

Death of a Naturalist Literary Device

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Figures of Speech

Metaphor

- **Definition:** A Metaphor is a figure of speech that compares two different things by saying that one thing is the other (without using “like” or “as”).
- **Example:** *“The great slime kings were gathered there for vengeance.”*
- **Explanation:** The poet calls the frogs **“slime kings.”** He does not mean the frogs are real kings, but he uses the word “kings” to show their power, ugliness, and dominance. The frogs seem like rulers of the pond. He feels they want to take revenge for disturbing them.

Simile

- **Definition:** A Simile is a figure of speech that compares two different things using the words “like” or “as.”
- **Example 1:** *“Their loose necks pulsed like sails.”*
- **Explanation:** The poet compares the frogs’ throats, which move as they croak, to sails moving in the wind. It creates a strong image of their throats moving.
- **Example 2:** *“Poised like mud grenades.”*
- **Explanation:** The poet compares the sitting frogs to **“mud grenades.”** It means they look ready to explode or attack. This shows the boy’s fear and imagination as he sees the frogs as dangerous.

Personification

- **Definition:** Personification is when non-living things or animals are given human qualities or feelings.
- **Example:** *“The great slime kings were gathered there for vengeance.”*
- **Explanation:** The frogs are given the human feeling of anger and the desire for revenge. It shows how the boy imagines them as powerful, angry beings who want to punish him.

Alliteration

- **Definition:** Alliteration is the repetition of the same consonant sound at the beginning of nearby words.
- **Example:** “some sat poised”
- **Explanation:** The /s/ sound is repeated. It creates a soft, hissing tone that matches the quiet, tense mood before the boy runs away.

Imagery

- **Definition:** Imagery is the use of words that create pictures in the reader’s mind.
- **Example 1:**

“Bubbles gargled delicately, bluebottles

Wove a strong gauze of sound around the smell.”

- **Explanation:** This line gives us strong sensory images. We can almost hear the bubbles and smell the rotten flax. It paints a full picture of the dirty but lively pond.
- **Example 2:** *“The slap and plop were obscene threats.”*

Explanation:

This line appeals to our hearing. The “slap” and “plop” sounds make the frogs’ movements come alive.