

Figurative Language Audit Checklist

July 15, 2026

Use this checklist to critique your story before submission and to guide your discussion at the meeting.

Bring your marked copy.

Part I – Controlling Metaphor

- ☐ I clearly identified my central metaphor.
- ☐ It connects directly to the story's emotional core or theme.
- ☐ It appears more than once (if extended), but not excessively.
- ☐ It enhances meaning rather than distracting from plot.
- ☐ It remains consistent (no mixed metaphoric systems).

Discussion Note:

Where does this metaphor appear? How does it evolve?

Part II – Additional Figurative Devices

- ☐ I used at least two additional figurative devices.
- ☐ At least one device is not a simple “X is Y” construction.
- ☐ My simile(s), if used, feel purposeful rather than ornamental.
- ☐ Any analogy clarifies rather than over-explains.
- ☐ My figurative language fits the story's world and tone.

Discussion Note:

Which device was hardest to integrate naturally?

Part III – Freshness and Originality

- ☐ I eliminated obvious clichés.
- ☐ If I began with a cliché, I revised it into a fresh image.
- ☐ My imagery is specific rather than generic.
- ☐ My comparisons feel earned by the character's experience.

Discussion Note:

Which image in my story feels most original? Why?

Part IV – Balance and Restraint

- ☐ I avoided stacking multiple metaphors in a single passage.
- ☐ Literal description grounds the scene clearly.
- ☐ I cut any figurative language that slowed pacing.
- ☐ I read the story aloud to test clarity and flow.

Discussion Note:

Did I remove any metaphors during revision? What improved?

Part V – Emotional Impact

- ☐ My figurative language deepens emotional resonance.
- ☐ Readers can still clearly visualize the literal scene.
- ☐ The imagery invites interpretation rather than confusion.
- ☐ I can explain why each figurative choice exists.

Discussion Note:

Where does the figurative language most powerfully shape reader experience?

Final Reflection

In one or two sentences, complete this:

The primary effect of my figurative language is to

_____.

Come prepared not only to read your story, but to articulate how your craft decisions reflect the principles in *From Spice to Spell*.

Remember: mastery is not about adding more.
It is about choosing wisely—and revising boldly.