



## The Lost Dog

Theo walked along the beach. A single kite fluttered nervously in the air. Dark clouds crowded the sky like woolly, black sheep. The bitter wind screamed, “Leave, leave, leave!” But Theo could not leave. His beloved dog, Tucker, had darted out the back door of the beach house and ran toward the water. Now Tucker was lost. And the timing could not be worse: A huge storm was approaching.

Theo thought about Tucker. What a great dog he was! Tucker was strong like a bull and fast like a cougar. His fur was as golden as the sun. His eyes were as brown as milk chocolate. Yes, Tucker was strong. Yes, Tucker was beautiful. But, mostly, he was a great pet! Each night, Tucker slept at the foot of Theo’s bed like a guardian angel. Each morning, Tucker licked Theo’s face to wake him up. His dog was the best alarm clock ever! Theo smiled at the warm memories, then grimaced like a gargoyle: His beloved dog was missing!

Theo felt panicky as a cat. He scanned his surroundings. The sky was gray steel. Seagulls shrieked. And there was not a person in sight. In fact, the beach was completely empty except for a few balls of crumpled-up newspaper playing tag in the wild wind. Theo picked them up and tossed them in the trash. He stared out at the ocean. The water was black ink. Angry waves crashed on the shore.

Theo had never felt so alone. His heart was a heavy stone. “Tucker!” he cried in desperation. Thunder cackled in the sky like a cruel witch. Then the rain came, falling and falling like giant tears. *Should I give up? Should I turn back?* Theo asked himself. *No, he had to find his dog.* He put one foot in front of the other and kept moving. “Tucker! Tucker!” he hollered like a broken record. After an hour, the rain finally stopped, but there was still no sign of Tucker. Exhausted as a marathon runner, Theo plopped down on a sand dune to rest. *I’ll just sit here for a minute*, he thought. But, before long, he was fast asleep and snoring like a chain saw.

All of a sudden, Theo felt a cold nose and a wet tongue lapping at his face. What was going on? He opened his eyes. The storm had passed. The sea was a smooth piece of glass. The yellow sun was smiling. And his beloved dog was licking his cheek. “Tucker!” he yelled, hugging the excited animal. “I found you...or should I say, you found me!” Theo was so thrilled that his heart swelled like a big balloon. “Come on, boy. Let’s go home!” Then the two best friends raced each other back to the beach house. And life was as happy as a big box of dog biscuits again!



**FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE:** Language that is used in a *nonliteral* way to mean something different from what the words actually say. Figurative language helps readers create pictures in their minds, which makes writing come alive. It includes...

**SIMILE:** Two things that are compared using the words *like* or *as*, such as “blue like the sea” or “as big as a whale.”

**METAPHOR:** Two things that are compared NOT using the words *like* or *as*, such as “his heart was a drumbeat.”

**PERSONIFICATION:** Animals or objects that act like humans, such as “the wind whistled.”



### Key Questions

1. What examples of simile can you find in the story? Underline some.
2. What examples of metaphor can you find in the story? Double-underline some.
3. What examples of personification can you find in the story? Circle some.
4. Why is figurative language a good tool to use in writing? Would your reaction to this story be the same if the author used only literal language and no similes, metaphors, or personification? If you like, rewrite a paragraph of this story removing all the figurative language to see.

**S-t-r-e-t-c-h Question:** Can you think of similes, metaphors, and examples of personification to fill each box? Look in your favorite books to find each kind of figurative language... or make up your own. It's as easy as pie!

Similes

Metaphors

Personification

**The Write Stuff**

Take the characters of Theo and Tucker and place them in a brand-new mini-story of your own design. Try to include as many similes, metaphors, and examples of personification as you can. When you're done, share your story with your classmates.



# Answer Key



## FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE: The Lost Dog

**Key Questions:** **1.** Answers should include similes: *Dark clouds crowded the sky like woolly, black sheep; Tucker was strong like a bull and fast like a cougar; His fur was as golden as the sun; His eyes were as brown as milk chocolate;* etc. **2.** Answers should include metaphors: *His dog was the best alarm clock ever!; The sky was gray steel; The water was black ink; The sea was a smooth piece of glass;* etc. **3.** Answers should include examples of personification: *The bitter wind screamed; Seagulls shrieked; a few balls of crumpled up newspaper playing tag; angry waves crashed;* etc. **4.** Answers will vary.

**S-t-r-e-t-c-h Question:** Answers will vary.

**TIP:** No two readers interpret a story—including its characters, plot, setting, tone, or imagery—exactly the same way.

For that reason, it's wise to invite differing opinions and healthy debate in the context of your literacy lessons.

## Common Core State Standards Correlation

This lesson and activity will help you meet many of the reading and language arts standards recommended in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Listed below are the specific CCSS Reading Standards for Literature (RL) addressed in this lesson at each grade level. For more information about the CCSS, visit [www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org).

### Literary Element



#### FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

**RL.3.1:** Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

**RL.3.4:** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language.

**RL.4.1:** Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

**RL.5.1:** Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

**RL.5.4:** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes.

**RL.6.1:** Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

**RL.6.4:** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific words choices on meaning and tone.