

## Vocabulary Strategy

### FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

**Figurative language** is not true in a literal sense; it's used to create an impression in the reader's mind. For example, when Woolf says that Oliver *dismantled* himself, she does not mean that Oliver literally took himself apart. Rather, she uses the word figuratively, to describe Oliver's insecurities.

**Directions:** Each of the boldfaced words or phrases is an example of figurative language. Explain how the figurative meaning of each example differs from the literal meaning.

1. People like to read Gina's stories because her writing really **jumps off the page**.  
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2. Brian felt as though he was **treading water** at his job and decided to look for another.  
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3. Marlon took the most difficult courses in the fall so that he could **skate** through the spring semester and possibly get a job.  
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4. Claire felt her heart **sink** into her stomach as she waited for the results of the math test.  
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5. Anthony almost **lost his lunch** after riding the park's newest rollercoaster.  
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6. When the two suspects' stories didn't match, the detective **smelled something fishy**.  
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7. Erica was happy to get the promotion after starting out as **low man on the totem pole**.  
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8. Jorge had never done stand-up comedy before but figured he would **take a stab at it**.  
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9. Jan tried to explain to Mom why she was late, but Mom told Jan to **save her breath**.  
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