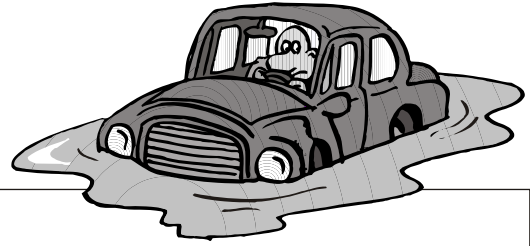# Text Features

Section 6.4
Sidebars

Pre-View 6.4

- **Sidebar** – a short text written in addition to a main article that gives additional information about a topic or an idea within the article

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A sidebar is another text feature that may be found in textbooks, newspapers, or other nonfiction texts but is probably most often found in magazines. A **sidebar** is a shorter passage that is often in a box placed beside a main article. It relates to the main article in some way and usually gives additional information about a specific detail mentioned in the article. The information in the sidebar is not directly relevant for the main article; it will be a "side note." Although sidebars are not material that could be easily included in the main article, they often verify, support, or clarify something in the main article.

Example 1:   **An article and a sidebar as they may appear in a magazine are shown below.**

Narrow Escape

As the hurricane approached, the water rose steadily, but they were assured that they would be safe in their section of the city. Once the tide wall was breached, however, they realized that they were no longer safe and began making preparations to move to higher ground. A knock at the door let them know that they had very little time to grab what they wanted protected from the rising flood waters and to get to safety.

John grabbed the children from their beds and settled them into the car as Kathy tried to pack clothes for everyone, important pictures, and documents. The dog was frantically racing at her heels as she grabbed pictures from the walls and stuffed them in the luggage. She grabbed the dog's food and dish and an extra bottle of water to have with them in the car. With the dog going with them, a shelter was out of the question. John prayed that the creek hadn't risen so much that the street was flooded on their way out of the city to his parents' home.

Heading out of his drive, he turned left to go the quickest route out of town. When he got to the creek, the water had risen over the road and the bridge, so he was forced to turn back and take the other exit out of his subdivision. It would be longer, but he and his family would be safer. When he got to the other exit, the street there was flooded as well, but he decided it would be safer to go into the water covering the street than to stay in the subdivision. He made it through the water; however, the water almost pulled his car downstream. Just as he cleared the water, he looked into his mirror to see the car behind him being swept away in the rising water that covered the street.

> **Flood Safety Tip**
>
> Never attempt to drive a car across a flooded area. No matter how heavy the vehicle, cars and trucks will easily float in as little as 18 inches of moving water. Once afloat, a vehicle will normally flip on its side or on its top. Even if the occupants escape the vehicle, many people still drown when they are unable to fight the flood currents to get to safety.

In this case, the sidebar is titled "Flood Safety Tip." The sidebar emphasizes the danger of crossing a flooded area in a car. It shows that the main character in the story was very fortunate and cautions others against trying the same thing.

Figurative Language and Stylistic Devices

Section 7.2
Additional Types of Figurative Language

Pre-View 7.2

- **Symbolism** – the use of an object to represent something else

- **Irony** – the use of language that is opposite of what is actually meant or an outcome in a situation that is opposite of what is expected

- **Paradox** – a situation or a statement that contains seemingly contradictory ideas

- **Allusion** – an indirect reference to a person, a piece of literature, a historical event, or another familiar thing

- **Imagery** – words that appeal to the readers' senses

Symbolism

Another type of figurative language is **symbolism**. Many times objects, especially in poems, are symbols for something else. For example, *night* or *sleep* may symbolize *death.*

Example 1:   **Read the following poem "The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost.**

1   Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
2   And sorry I could not travel both
3   And be one traveler, long I stood
4   And looked down one as far as I could
5   To where it bent in the undergrowth;

6   Then took the other, as just as fair,
7   And having perhaps the better claim,
8   Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
9   Though as for that the passing there
10   Had worn them really about the same,
11   And both that morning equally lay
12   In leaves no step had trodden black.
13   Oh, I kept the first for another day!
14   Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
15   I doubted if I should ever come back.

16   I shall be telling this with a sigh
17   Somewhere ages and ages hence:
18   Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
19   I took the one less traveled by,
20   And that has made all the difference.

What do the two roads symbolize?

The two roads represent two choices, or paths, in life.

Figurative Language in Literary Elements

Section 8.1
Setting

Pre-View 8.1

- **Literary Elements** – characteristics of texts often seen in fictional and nonfictional stories and poetry, but they can also be seen in other types of nonfiction; examples of elements include setting, characterization, mood, theme, etc.

- **Diction** – an author's choice of words

- **Figurative Language** – language that is not meant to be understood literally and includes the use of simile, metaphor, analogy, personification, hyperbole, oxymoron, idiom, symbolism, irony, and paradox

- **Setting** – the time and place of a story; includes its surroundings and environment

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Stories, either fiction or nonfiction, as well as poems have certain identifiable characteristics. These characteristics, such as setting, characterization, point of view, mood, tone, atmosphere, theme, and plot, are called **literary elements**. Authors and poets often use **diction** and **figurative language** when creating these elements. You've seen the different types of figurative language in Section 7. Now you can analyze how they are used with literary elements.

Setting

The **setting** is the time and place of a story, which include the surroundings or the environment.

The time can be specified by the author with a specific day or year, the time may be general with a season or a time of day, or it may be unspecified. There may be clues throughout the story about the time period that lead readers to understand that it occurs in modern times, cowboy days, days of knights and castles, etc.

The place may be a specific city or it may be more general, as in a cottage in the mountains. The place is often described by using imagery, but other types of figurative language may also be used.

Example 1: As I entered the elaborate ballroom, my ears met the lilting lyrics of softly sung music. The dancers gracefully waltzed, and I was wooed to watch.

What is the setting, and which type of figurative language does the author use in creating the setting?

The setting in this example is a ballroom where soft music is playing and dancers are waltzing. No specific time is given. The author uses imagery to describe the ballroom, the music, and the dancers so as to paint a picture in the reader's mind. The author also specifically uses the stylistic device of alliteration for its effect. Notice the repetition of certain beginning sounds: *entered, elaborate, ears; lilting lyrics; softly sung; waltzed, wooed, watch.*