Figurative and Literal Language

When we use language, sometimes we want the words to mean exactly what they say. This is called **literal language**. At other times, we want words to create an image or suggest an idea. This is called **figurative language**.

For Example:

**Literal:** I can’t find my keys and I keep forgetting appointments.

**Figurative**: My mind is oatmeal.

**Decide if the sentences below use literal or figurative language. Then, place and “L” or an “F” before each one.**

\_\_\_\_\_1. The war is like one big video game.

\_\_\_\_\_2. Lauren made up her mind to volunteer every Tuesday after school.

\_\_\_\_\_3. Thinking about a Bears Super Bowl win makes Olive feel like a warm fuzzy blanket.

\_\_\_\_\_4. As I delivered my speech, my voice sounded as if I’d swallowed rocks and shards of glass.

\_\_\_\_\_5. Henry may seem clumsy, but onstage he dances like a gazelle.

\_\_\_\_\_6. Jacob expresses many feelings through his photography.

\_\_\_\_\_7. It was after 8, so it was time to feed the rabbit.

\_\_\_\_\_8. Before the soccer match, both teams attended a sportsmanship program.

\_\_\_\_\_9. I have a ton of paperwork to do before I can enjoy my summer break.

\_\_\_\_\_10. Sometimes I have to be my brother’s conscience.

\_\_\_\_\_11. The traffic noises argued long into the night.

\_\_\_\_\_12. Learning to juggle flaming chainsaws might be a little tricky at first.

Now look at the sentences you’ve marked as **Figurative**. Go back and underline what informed your decision. Next to each, label the kind of figurative language used.

Options: simile (S), metaphor (M), personification (P), hyperbole (H), understatement (U)---*some may be used more than once!*