

Name: _____

Date: _____

Hyperbole in Literature (Middle Grades)

Hyperbole is exaggeration. We use **hyperbole** in our everyday language all the time.

Example: My mom is going to kill me!

Writers also use **hyperbole** to emphasize a point. It is important to recognize when writers are exaggerating so that you don't take the words literally! Imagine if you thought your friend's mom was *really* going to kill him every time he didn't do something right!

Exercise:

Read each example of hyperbole from literature. Rewrite the statement without exaggeration (what is the writer really saying—write that down.).

"Well now, one winter it was so cold that all the geese flew backward and all the fish moved south and even the snow turned blue. Late at night, it got so frigid that all spoken words froze solid afore they could be heard. People had to wait until sunup to find out what folks were talking about the night before." (From Folktale, "Babe, the Blue Ox")

"I'll love you, dear, I'll love you till China and Africa meet,
And the river jumps over the mountain
And the salmon sing in the street,
I'll love you till the ocean
Is folded and hung up to dry
And the seven stars go squawking
Like geese about the sky." (Auden, "As I Walked Out One Evening")

"He cried all night, and dawn found him still there, though his tears had dried and only hard, dry sobs shook his wooden frame. But these were so loud that they could be heard by the faraway hills..." (From *Pinocchio*)

"A whole morning could be spent just getting the laces on your sneakers right since all sneakers in the 1950s had more than seven dozen lace holes and the laces were fourteen feet long. Each morning, you would jump out of bed to find that the laces had somehow become four feet longer on one side of the shoe than the other." (*The Life and Times of the Thunderbolt Kid*, Bill Bryson)

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It was very cold. So cold that everything froze. (Exaggeration: even words froze, birds and fish went Backwards).

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I will always love you. (Exaggeration: All of these things could never happen; China and Africa meeting, rivers Jumping over mountains, salmon singing in the streets, the ocean is hung to dry, stars squawk like geese--this Helps to show the extent of the person's love.)

"He cried all night, and dawn found him still there, though his tears had dried and only hard, dry sobs shook his wooden frame. But these were so loud that they could be heard by the faraway hills..." (From *Pinocchio*)
He cried for a long time and very loudly. (Exaggeration: The faraway hills could hear the cries.)

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Tennis shoes used to be very hard for a kid to tie. (Exaggeration: the shoes had 7 dozen lace holes and the Laces were 14 feet long.)
