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Figurative means that words are used in a way that is different from the usual meaning. That way the description is more interesting or impressive. Figurative language creates a picture in your mind. For example: He is about to explode! We do not mean to say that the man will actually explode. We only want to say that he is extremely angry. So we use the verb "explode" in a figurative way. In other words, we use a word that usually describes something else. That way the description is more interesting. It creates a certain picture in the mind. The opposite of figurative is literal. Literal means that you mean what you say exactly. For example: He is about to explode! Here we do mean to say that the man will actually explode. The man holds fireworks, and it looks dangerous enough to explode. So here we use the verb "explode" in a literal way. In other words, we use the usual meaning of the word. Learn all about figurative language to improve your writing and your understanding and enjoyment of literature. English Short Stories for Advanced LearnersTable of Contents Watch a video Table of Contents to illustrate the stories (with sound): If you're looking for free English books online, either in PDF or e-reader formats, start with classic literature: People have enjoyed these books for a long time, and they still enjoy them today. They contain themes and topics that are relevant to every human being, no matter whether they were born in 1600, 1950 or 2010. And luckily, many of these books now belong to the public domain and available for free—that's why you'll find them readily available to download to your computer, phone or e-reader. I've scoured the internet for some great options to get you started building your digital library.Contents 1. The Story of Doctor Dolittle by Hugh LoftingDoctor Dolittle loves animals. He loves them so much that when his many pets scare away his human patients, he learns how to talk to animals and becomes a veterinarian instead.He then travels the world to help animals with his unique ability to speak their language. 2. The Red House Mystery by A.A. MilneDoes the name Winnie the Pooh sound familiar? Author A.A. Milne is best remembered for creating the fluffy, yellow teddy bear.But before he became a famous children's book author Milne wrote a few adult fiction books. "The Red House Mystery" is one of these.In this mystery novel, the guests in a man's home become detectives as they try to find a killer—who is one of them! 3. The Secret Garden by Frances Hodgson Burnett"The Secret Garden" is a touching story about the power of friendship.Mary Lennox is a spoiled and rude little girl sent by her parents to live at her uncle's huge home. One day while exploring outside the home, she discovers a secret: a locked garden.The secret garden helps her make a friend, and thanks to the love of their friendship she learns to be a better person. 4. Treasure Island by Robert Louis StevensonEverything you know about pirates probably came from this one book: wooden legs, parrots on the shoulder and treasure maps."Treasure Island" is the story of a boy who sails on a ship searching for treasure, but instead finds himself surrounded by terrible pirates. It's also a story about growing up, full of action and adventure. 5. Black Beauty by Anna Sewell"Black Beauty" is one the best-selling books of all time, and for a good reason—this story about a horse teaches kindness towards animals and people.The story is told by the horse. It describes his life and the many cruel people and difficult times he had to live through before finding peace.It's a great read even if you're not a fan of horses. 6. Heidi by Johana Spyri"Heidi" is a book often described as being "for children and for people who love children."It does a great job of showing the world through a little girl's eyes as she explores the mountains in Switzerland. She makes many friends along the way, but also deals with the kinds of fears that a child would have, like being alone and away from the people who love you.It's a long book, but one that's easy to fall in love with. 7. My Man Jeeves by P.G. WodehouseThese days not many of us have butlers (servants hired to care for you and your house) but whenever people talk about a butler, his name sometimes comes up as Jeeves.That name comes from Wodehouse's series of books featuring the perfect butler Jeeves, and the many humorous adventures he and his employer had. 8. Wuthering Heights by Emily BrontëJealousy and revenge are the main themes of "Wuthering Heights," which is the name of the farmhouse where the story takes place. This book can be hard to get through, and it's not because of the vocabulary. It's a hard book to read because of all the cruelty in it. Still, this is a good book if you're interested in dramas and passions. 9. The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood by Howard PyleRobin Hood is a special kind of thief: he steals from the rich and gives to the poor. This book is a collection of stories about the legendary, kindhearted thief and his group of outlaw friends.Be prepared for many fun and funny moments, and some with a more serious tone. This book is perfect for reading little by little, since the stories are only connected by their characters. 10. The Red Badge of Courage by Stephen CraneThere are many war books that show how terrible war is physically—all the violence and death. "The Red Badge of Courage" talks instead about the psychological terrors of war.It's told from the point of view of a soldier in the Civil War who's actually running away from the battlefield. It uses many symbols and metaphors to discuss the important themes.If you can handle the advanced vocabulary, you can find much more meaning hidden in this book. 11. The Picture of Dorian Gray by Oscar WildeWhat if you could stay young forever? Dorian Gray makes a deal to stay young forever—while a painted portrait of him shows all the signs of aging.Of course, it turns out this deal he made might not have been such a good idea after all... 12. The Count of Monte Cristo by Alexander DumasAfter being thrown into jail for a crime he didn't commit, Edmond manages to escape and become rich. With his new money, he tries to get revenge on the people who put him in prison, but his plans don't quite go like he hopes."The Count of Monte Cristo" is about betrayal, love and letting go. 13. The Adventures of Tom Sawyer by Mark TwainTom Sawyer is a troublemaking little boy who's always causing problems, having fun and enjoying many crazy adventures. In this classic tale by Mark Twain, Tom visits his own funeral, stops a crime and tries very hard to get a girl to like him.Tom Sawyer is a well-known name in American literature and his stories of adventure are very fun to read. 14. The Invisible Man by H.G. WellsBeing invisible sounds like fun, but is it really?When a man learns how to make himself invisible, all he gets in return is problems and people betraying him. Maybe he should have just stayed normal... 15. Emma by Jane AustenJane Austen is perhaps best known for her novel "Pride and Prejudice," which is about life and love for rich, upper-class people in the early 1800s."Emma" takes place in the same time period, focusing on the character of Emma who is "handsome, clever and rich."Emma thinks that she's great at matching people up to get married, but she soon learns that maybe she shouldn't interfere with (get involved in) people's lives so much. 16. Tarzan of the Apes by Edgar Rice BurroughsTarzan is a wild man, raised by apes in the middle of the jungle. This book tells about his life among the apes and other animals, and what happens when a wild monkey man meets other humans for the first time. 17. The Innocence of Father Brown by G.K. ChestertonIf you met Father Brown, you wouldn't realize that he's a great detective. He's a small Catholic priest who always carries an umbrella—the kind of person who's easy to forget.He's a great thinker, though, and he can see people for who they really are. "The Innocence of Father Brown" has 12 short stories where the little priest uses his knowledge of human nature to solve mysteries. 18. Frankenstein by Mary ShelleyCreating life from death is Dr. Frankenstein's dream. When he finally brings a dead man to life, things don't work out the way he wants.If you know the Frankenstein monster, you might think he's a terrible creature.But this book tells the real story of Dr. Frankenstein's creation, named only "the monster." It turns out that the monster might not be such a monster after all. 19. The Moonstone by Wilkie CollinsIf you love detective books, you'll love "The Moonstone," which might be the first detective novel in the English language!It has everything that a good mystery needs—a precious jewel is stolen during a young woman's 18th birthday party.Who stole the jewel and where is it now? Follow the trail of the thief in this book. 20. Dracula by Bram StokerDracula is one of the best known vampires of all time. If you've watched any movies about Dracula, you might be surprised at what the actual book is like.It's an epistolary novel, which means it's written completely in the form of letters, and the story of Dracula is told through other people's points of view.It's an interesting look at the first "modern" vampire, and it's really a great read. If you like learning English through movies and online media, you should also check out FluentU. FluentU lets you learn English from popular talk shows, catchy music videos and funny commercials, as you can see here.If you want to watch it, the FluentU app has probably got it. The FluentU app and website makes it really easy to watch English videos. There are captions that are interactive. That means you can tap on any word to see an image, definition, and useful examples.FluentU lets you learn engaging content with world famous celebrities. For example, when you tap on the word "searching," you see this:FluentU lets you tap to look up any word. 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