EDSITEment!
THE BEST OF THE HUMANITIES ON THE WEB

Worksheet 3. Literal and Figurative Language

Student Name _____Date_____

Writers use words for different purposes and meanings, especially poets!

Literal language is used to mean *exactly what is written*. For example:

> "It was raining a lot, so I rode the bus."

In this example of literal language, the writer means to explain exactly what is written: that he or she chose to ride the bus because of the heavy rain.

Figurative language is used to mean something *other than what is written*, something symbolic, suggested, or implied. For example:

> It was raining cats and dogs, so I rode the bus.

In this example of figurative language, there were not actually cats and dogs falling from rain clouds, instead, the rain felt so heavy and large that it was almost as if small animals were falling from the sky!

In the examples below, **identify** the phrases as literal or figurative. If phrases are figurative, **underline** the figurative language and **explain** what the author is suggesting, implying, or meaning.

Phrase	Literal or figurative language
I'm so hungry, I could eat a horse.	
She is as fast as a cheetah!	
That dog is a clown; it makes us laugh all the time.	

He was late to dinner.	
I stayed up late last night, I'm so tired!	
Time is money.	
They are as busy as bees.	
They sky is pale blue with few clouds.	
The sky is full of dancing stars.	
The field is calm and quiet.	
The dawn crept across the sky in pink clothing.	
The darkness surrounded them with a cold embrace.	