

**Metonymy** is a figure of speech which a thing or concept is not called by its own name, but by the name of something intimately associated with that thing or concept. (as “crown” in “lands belonging to the crown”)

# Metonymy

“According to the White House”

**The White House isn't a living human object so it can not be literally asked to talk so as metonymy it represents the President or the administration or even the government in general.**



**The White House –**  
For the President– The Government

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**The bottle** for alcoholic drink.

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**The press** for journalism

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**A skirt** for a woman

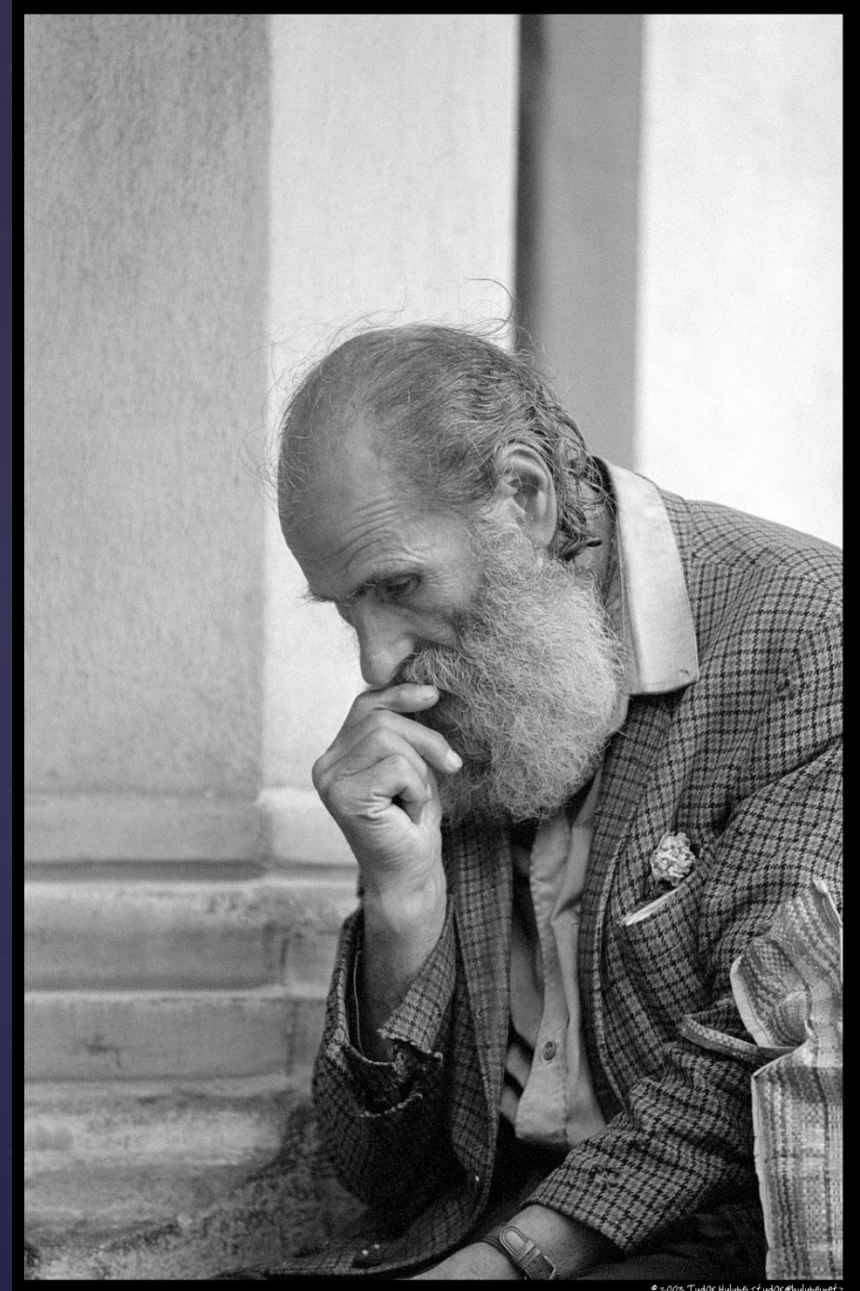
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**Mozart** for Mozart's music

# “ My Old Man”

“Old Man” refers to father. Father may or may not be considered old, but “old man” is associated as an attribute related to father.

By extension see “old woman” or “old lady” – Though generally “old lady” has a different connotation.



From William Shakespeare's  
Julius Caesar.

**"Friends, Romans, countrymen,  
lend me your ears"**

Metonymically — "ear" represents  
"attention" (because we use ears to pay  
attention to someone's speech).

**The suits on Wall  
Street walked off  
with most of our  
savings.**

We cannot only have a plan for Wall Street...We must also help Main Street.”

than...

We cannot only have a plan for wealthy bankers and moneyed financial institutions...We must also help the average person who is more likely to live in a small town and not own a yacht.



Place names are commonly used to represent the most famous activities that happen there. *For a quick lesson on Metonymy, you could provide students with a list of places and ask them what they refer to.*

Washington → The U.S. Government

Silicon Valley → The computer tech industry

Hollywood → The film industry

Detroit → The auto industry

The Vatican → The Pope or the Catholic Church

Scotland Yard → The British police

Houston → NASA

Wall Street → Financial institutions

Main Street → The average American

Madison Avenue → The advertising industry

