

Elocution Module 14: Trope 3—Personification

This module is designed for use in Lesson 9: Comparison Essay with Themes and Sub-Ideas (see chart, Year-at-a-Glance). You should expect to use at least one class period to complete this module.

Getting Ready

To teach this module, you will need to:

Be able to

- Show students how to recognize personification in writing, and to add personification to their own writing.

Understand

- That personification means the writer gives inanimate objects human qualities.
- How personification is a form of metaphor: we are comparing something to humans.

Know

- That when we add personification to our writing, we are comparing an inanimate object to humans.

To teach this module, you will need the following materials:

Elocution Worksheet 17—Personification
Extra examples of personification from nursery rhymes or poetry

When they complete this module, your students will

Be able to

- Recognize personification in writing, and to add personification to their own writing.

Understand

- That personification means the writer gives inanimate objects human qualities.
- How personification is a form of metaphor: we are comparing something to humans.

Know

- That when we add personification to our writing, we are comparing an inanimate object to humans.

Presenting the Material

Pre-Grammar

Subject matter	Presentation
<p>Goals: Review metaphor.</p> <p>Use the questions from Forethought on Elocution Worksheet 17, or come up with your own questions.</p>	<p><i>What is metaphor?</i></p> <p><i>How do you create a metaphor?</i></p> <p><i>What must be true of two things for you to use them in a metaphor?</i></p>
<p>Transition to Grammar</p> <p>Read your students the three examples in part A under “Sentences to Contemplate.”</p>	<p><i>Tell me what you remember about these examples.</i></p> <p><i>What images stick out?</i></p> <p><i>Is the writer trying to make any comparisons?</i></p>

Grammar:

Subject matter	Presentation
<p>Goal: Give your student clear types, or examples, of personification.</p>	
<p>Model Use the information in the shaded box under “Sentences to Contemplate” as your model, going through the two-step process described.</p>	<p><i>What two things are being compared?</i></p>
<p>First type</p>	
<p>Now turn to section B under “Sentences to Contemplate.” Read the first sentence.</p>	<p>“The trees dance in the moonlight.”</p>
	<p><i>What are we comparing here? What is the tree like?</i></p> <p><i>Have you ever seen a tree dance?</i></p> <p><i>What human quality does the tree seem to have?</i></p>
<p>Second type</p>	
<p>Now turn to section B under “Sentences to Contemplate.” Read the second sentence.</p>	<p>“Integrity thumbs its nose at pomposity.”</p>
	<p><i>What are we comparing here? What is integrity like?</i></p> <p><i>Does integrity have a thumb? A nose? Have you ever seen it thumb its nose at something?</i></p> <p><i>What human qualities does integrity seem to have?</i></p>
<p>Third type</p>	
<p>Now turn to section B under “Sentences to Contemplate.” Read the third sentence.</p>	<p>“Money is a great servant but a terrible master.”</p>
	<p><i>What are we comparing in this sentence?</i></p>

<p>Fourth type (and fifth, sixth, etc.)</p> <p>Read the fourth and fifth types under “Sentences to Contemplate” on Elocution Worksheet 17, section B. If necessary, offer some of your own examples of personification.</p> <p>Ask similar questions to the ones above, having the students point out human characteristics of inanimate objects.</p>	<p><i>Can money have an occupation like this?</i></p> <p><i>What human qualities does integrity seem to have?</i></p>
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Dialectic:

Subject matter	Presentation
<p>Compare the sentences from “Sentences to Contemplate,” asking the questions under “Comparison.”</p>	<p><i>What is being compared in each example above?</i></p> <p><i>How is this figure of speech like metaphor?</i></p> <p><i>How is it different?</i></p> <p><i>We call this personification.</i></p>

Rhetoric A: Explanation

Subject matter	Presentation
<p>Student states the concept</p> <p>Instruct your students to complete the explanation section of the worksheet. Then discuss what they wrote.</p> <p>Ask them to describe what personification</p>	<p><i>Complete the Explanation section on the worksheet.</i></p> <p><i>What is personification?</i></p>

is.	<i>How can you create personification in your writing?</i>
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Rhetoric B: Practice/ Application

Subject matter	Presentation
<p>Students work on their essays by applying this lesson.</p> <p>Practice</p> <p>Direct your students to practice adding personification by completing the five sentences under the “Practice” section.</p> <p>Have your students read through their practice essays, adding at least one instance of personification.</p> <p>Application</p> <p>Instruct your students to edit their current essays by adding at least one instance of personification to them.</p>	<p><i>Now, turn to the “Practice” section. Rewrite each sentence using personification.</i></p> <p><i>Now, read through your practice essays. Using the two-step method on the worksheet, add an example of personification to your essay.</i></p> <p><i>Now edit your current essays by adding at least one instance of personification to it.</i></p>

Assessment

<p>Read their explanations, and make sure they understand the concept.</p> <p>Read through their practice essays and make sure they understand how to add personification to their writing. Although using this trope may seem out of place in these particular essays, make sure they understand how they <i>can</i> add it, so that when personification does seem appropriate, they’ll have the tools to use it.</p> <p>Check your students’ current essays to be sure they have added personification to them.</p>
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