

# Literary Devices In the Bible: Personification

*This lesson may be used in conjunction with any work of literature where personification is employed.*

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## GRADE LEVEL

7-12

## TIME REQUIREMENT

1 Period (50 min)

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Understand what personification is
- Analyze the personification of wisdom in the book of Proverbs
- Practice personification using a biblical concept
- Share their personifications with classmates
- Explore why personification is an effective tool in literature
- Connect the lesson with the literature being studied (if applicable)

## JOURNEY TO EXCELLENCE CONNECTIONS

- Acceptance of God
- Interpersonal Relationships
- Intellectual Development
- Communication Skill
- Personal Management
- Aesthetic Appreciation

## MATERIALS

- ✓ Copies of Proverbs 1:20-33 (NIV)
- ✓ Overhead with definition (or write on board)

## PRE-ACTIVITY

Optional: Teach/review meaning of the word *abstract* (in contrast to *concrete*)

## ACTIVITY

### Define

1. Ask if anyone knows what personification is and write student ideas on board
2. Provide definition & identify what students "got right"

### Analyze

1. Pass out the passage from Proverbs (1:20-33) and read together
2. Ask what (abstract concept) is being personified (*wisdom*)
3. Ask **how** personification is accomplished here (*wisdom is given human traits*)
4. Ask what human characteristics Wisdom exhibits; write student answers on board
  - a. Voice ("Wisdom calls aloud..."); other examples from text?
  - b. Action ("I would have poured out my heart to you..."); other examples from text?
  - c. Emotion ("I in turn will laugh..."); other examples from text?
  - d. Physical presence ("She raises her voice *in the public squares*"); other examples from text?

### Practice

1. Have students suggest other biblical (abstract) concepts (i.e. love, forgiveness, truth, peace, etc.); write them on the board
2. Students then select a biblical concept that they will personify (in paragraph form). This may be done individually or in pairs

### Share

1. Students share their personifications with the rest of the class

### Connect

1. Ask students why personification is used in literature. Why did Solomon use it in his proverbs? What makes it useful and effective?
2. If this lesson is being used in conjunction with a specific work of literature, ask students to identify where personification is used in it; and discuss why it might be used

## RESOURCES

- Google “Personification” to find great examples of personification in poetry.

# Definition of Personification

(dictionary.com)

- The representation of a thing or abstraction in the form of a person...
- An imaginary person or creature conceived or figured to represent a thing or abstraction
- A character portrayal or representation in a dramatic or literary work

# Proverbs 1:20-33 (NIV)

**20** Wisdom calls aloud in the street,  
she raises her voice in the public squares;  
**21** at the head of the noisy streets she cries out,  
in the gateways of the city she makes her speech:  
**22** "How long will you simple ones love your simple  
ways? How long will mockers delight in mockery and  
fools hate knowledge?  
**23** If you had responded to my rebuke, I would have  
poured out my heart to you and made my thoughts  
known to you.  
**24** But since you rejected me when I called and no one  
gave heed when I stretched out my hand,  
**25** since you ignored all my advice and would not accept  
my rebuke,  
**26** I in turn will laugh at your disaster; I will mock when  
calamity overtakes you-  
**27** when calamity overtakes you like a storm, when  
disaster sweeps over you like a whirlwind, when distress  
and trouble overwhelm you.  
**28** "Then they will call to me but I will not answer; they  
will look for me but will not find me.  
**29** Since they hated knowledge and did not choose to  
fear the LORD,  
**30** since they would not accept my advice and spurned  
my rebuke,  
**31** they will eat the fruit of their ways and be filled with  
the fruit of their schemes.  
**32** For the waywardness of the simple will kill them, and  
the complacency of fools will destroy them;  
**33** but whoever listens to me will live in safety and be at  
ease, without fear of harm."