

Analogy

A comparison of one thing with another thing that has similar features

Simile

(Lat *similis* 'like')

A word or phrase that compares sth to sth else, using the words like or as, for example *a face like a mask* or *as white as snow*. A comparison is explicit.

Metaphor

(Gr 'carrying from one place to another')

A figure of speech in which one thing is described in terms of another. The basic figure in poetry. A comparison is usually implicit.

A word or phrase used in an imaginative way to describe sb/sth else, in order to show that the two things have the same qualities and to make the description more powerful, for example *She has a heart of stone*. Usually the comparison is between two seemingly unrelated subjects.

Allegory

(Gr *allegoria* 'speaking otherwise')

A story, play, picture, etc. in which each character or event is a symbol representing an idea or a quality, such as truth, evil, death, etc.

An allegory is a story in verse or prose with a double meaning; a primary or surface meaning; and a secondary or under-the-surface meaning. It is a story, therefore, that can be read, understood and interpreted at two levels. It is thus closely related to the fable and the parable.