

Literary Language: Figurative Language, Time, Place, and Tone

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.9-10.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).

Passage: The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald

There was music from my neighbor's house through the summer nights. In his blue gardens men and girls came and went like moths among the whisperings and the champagne and the stars. At high tide in the afternoon I watched his guests diving from the tower of his raft, or taking the sun on the hot sand of his beach while his two motor-boats slit the waters of the Sound, drawing aquaplanes over cataracts of foam. On weekends his Rolls-Royce became an omnibus, bearing parties to and from the city between nine in the morning and long past midnight, while his station wagon scampered like a brisk yellow bug to meet all trains. And on Mondays eight servants, including an extra gardener, toiled all day with mops and scrubbing-brushes and hammers and garden-shears, repairing the ravages of the night before.

Finding Figurative Language

Directions: Read the passage carefully. Look for places where Fitzgerald compares one thing to another or describes something in a way that is not meant to be understood literally.

Find **three examples of figurative language** in the passage. Copy each example exactly as it appears.

Example from the Passage	Type of Figurative Language
1.	
2.	
3.	

Why Did Fitzgerald Use It?

Choose **one** of the examples you found.

The example I chose:

What does it help you understand about Gatsby's world?

Creating a Sense of Time and Place

The Time

Find **three words or phrases** that give you a sense of the time period or the way people lived during this period.

Word or Phrase from the Passage

1.
2.
3.

2. The Place

Find **three words or phrases** that help you picture the setting.

Word or Phrase from the Passage
1.
2.
3.

Put the Details Together

Look at the words and phrases you selected above.

What is the setting?

How does Fitzgerald create a sense of time and place with word choice?

Which word or phrase from the passage most strongly supports your answer

What Is Tone?

Tone is the attitude or feeling created by an author's choice of words.

For example:

Formal: sophisticated, serious, polished

Informal: casual, conversational, relaxed

But tone can also be **excited, luxurious, mysterious, chaotic, playful, serious, critical, peaceful**, and many other things.

Find the Words

Reread the passage and find **2 words or phrases** that contribute to its overall tone.

Based on the words and phrases you selected, what tone does Fitzgerald create?

Now Look at the Whole Passage

Which statement best describes the **cumulative effect** of Fitzgerald's language?

- The language creates a simple and ordinary picture of everyday life.
- The language creates a vivid picture of a wealthy, active, and extravagant world.
- The language creates a quiet and isolated setting.
- The language creates a plain, factual description without much emotion.

Find two pieces of evidence from the passage that support your choice.

Evidence 1:

Evidence 2:

RL.9-10.4 Checklist

Before you finish, make sure you can:

- **Identify figurative language in a text.**
- **Explain why the author uses figurative language.**
- **Identify words and phrases that establish a sense of time and place.**
- **Explain why the author uses specific words and phrases.**
- **Identify words and phrases that create a formal or informal tone.**
- **Explain how multiple word choices work together to create an overall effect.**