- The birds sang sweetly.
- The tinkling of broken glass.
- She shrieked with joy.

Smell

- As stinky as a dirty diaper.
- It smelled like rotten eggs.
- It smelled clean and fresh, like Grandma's laundry.
- He reminded her of her grandfather, a scent of peppermint and tobacco.
- The street smelled of gas fumes and hot tar.

Taste

- The sour taste of vomit.
- As salty as a potato chip.
- Thick, not-too-sweet chocolate, with a hint of orange.
- The metallic taste of blood.
- The bitter taste of getting her mouth washed out with soap.

Touch

- She caressed the cool, smooth cover of the laptop.
- The lotion gave her baby-soft skin.
- He was tied tightly, and the rough bark gouged his back.
- It was as soft as rabbit's fur.
- The biscuit was as hard as a rock.

Imagery

- Painting images with words.



Imagery

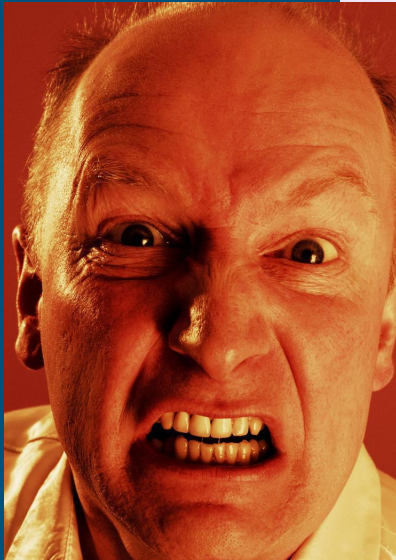
- A set of mental pictures



Imagery

- To make an imaginary world seem real, an author often makes use of words and phrases that appeal to the senses. These words and phrases, called images, help a reader mentally experience what the characters in the literary selection are actually experiencing.

Imagery



- A well written description should create a particular response or emotion in the reader's imagination.

What Is an Image?

An **image** is a word or phrase that appeals to one of our senses. Images can help us ▼

- create a mental picture ▼
- hear a sound ▼
- feel texture or temperature ▼
- taste a sweet, sour, or salty flavor



Examples

- **Sight:** orange glare, green willows, wilted and dry willows, brown bank
- **Smell:** sweaty clothes, the pungent skin, dusty odor of the earth
- **Touch/Feel:** cool water, hot July sun, cool green willows, sun-baked backs, dusty bank, the sharp briars pulling, damp jeans

Examples

- **Taste:** a strawberry ice, a tall frosted glass of lemonade, deep pink sweetness of the watermelon
- **Sound:** crackling underbrush, the melon gave way with a crack

Examples:

Where the Red Fern Grows

- p 10, “Below our field, twisting and winding, ran the cool blue waters of the Illinois River. The banks were cool and shady. The rich bottom land near the river was studded with tall sycamores, birches, and box elders.”

Examples:

Where the Red Fern Grows

- p 21, "A silent gray shadow drifted down from the top of a tall sycamore. There was a squeal and a beating of wings. I heard the tinkle of a bell in the distance ahead."

Examples:

Where the Red Fern Grows

- p 32, "I took one look at my bare feet and winced. They were as brown as dead sycamore leaves. The spider-web pattern of raw, red scratches looked odd in the saddle brown skin."

Examples:

Where the Red Fern Grows

- p 42, “The leader of the gang was about my size. He had a dirty freckled face and his two front teeth were missing. I suppose he had lost them in a back alley fight. His shock of yellow sun burnt hair bobbed up and down as he skipped and jumped to the rhythm of the ‘dog boy’ song.”

What Is an Image?



Listen to this excerpt of “The Shell” by James Stephens and imagine the scene he describes.

And straightway like a bell
Came low and clear
The slow, sad murmur of the distant seas,
.....
And in the hush of waters was the sound
Of pebbles rolling round,
For ever rolling with a hollow sound.
And bubbling sea-weeds as the waters go
Swish to and fro
Their long, cold tentacles of slimy grey.

—from “The Shell” by James Stephens

What Is an Image?

Quick Check

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Which words
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Hearing



Sight



Touch

Back

Imagery in Literature and Poetry

Writers use imagery to

- speak to our deepest feelings—joy, sorrow, wonder, love ▼
- emphasize certain qualities of the subject ▼
- create a mood ▼

Out on the land White Moon shines.

Shines and glimmers against gnarled shadows,

All silver to slow twisted shadows

Falling across the long road that runs from the house.

—from “Baby Face” by Carl Sandburg

Imagery in Literature and Poetry

Imagery is

- part of a writer's style ▼
- a product of the writer's own way of seeing the world ▼
- a reflection of the time and place in which the writer lives



Imagery in Poetry

Quick Check

The Loon

by Lew Sarett

A lonely lake, a lonely shore,
A lone pine leaning on the moon;
All night the water-beating wings
Of a solitary loon.

With mournful wail from dusk to dawn
He gibbered at the taunting stars,—
A hermit-soul gone raving mad,
And beating at his bars.

What mood does the poet create through his use of imagery?

How does the imagery affect your emotions? Explain.

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What mood does the poet create through his use of imagery?

still, lonely,
sorrowful

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How does the imagery affect your emotions? Explain.

I feel sad when I picture the desolate scene and hear the bird struggling alone.

Practice

PRACTICE

Images can be drawn from all sorts of things we observe in life. For each category, create two images—one pleasant and one unpleasant. Try to include images that appeal to all five senses.

Images	Pleasant	Unpleasant
Animal images		
Flower images		
Water images		
Sky images		
Earth images		
City images		
Country images		