

MINNESOTA WRITING PROJECT
DEMONSTRATION LESSON TEMPLATE

Title: Using Similes and Metaphors in Poetry

Grade appropriate: 5-12

Approximate length of time to complete lesson: 50 minutes

Objective (s) to be covered:

- Students will understand the definitions of poetry techniques “simile” and “metaphor.”
- Students will be able to compose interesting, unique similes and metaphors based on visual prompts.
- Students will be able to extend one of those similes or metaphors to a first draft of a poem.
- Students will practice revising poetry.

Specific standards addressed: Writing

Brief summary/outline:

Anticipatory Set: As students enter the classroom, they will see a journal topic on the board and immediately start writing. For example: “My car is like _____.”
“The sun is _____”

Objective #1: Definitions

- Simile: A comparison between two similar things, using the words “like” or “as.”
- Metaphor: A comparison between two dissimilar things, by saying that one thing “is” the other.

Have students generate a list of common clichés, such as “green as grass” or “cold as ice.” Tell students that if they’ve heard it before, it’s off limits. They need to come up with original comparisons.

Objective #2: Create original similes and metaphors

Activity: Pass out magazine photos of people. Every student gets one. They are allowed one minute to come up with an original simile or metaphor for the photo. The teacher says “switch,” and the students pass the pictures to another person, continuing the process until everyone in the class has had every picture. Students share one simile or metaphor that is surprising or interesting.

Objective #3: Write an extended metaphor poem

Read and discuss examples of poems that are extended metaphors: “Hope” by Emily Dickinson, “Fog” by Carl Sandberg, etc.

Students are asked to choose one of the metaphors or similes that they’ve just composed and extend it into an extended metaphor poem.

Objective #4: Revise poetry

Students are asked to look over the poems that they have just written and look for words/ phrases/ lines that can be cut without sacrificing the meaning of the poem.