
Building the transcontinental railroad was a huge job. Workers worked year round, in snowstorms and heat waves. They laid track through mountains, over valleys, and across rivers. In 1840, only 3,000 miles of track had been laid. By 1890, 164,000 miles of track snaked its way across the country.

What do the underlined words mean?

- a) The railroads were dangerous.
- b) The railroads had many turns in them.
- c) The railroads were fast and quiet.

In World War II, the Russians thought the wide Bug River would protect them from the German army. But the Germans had an ace up their sleeve. They had invented an underwater tank! The Russians were surprised when 80 tanks emerged from the river—on their side!

What do the underlined words mean?

- a) The Germans could perform magic tricks.
- b) The Germans were good card players.
- c) The Germans had been keeping their underwater tanks a secret.

In the mid-1960s, young men in college could not be forced to join the military. Still, many of them protested the Vietnam War. In 1968, that law was changed, and even college students were drafted. This added fuel to the fire, and demonstrations against the war increased.

What do the underlined words mean?

- a) made the situation worse
- b) increased the size of the military
- c) caused protestors to burn things

Figurative Language Reading Comprehension Practice Cards provide an easy way to help students develop a critical reading skill. Each card in this set has been leveled for a 5.0–6.5 reading level.

The Figurative Language cards consist of leveled reading passages that contain metaphors, idioms, personification, similes, and more. Questions ask students to choose their meaning from multiple choice answers.

You may want to introduce the set of cards to the students by making an overhead transparency of a few cards to work through as a class. Once students become familiar with the cards, they can use them independently as take-home practice, in a reading center, or as reading and responding practice in small groups. Each card features the answer on the reverse for easy self-checking.

Continual practice with Figurative Language cards reinforces a reading comprehension skill essential for all areas of study.