



The Source of Wisdom

14-15



The Source of Wisdom

Topic: Literature

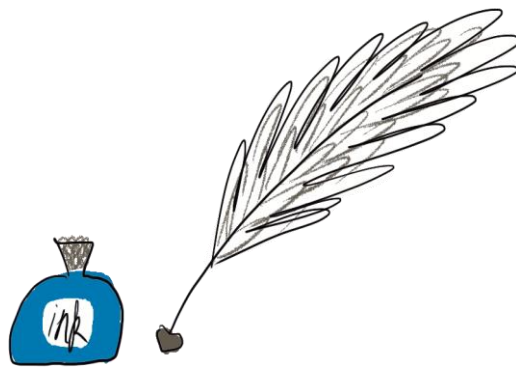
Level: Secondary education (14-15 years old)

Concepts: Literary devices

Time required: +/- 45 min

Summary of the activity: In this story, you have become a character in the fantasy novel you are currently reading and you try to escape from the story to go back to your real life. To this end, you have to find all the literary devices hidden in the tale.

Material needed: A piece of paper, a pen, some adventure instinct and... motivation!

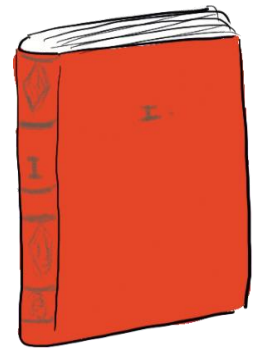


1

It's evening when the train leaves the station, puffing away. It's only 5 in the afternoon, but it's almost impossible to distinguish the houses and fields that follow one another outside the window. You're sitting next to your sister, who's listening to her music at full volume through her earphones. No chances to play a game with her...

Nevermind! At least, you have your new book! Your parents agreed to give you your Christmas present in advance. This way, maybe, the long trip won't seem that long and boring.

You take the volume in your hands. It's heavy and compact. The hardcover is red, and the title and the author are engraved in gold. You slide your finger over the first page and start reading, lulled by the hum of the train running on the tracks...



→ Go to paragraph 4.

2

"You've answered too quickly. The correct answer is 'black' because an **antithesis** is created by the conjunction of two opposite words". Never mind, it's too late to back out! But before you can fix it, you feel the ground under your feet caving in. You try to hold onto something, but it's no use; you keep falling, and it seems endless.

→ Go to paragraph 11.

3

Saying those words, you realise that you've got **euphemism** and **metonymy** mixed up! The first one consists in using a mild or indirect word to tone down what is being said (for example, your mum uses a euphemism when she says that your sister is "creative with the truth", meaning that she lies), whereas the second one consists in using one word which is substituted for another word or sentence that is closely associated with: it's like when mum asks you to give her "a hand". She doesn't mean that you must give her one of your hands, but your help!

But now it is too late to fix your mistake, and just like that, you disappear into the darkness. Overcome by panic, you shout in vain the name of the witch. The ground suddenly starts to tremble, and the shadows disperse to reveal... giant mushrooms! A bluish mist lazily winds around you. You try to find a path amongst this toadstools' maze, although without the witch you're completely lost. All at once, you hear a voice manifestly coming from the sky. Puzzled, you look up and, to your great surprise, you discover, lying on a mushroom cap, a giant caterpillar who's busy making smoke rings. How queer everything is today! And yesterday, things went on just as usual.

The caterpillar starts talking to you with a fawning voice:

**"Little human is apparently lost
Little human hopes to leave this place
Little human could succeed if my words are listened to carefully
Little human needs to tell me which figure of speech I am using
Little human could then escape these woods"**



You realise that your answer can only be:

- **An anaphora** >>> → **Go to paragraph 19.**
- **An epiphora** >>> → **Go to paragraph 12.**

4

You feel something climbing on your cheek, you briefly open your eyes, half-asleep. It looks like a kind of purple ladybug. Panicked, you jump up and shoo the creature away. Yet, the most intriguing part is that you are not waking up where you fell asleep. Instead, you wake up in the middle of a meadow! Above you, the fire-coloured sky seems on the verge of spewing out dazzling lightning, the heat is unbearable and nature, though familiar, seems to twinkle with a supernatural glow. Where have you ended up then?

Suddenly, a hunched silhouette appears from behind a tree. It has long silver hair and leans on an old branch that serves as a cane. You discover a woman with icy blue eyes who comes nearer and starts to examine you, as if she was reading you like a book. This whole scene looks oddly familiar... until you realise that you actually know both this decor and this person. It all comes straight out from your fantasy novel that you are currently reading! And this woman in front of you is in fact the gatekeeper, an old witch named Ingrid. She greets you:

“Welcome! You must be wondering how you ended up here, but the question you need to ask yourself is how to get out of it? I will show you the path towards the Source of Wisdom. A sip from this miraculous water will allow you to go back to your normal life”.

Familiar with fantastical adventures, you fill that there is something fishy going on, and you ask suspiciously: “What are you expecting from me?”

“To get out, you will have to find all the literary devices hidden in this story.”

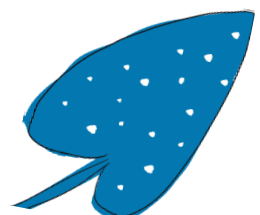
“Or...?”

Ingrid's eyes shine with a glint of malice:

“Or you'll end up in an even stranger place.”



Go to paragraph 5.



5



Although you're not reassured, you follow the witch into the woods that are close by. Large butterflies with dark wings brush past you and you suppress a shiver of fear: this dark forest doesn't look good to you. The path that you are taking is suddenly divided into two branches: on one side, you can see a straight line, on the other one, a sinuous route that goes into the depths of the darkness. The only information you have is a wooden panel that stands at the crossroads. You notice that runes you cannot decipher are engraved on it. Fortunately, the witch translates them aloud:

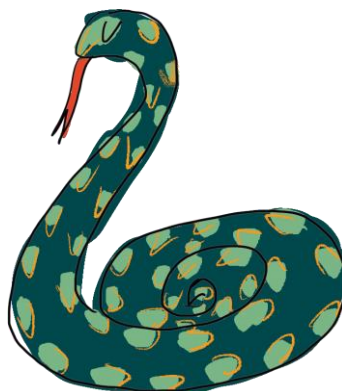
"To find the Source of Wisdom, follow the path that is sinuous like a snake."

You are about to take the straight path, not without reluctance, when the witch suddenly hits the ground with her long stick. She shoots you a black look.

"Have you not listened to what I said?" she shouts. "You have to find literary devices to find the correct path. So, I'm asking you, which literary device is hidden in '**sinuous like a snake**'?"

You think for a couple of seconds before answering:

- **A metaphor**  **Go to paragraph 14.**
- **A simile**  **Go to paragraph 7.**



6



“Yes, that’s it!” the goblin exclaims. He then starts to explain the literary devices to his friends: “A **euphemism** consists in using a mild or indirect word to tone down what is being said. I use it to avoid saying that I am short.”

His friends burst out into laughter as if he had told a good old joke, and, as suddenly as they’ve appeared, they vanish into the woods.

You follow your path, fighting your way through the ferns and the knotted branches that grab you like long claws. You hear grunts and scratching noises, but you prefer to focus on your steps rather than venturing a glimpse into the surrounding darkness. After what feels like hours, you discover a waterfall. A path made of flat stones leads to it, and to your astonishment, you see the witch step into it. You follow her closely, but every time your foot slips, it makes your blood run cold. Once you finally reach the waterfall, Ingrid starts to sing a hypnotic chant:

O Fair Waterfall, accept our greeting

O Fair Waterfall, one favour that’s all we’re exhorting



O Fair Waterfall, we know that you welcome a secret path in your midst

O Fair Waterfall, let us in, we insist

O Fair Waterfall, hear our chant which beginning is repeated over and over

O Fair Waterfall, here is an that we offer

The witch looks at you and you understand that you have to complete the lyrics. But before you can ask her anything, she exclaims: “Not this time! You have to figure it out yourself!”, and she disappears laughing and waving her stick. You have to look after yourself now. Courageously, you make your decision and answer out loud:

- **An anaphora**  **Go to paragraph 19.**
- **An epiphora**  **Go to paragraph 17.**

7

The witch seems to loosen up a bit and cheers you with a faint smile.

“The **simile** compares two unrelated objects to each other,” she explains. “It is always introduced by comparative words, unlike metaphors. For example, ‘Your hand is **as** cold **as** ice’ is a simile, while ‘Your hand is ice’ is a metaphor.”

This explanation doesn’t sound really helpful for the rest of your journey, considering that threatening shadows tower before you. Yet, Ingrid has made a glimmer appear by magic, which lights the path. You barely start walking, and you bump into some strange creatures who bear an uncanny resemblance to goblins. Although none of the three goblins are quite tall, the road is narrow enough so that they barricade the road.



“Shoo,” the witch shouts, “Go away!” yet none of them move an inch.

“Not before you solve our puzzle,” says the one with a long white beard. “You shall find which literary device I use in this sentence. My friends don’t know it and I can’t find which one it is: how could I explain it to them then? Anyway, here is what I told them:

I am vertically challenged.

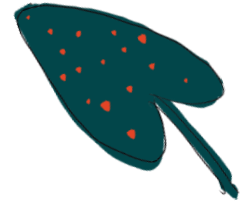
Please, help me find which literary device it is.”

You cannot wait to leave this forest, so you quickly answer:

- **A euphemism**  **Go to paragraph 6.**
- **A metonymy**  **Go to paragraph 3.**

8



Well done! 'Wise and foolish' is an **antithesis** created by the conjunction that separates the two opposite words. An **oxymoron** would be phrased as such: "wisely foolish".



A long tunnel opens up before you, and at its opposite side, there is Ingrid waiting for you in a circular room carved directly in the rocks. In the middle, a round table also carved in rock takes centre stage. An old parchment lies on it. Once again, the witch reads it:

**"I am a piece of paper often winded on which to write. Who am I?
Solve this riddle and you'll find the Source of Wisdom."**

Tired of these twists and turns, you are dying to leave this strange world. You are reminded of your English teacher explaining to you: "A **periphrasis** uses an unnecessarily long form of expression to say something that could be said in one word. A **litote** consists in an ironic understatement in which an affirmative is expressed by the negative of its contrary." You answer then:

- A **periphrasis**  **Go to paragraph 10.**
- A **litote**  **Go to paragraph 16.**

9

Stuck in Wonderland

Wrong choice! An **assonance** is the similarity in sound between two syllables that are close together, created by the same vowels (e.g. "back" and "hat"), while an **alliteration** is the use of the same sound or sounds, especially consonants, in several words that are close together.

However, you miraculously wake up, yet not on the train in which you dozed off. You are underneath a blossoming tree in the garden of a Victorian house. A young lady leans on you and, with a crooked smile, tells you:

“What a long sleep you’ve had, Alice!”

The end



10

Yes! It's a periphrasis! A fountain arises from the ground, causing a quake. Once the calm is restored, you lean on its crystal-clear water and you take a large mouthful. However, you may well blink, the setting hasn't changed: you're still stuck in this absurd world! Coming forward, Ingrid explains:

“The positive power of this pure water can't presently perform. You first have to solve this last riddle for its effects to work.”

You realise that a figure of speech is hidden in Ingrid's words. Once you find it, you will be delivered at last. You've noticed that she repeated the same sound containing the letter **P**. You give your answer as if you were pronouncing a magic spell:

- **Assonance** >>> → **Go to paragraph 9.**
- **Alliteration** >>> → **Go to paragraph 18.**

11

You eventually land with all your weight on a table that has been laid for the tea. You sweep away everything in your path: teapots, cups, spoons... The three guests jump in unison. You pick yourself up with a grimace of pain, and you're about to apologise when you notice their odd look: a man with a top hat joined by a hare and a dormouse, both dressed up. The surprise makes you forget what you were about to say.

"You're right on time for the tea!" the man with the top hat exclaims.



"For sure, you know how to make an entrance," the hare adds wittily.

"I'm sorry, but to be honest, I'm not here for the tea," you answer. "I'm looking for the Source of Wisdom. Do you happen to know where it is?"

The man with the top hat gives you a mischievous smile.

"Maybe, but first, allow us to ask you a riddle:

"I am black and white, I am handsome and hideous, I am wise and foolish, my opposites attract while keeping a reasonable distance, I am..."

- **An oxymoron**  **Go to paragraph 15.**
- **An antithesis**  **Go to paragraph 8.**



12

You made a mistake, but you understand why: the **anaphora** consists in repeating the same words at the beginning of a sentence, whereas the **epiphora** repeats the same words at the end of a sentence! But before you can fix it, the blue fog entirely engulfs you and the ground thunderingly caves in. You try to hold onto something, but it's no use: you keep falling, and it seems endless!

You eventually land with all your weight on a table that has been laid for the tea. You sweep away everything in your path: teapots, cups, spoons... The three guests jump in unison. You pick yourself up with a grimace of pain, and you're about to apologise when you notice their odd look: a man with a top hat joined by a hare and a dormouse, both dressed up. The surprise makes you forget what you were about to say.

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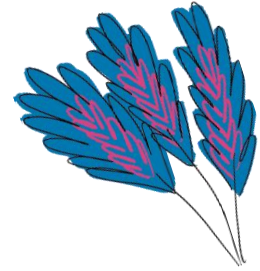
"Maybe, but first, allow us to ask you a riddle:

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- **An oxymoron**  **Go to paragraph 15.**
- **An antithesis**  **Go to paragraph 8.**



13





"Well done! 'White and black' is an **antithesis** because it is the conjunction of two opposite words".

A long tunnel opens up before you, and at its opposite side, there is Ingrid waiting for you in a circular room carved directly in the rocks. In the middle, a round table also carved in rock takes centre stage. An old parchment lies on it. Once again, the witch reads it:

**"I am a piece of paper often winded on which to write. Who am I?
Solve this riddle and you'll find the Source of Wisdom."**

Tired of these twists and turns, you are dying to leave this strange world. You are reminded of your English teacher explaining to you: "A **periphrasis** uses an unnecessarily long form of expression to say something that could be said in one word. A **litote** consists in an ironic understatement in which an affirmative is expressed by the negative of its contrary." You answer then:

- **A periphrasis**  **Go to paragraph 10.**
- **A litote**  **Go to paragraph 16.**

14

The witch sighs which makes you sceptical about your answer.

"Well," she says, "I will help you with this one. Have you noticed that the sentences include a comparative word 'like'? On the contrary, metaphors do not rely on these words. It is a simile!"

 **Go to paragraph 7.**

15

You've answered too quickly without taking the end of the riddle into account: "while keeping a reasonable distance". 'Wise and foolish' is an **antithesis** created by the conjunction that separates the two opposite words. An **oxymoron** would be phrased as such: "wisely foolish".

Nevermind, it's too late to back out! You land mysteriously on a stump. Here are the woods from the beginning again... except that this time they don't look the



same. Trees here seem like giants springing up and their black trunks reflect the starlight. You notice another stump facing you, seeming to be an invitation to have dinner at that improvised table, except that instead of food, it offers you with two flasks. Intrigued, you lean on it, but before having time to catch one of the flasks and look at it, a voice coming out of nowhere interrupts you:

"The flask for liberty is named after a periphrahsis."

A yellow smile appears in the dark, looking like a floating moon. You suppress a shiver of fear but you trust the voice and start to read the tags on the flasks:

1. A glass container used for a mysterious liquid

2. The magic potion

You don't want to stay there any longer, so you drink the contents of the bottle number...

- 1  **Go to paragraph 10.**
- 2  **Go to paragraph 16.**





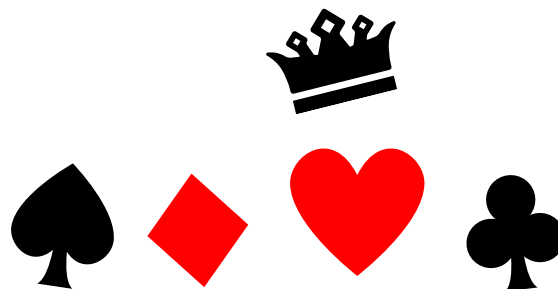
16

You have a strange feeling that it's not the correct answer! You hear footsteps edging closer behind your back. Turning over, you discover a small woman wearing a crown and with lackeys dressed as playing cards. The woman, who seems to be the queen, points at you and shouts:

“No stranger can wander around my kingdom! Off with their head now!”

You look for Ingrid, but she's not there! You can only count on yourself to get out of this mess. You suddenly realise that the queen used one of the figures of speech that consists of repeating a sound with the same consonants (**N**). So, on the point of having an axe decapitating you, you shout:

- **Assonance**  **Go to paragraph 9.**
- **Alliteration**  **Go to paragraph 20.**



17

That wasn't an epiphora. The waterfall remains closed.



"Careful!" Ingrid reappears, warns you and points out the blue mist that comes closer. "I can help you escape but only if you answer correctly to the following test; otherwise, the fog will catch you up. Which sentences are anaphoras?"

1. **"Doubt thou the stars are fire;
Doubt that the sun doth move;
Doubt truth to be a liar;
But never doubt I love."** "Hamlet" by William Shakespeare

2. **"In every cry of every Man,
In every infant's cry of fear,
In every voice, in every ban"** "London" by William Blake

3. **"There was never any more inception than there is now,
Nor any more youth or age than there is now,
And will never be any more perfection than there is now,
Nor any more heaven or hell than there is now."**
"Song of Myself" by Walt Whitman

4. **"For the moon never beams, without bringing me dreams
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;"** "Annabel Lee" by Edgar Allan Poe

- You answer 1 and 2  Go to paragraph 19.
- You answer 3 and 4  Go to paragraph 12.

18

Home Sweet Home

Phew! You made the right choice! An **alliteration** is the use of the same sound or sounds, especially consonants, in several words that are close together, while **assonance** is the similarity in sound between two syllables that are close together, created by the same vowels (e.g. "back" and "hat").

Suddenly, a dense fog invades the space around you and the floor starts to quake. You can't see anything and you cover your face to protect your eyes.

When you open your eyes, you're back on the train with your family. You've reached the train station and it seems that your parents waited until you woke up to leave the train.

"Impossible to drag you out of your sleep," your dad says laughing.

"I have had such a weird dream," you apologise.

Before leaving, you notice that you've left your fantasy novel on your seat. You hesitate and, at the very last minute, you leave it there. You've had enough adventures for today!

The end





19

Luckily, you've remembered the **anaphora**, this figure of speech which consists in repeating the same words at the beginning of the sentence. On the contrary, if it had been an **epiphora**, the same words would have been at the end.

But now you have to focus on the present because you have ended up in a dead-end cave. Impossible to run away: behind you, the impassable waterfall and in front of you a large stone wall. "It seems like someone needs help". Ingrid says while indicating to you the runes engraved on the rock and reads it aloud:

"Complete the antithesis correctly and you may cross me:

White and..."

- **Pure**  **Go to paragraph 2.**
- **Black**  **Go to paragraph 13.**

20

Wisdom

Phew! You made the right choice! An **alliteration** is the use of the same sound or sounds, especially consonants, in several words that are close together, while **assonance** is the similarity in sound between two syllables that are close together, created by the same vowels (e.g. "back" and "haa").

A fountain arises from the ground which causes a quake. Eventually, you have reached the Source of Wisdom! Once the calm is restored, you lean on its crystal-clear water and you take a large mouthful...

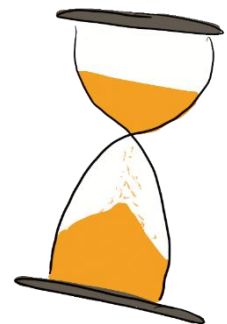
When you open your eyes, your dad is shaking your arm trying to wake you up. "Impossible to drag you out of your sleep," he says, laughing.

"We've arrived!"

"I have had such a weird dream," you apologise.

Before leaving, you notice that you've left your fantasy novel on your seat. You hesitate and, at the very last minute, you leave it there. You've had enough adventures for today!

The end





Designed by 6 European organisations, the project intends to create efficient, engaging pedagogical materials and tools for teachers in order to implement an innovative gamified Homework methodology with pupils. In doing so, we wish to contribute to boosting their efficiency and engagement rate in remote work and, more specifically, in Homework.

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