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## Lesson Five

### FOCUS: Figurative Language

Writers often use non-literal language to invite readers to visualize events, view internal conflicts, glimpse social themes, or grasp abstract concepts like beauty, truth, or goodness. An author uses figurative or non-literal language to stretch our imaginations, challenging us to decode the references and meanings bound within images, similes, metaphors, and symbols. Such devices require a reader to participate actively in the novel, as the reader begins to (implicitly or explicitly) interpret non-literal elements of the tale.

While figurative language provides an essential tool for many writers, Hemingway avoided figurative descriptions. Rather than describing through symbols, images, or metaphors, he preferred to imply change of mood, meaning, or direction subtly. As his work developed, dialogue came to serve as Hemingway's principle tool for breaking open a character, a scene, or a theme.

### Discussion Activities

Read Handout Three, "Hemingway's Writing Style." Return to the novel and select a section of dialogue to examine closely. For example, what remains unsaid in Henry's exchange with Catherine on pp. 153-55? Discuss this example with the class. Then, allow students a few minutes to review the novel individually and select some dialogue for discussion. How does the dialogue selected imply meaning beyond the words exchanged?

### Writing Exercise

Have students write a few paragraphs describing an unusual or exotic place they have visited. In their story, the students should use image, simile, and metaphor at least twice. As another option, have students write a dialogue between themselves and their best friend, a parent, or a relative. When they have finished writing the dialogue, discuss how their experience with dialogue relates to Hemingway's techniques used in the novel.

### Homework

Have students read Chapters XXV-XXVII (pp. 163-193). While reading, reflect on symbols of war that you see in media, novels, or the general culture. Do you find these symbols within the novel as well?