Figurative Language

Figurative language is the use of figures of speech to convey a feeling or paint a picture that, in many ways, transcends the words themselves, giving deeper meaning or emotion to the description.

Simile

Uses the comparison of two things, using like/as, to create a deeper understanding or elicit a feeling.

Example–

↔From *The Sun Also Rises* by Ernest Hemingway
"The cafe was **like** a battleship stripped for action."

Metaphor
Similar to a simile but omits the words like or as.

Example–

↔From *The Fault in Our Stars* by John Green
"My thoughts are stars I cannot fathom into constellations."

Personification
Uses human traits to bring life and description to a non-human object.

Examples:

↔From the poem *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* by T.S.Eliot, Stanza 3 -

The yellow fog that rubs its back upon the window-panes,
The yellow smoke that rubs its muzzle on the window-panes
Licked its tongue into the corners of the evening,

Lingered upon the pools that stand in drains,
Let fall upon its back the soot that falls from chimneys,
Slipped by the terrace, made a sudden leap,
And seeing that it was a soft October night,
Curled once about the house, and fell asleep.

Hyperbole
Exaggerates something, sometimes using a simile.

Example–

⟷From *Parker's Back* by Flannery O'Connor

"The skin on her face was as thin and drawn as tight as the skin of onion and her eyes were gray and sharp like the points of two picks."

Oxymoron

Describes two opposite things for effect, often with a describing word (an adjective) followed by a noun.

Example–

⟷From *Romeo and Juliet* by Shakespeare, Juliet says to Romeo:

"Parting is such *sweet* sorrow."

Alliteration

Repeats the same consonant sound at the beginning of two or more words to create a feeling or tone.

Example–

⟷From, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou

"Up the aisle, the **m**oans and screams **m**erged with the sickening smell of **w**oolen black clothes **w**orn in summer **w**eather and green leaves **w**ilting over yellow flowers."

Idiom
An idiom is an expression or saying that has a specific meaning (not necessarily literal to the words used) and is highly influenced by culture, time and location. My suggestion is to do one of 2 things with an idiom:

~Use them for a specific person's dialogue to build character

~Or, change the idiom to surprise the reader.

Examples–

Grandma leaned over the laptop, her face nearly touching the screen. "I can't use these things to save my life!" she hollered as if I weren't sitting right beside her.

Lonnie was as blind as a bat. No, worse than that, since bats can see some. She was blind as a baby star-nosed mole. I learned all about them in science and those creatures can't see nothin'.

It's like the pot calling the kettle fat.

<u>Anaphora</u>
This is when the author repeats words at the start of successive clauses or sentences. This is used to highlight a feeling, message or create a sort of crescendo and rhythm in the writing.

Examples–

From *The Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger

"It rained on his lousy tombstone, and it rained on the grass on his stomach. It rained all over the place."

From *The Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair."