



THE LITERACY LINE

Keeping you in touch with ways to promote literacy for lifelong learning.

Newsletter of the

Emerald Empire Reading Council
www.literacylane.org

Jan/Feb 2012

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RAW Grants Awarded

This fall EERC awarded two \$100 RAW (Reading And Writing) Grants. One was awarded to Lori Florez of Cottage Grove High School to purchase ten copies of novel *Okay for Now* by Gary Schmidt for a winter book club selection. Students in this book club will receive extra credit from their Language Arts and Social Studies teachers because the teachers and Lori agreed on the selection. Two-to-four teachers and 10–15 students participate in these book clubs.

The other grant was awarded to Priscilla Ing of McCornack Elementary in Eugene to be used to purchase some of the sets for the OBOB program. This is the first year McCornack has participated in this program and we were pleased to be able to help with the beginning of something we hope will continue for many years.

In the May-June issue we will share the success of these two programs that the EERC RAW Grant money helped to support.

About the Inserts

In this issue we have some suggestions for using metaphor, simile, and analogy to improve teaching, learning, and writing. Metaphor and simile are often thought of as only figurative language used mostly with fiction writing, but they are powerful tools to aid in the writing of informational text as well. More than that, all three are thinking tools (for thinking, understanding, and remembering), that help a person make connections between unlike things—connecting the new to the familiar, the difficult to the understood. Once that is accomplished, it is much easier to remember important information. This can often be enhanced by adding visuals.

When you read the “Metaphors That Missed” you might ask yourself (or older students) why the connection didn’t work and what might have worked instead. You might try to write an “I” Poem or a Metaphor Poem. Research has shown that the best teachers of writing are those who also write. So, dust off those pencils, dip into those ink bottles, or warm up those keys—whatever your style—and get started. Share your efforts with your students so they realize that adults often have difficulty getting their ideas down on paper and need to make plenty of revisions.

Speaking of revisions, E. B. White had difficulty getting started with writing *Charlotte's Web*. He is quoted as saying, “I had about as much difficulty getting off the ground as did the Wright brothers.” He went through nine versions of the beginning before he was satisfied. To see a few of these revisions along with a comments page, click on or paste in this URL: <http://www.oregonread.org/drafts>. Other author’s drafts along with the published pages are in this folder.

Drafts of the beginning of *Because of Winn-Dixie* by Kate DiCamillo are available on the Scholastic website along with Kate’s comments about why she made her revisions—excellent information for student writers. Find the drafts here: http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/flashlightreaders/pdfs/WinnDixie_story.pdf

Events and Opportunities

ORA Winter Institute **February 10-11, 2012**

Don't miss this opportunity to hear from some of the most respected professionals in the field of writing for all grade levels as well as working with adolescents. Katie Wood Ray will lead the K-5 writing strand on Friday while teachers of grades 6-12 will get to hear about working with adolescents with Kylene Beers and Robert Probst. Presenters will work with teachers during planning times.

Saturday will start off with a keynote presentation on the Common Core State Standards by Penny Plavala. This will be followed by two different time periods—each with a choice of four sessions. For a description of the all-day, keynote, and small breakout sessions, visit <http://www.oregonread.org>.

Register early because the venue has changed and it is much smaller. Seating is limited. There is a discount for teams and no charge for admistrators with a team.

EERC's B.E.A.R. Faire **(Be Excited About Reading)**

Please join us on April 21st from 1-3 at the Springfield Public Library for another fabulous B.E.A.R. Faire—our longtime community service event. We offer book-related activities, storytelling, reading advice for parents, and at least one free book for every child attending.

If you are interested in helping with an activity table, please contact Sandy Coffin: sandycoffin@comcast.net. We will supply the activity and materials. You just get to have fun with the kids and their parents. You will also acquire a number of activities you can use in your classroom or with young relatives and friends.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February 10-11, 2012 - ORA's Winter Institute with Katie Wood Ray or Kylene Beers and Robert Probst on Friday plus sessions with well-known Northwest Educators and Consultants on Saturday. Don't miss this great event!

April 28, 2012 - Our Annual B.E.A.R. Faire (for information contact Sandy: sandycoffin@comcast.net)

May 18, 2012 - Our Annual Whine and Wine End-of Year Celebration (Rob Everett of the Springfield Library will be our speaker)

There is no charge for the last two events. To get up-to-date information, check <http://www.oregonread.org>, the Emerald Empire page on the ORA site or the calendar page on EERC's site: www.literacy.lane.org.

EERC's Writing Workshop

If you missed the January Writing Workshop at the Lane ESD, the handout is available on our website: http://www.literacylane.org/teacher_resource.html. Click on January Program. There is an accompanying PowerPoint slide presentation that gives examples of 25 techniques for spicing up informational writing and is available for download from the ORA website: http://www.oregonread.org/Informational_Writing.ppt. You can also download a PowerPoint presentation of an informational book: *Surprising Sharks* by Nicole Davies that incorporates 16 of these techniques at <http://www.oregonread.org/surprisingsharks.ppt>. *Surprising Sharks* also happens to be a Patricia Gallagher nominated book for this year.

The handout gives examples of the difference between reading like a reader and reading like a writer and some ways to practice this with your students to help them become more aware of writers' craft.

Have YOUR Students Voted Yet?

Have you shared this year's Patricia Gallagher books with your class yet? Have your students each voted for a particular favorite? If your class hasn't had the opportunity yet, please check out a set from EERC and read them aloud. Included with the books is an activity packet with reading and writing activities to use with each book. If you are not sure who to contact in your district, just email Karen: kantikajian@cvcable.com

Technical Terms in Plain English

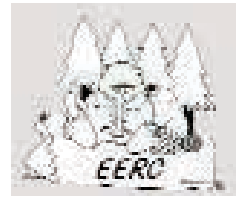
1. A NUMBER OF DIFFERENT APPROACHES ARE BEING TRIED—We are still clueless.
2. EXTENSIVE REPORT IS BEING PREPARED ON A FRESH APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM—We just hired three kids fresh out of college.
3. CLOSE PROJECT COORDINATION—We know who to blame.
4. MAJOR TECHNOLOGICAL BREAKTHROUGH—It works only so so, but looks very hi-tech.
5. PRELIMINARY OPERATIONAL TESTS WERE INCONCLUSIVE—The darn thing blew up when we threw the switch.
6. TEST RESULTS WERE EXTREMELY GRATIFYING— We are so surprised that the thing works.
7. IT IS IN THE PROCESS—It is so wrapped up in red tape that the situation is almost hopeless.
8. WE WILL LOOK INTO IT—Forget it! We have enough problems for now.
9. PLEASE NOTE AND INITIAL—Let's spread the responsibility for the mistake.
10. GIVE US THE BENEFIT OF YOUR THINKING—We'll listen to what you have to say as long as it does not interfere with what we've already done.
11. SEE ME OR LET'S DISCUSS—Come into my office, I'm lonely.
12. ALL NEW—Parts not interchangeable with the previous design.
13. RUGGED—Too darn heavy to lift!
14. LIGHTWEIGHT—Lighter than RUGGED.
15. YEARS OF DEVELOPMENT—One finally worked.
16. ENERGY SAVING—Achieved when the power switch is off.
17. LOW MAINTENANCE—Impossible to fix if broken.

Metaphors That Missed

The following metaphors were collected from student papers. If you use them with students, you might have them explore reasons for the metaphors missing the mark. This will help students avoid the same mistakes.

1. Her face was a perfect oval, like a circle that had its two sides gently compressed by a Thigh Master.
2. His thoughts tumbled in his head, making and breaking alliances like underpants in a dryer without Cling Free.
3. She had a deep, throaty, genuine laugh, like that sound a dog makes just before it throws up.
4. He was as tall as a six-foot, three-inch tree.
5. The little boat gently drifted across the pond exactly the way a bowling ball wouldn't.
6. McBride fell 12 stories, hitting the pavement like a Hefty bag filled with vegetable soup.
7. From the attic came an unearthly howl. The whole scene had an eerie, surreal quality, like when you're on vacation in another city and Jeopardy comes on at 7:00 p.m. instead of 7:30.
8. The hailstones leaped from the pavement, just like maggots when you fry them in hot grease.
9. Long separated by cruel fate, the star-crossed lovers raced across the grassy field toward each other like two freight trains, one having left Cleveland at 6:36 p.m. traveling at 55 mph, the other from Topeka at 4:19 p.m. at a speed of 35 mph.
10. They lived in a typical suburban neighborhood with picket fences that resembled Nancy Kerrigan's teeth.
11. John and Mary had never met. They were like two hummingbirds who had also never met.
12. Even in his last years, Granddad had a mind like a steel trap, only one that had been left out so long, it had rusted shut.
13. The plan was simple, like my brother-in-law Phil. But unlike Phil, this plan just might work.
14. The young fighter had a hungry look, the kind you get from not eating for a while.
15. He was deeply in love. When she spoke, he thought he heard bells, as if she were a garbage truck backing up.

Newsletter of the
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of the Oregon Reading Association
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If your newsletter was mailed, you are missing two pages: Analogy Practice and Analogies Card Game. Check for them under teacher resources on our website.

← Check your membership expiration date.

Do you need to renew your EERC/ORA membership? Check the expiration date on the label above. If you do need to renew (or join) please visit our website <http://www.literacylane.org> for a membership application.



- READ ALOUD TO CHILDREN EVERY DAY -



*Coming
Events*

EERC's Annual B.E.A.R. Faire

(Be Excited About Reading) Faire

April 21, 2011, from 1-3

Held at the Springfield Public Library

A free book for every child attending.

Lots of book-related activities and storytelling.

Come in book character costume—get an extra book!

EERC's Whine and Wine Celebration

Come to celebrate the end of the school year, share ideas with colleagues, and hear our guest speaker (Rob Everett of the Springfield Library) talk about some great books for summer reading.

EERC provides the food and lots of door prizes—books, of course!

May 18, 2012 - 4-6 - Oregon Electric Station

"A great teacher makes hard things easy."

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

February Picture Books . . . and More

My Heart is Like a Zoo by Michael Hall

With a simple text using similes, the author/illustrator shows how so many animals can be created by combining heart shapes of various sizes and colors. The hearts are overlapped with different shades so all the different heart shapes are visible. He adds occasional circles and rectangles when needed.



Activity:
Read the book to the class and talk about how Mr. Hall overlapped hearts to create his zoo animals. Let students create imaginary critters or fantastical creatures with heart shapes.

If you have heart punches in various sizes you can easily provide lots of cut hearts in different colors. If not, students can fold, trace a pattern, and cut their own or older students can just fold and cut freehand. Notice that some of the hearts in the book are skinnier or fatter than others.

Back of the Bus by Aaron Reynolds, Illustrated by Floyd Cooper



This is the well-known story of Rosa Parks told through the eyes and in the voice of a young black boy sitting with his mother at the back of the bus. It starts with a friendly interaction between the boy and

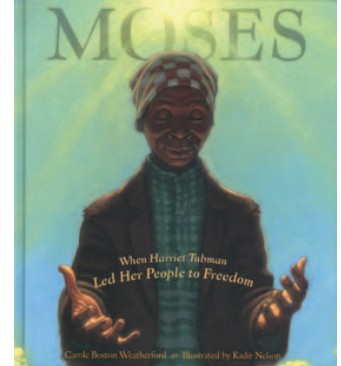
Parks as he rolls a marble down the aisle and she, with a smile, rolls it back to him from her seat in the front. It shows his mother's concern about him acting proper, especially when black folks are ordered to the back of the bus. It portrays the feelings of the black bystanders, the mother's dignity, and the boy's confusion as Parks, refusing to obey the law, is handcuffed and led off the bus to be taken to jail.

Often events in history mean more to young people when viewed through the eyes of those their own age. That gives an added dimension to this familiar civil rights event. The book could easily be used with older students as well as it portrays the feelings of the other participants in the event.

Useful for civil rights units but also as a discussion of how others felt at the time (both black and white) and whether any of those in the bus should have spoken up or supported Rosa Parks.

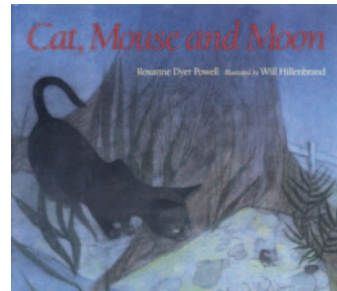
Moses: When Harriet Tubman Led Her People to Freedom by Carole Boston Weatherford, Illustrated by Kadir Nelson. Caldecott Honor book and winner of the Coretta Scott King Award.

A beautifully written and illustrated version of Harriet Tubman's contributions to the Underground Railway—freeing as many as three hundred slaves including her brothers and her parents.



An author's note in the back of the book gives many interesting facts.

Cat, Mouse and Moon by Roxanne Dyer Powell and Illustrated by Will Hillenbrand



This is one of my favorite books for imagery, metaphor and simile. The illustrations are wonderfully evocative and change with the setting and the cat's attitude.

Since much of this issue deals with metaphor, I wanted to share some of the text from this book—which is sadly out of print.

It is night and Cat is out. Moon is in the sky, and in Cat's eye, and on the rippling surface of the lake.

Clouds fold themselves over Moon. Sometimes they are sheer veils; other times, they are thick cloaks. When Moon breaks free of them, the night is almost as bright as day.

Cat follows Moon's path down to the water's edge. Cat skirts along the edge of the pond. Moon looks over Cat's shoulder.

Now thick clouds wrap Moon up and steal his light. Deep night shadows reach from their hiding places behind the trees.

Moon throws off his cloud-cloaks and floods the night with light. Under the dark limbs of the pine tree where Mouse is working, Moon becomes tiny specks in the edges of Mouse's black bead eyes. Mouse sees Moon ruffling the edges of Cat's fur.

(Examples of both metaphor and personification. The author also uses similes.)

I have two extra used copies of this book to give away to the first two people to email me. I will send by courier. Email: kantikajian@cvcable.com.

Examples from Literature

Personification:

I was raised in a country fog so thick the crows had to walk to the cornfield that morning. . . . It took twenty men sawing, fitting, and lifting beams, and a flock of womenfolk cooking to raise me that day.

—*The Barn* by Debby Atwell

(The first part is also an example of hyperbole. The second part is an example of a series of 3's)

I am the mountain,
Tall and grand.
And like a sentinel I stand.

Surrounding me, my sisters rise
With watchful peaks that pierce the skies;
From north to south we form a chain
Dividing desert, field, and plain.

—*Sierra* by Diane Siebert

(Each section starts with the phrase “I am the mountain” while the last section and the conclusion repeat the whole three lines.)

I am the desert.
I am free.
Come walk the sweeping face of me.

Through canyon eyes of sandstone red
I see the hawk, his wings outspread,
He sunward soars to block the light
And casts the shadow of his flight
Upon my vast and ancient face,
Whose deep arroyos boldly trace
The paths where sudden waters run—
Long streams of tears dried by the sun.

—*Mojave* by Diane Siebert

(Other three-line stanzas similar to the first are used at the end with the ending a repeat of the beginning.)

Metaphor:

Mountains rise through the clouds in a slow dance that goes on and on for millions of years. Every kind of mountain moves in its own way.

Slumbering volcanoes awake, roaring. Fire, gas, and ash leap. Cone-shaped mountains rise from the land.

—*Mountain Dance* by Thomas Locker

He follows two compasses and the stars to navigate. As long as the sky is clear, he is safe. But he must stay awake.

He writes: “Now I must cross not one, but two oceans: One of night and one of water.”

—*Flight: The Journey of Charles Lindberg*
by Robert Burleigh

Midnight.

The blackness erupts. Clouds heave. The sky unlocks. Fists of rain pummel the cockpit windshield.

Rivers of quicksilver darkness drown the moon.

The wooden Vega wobbles on invisible hills of air.

Lightning scribbles its zigzag warning across the sky:
DANGER.

—*Night Flight: Amelia Earhart Crosses the Atlantic*
by Robert Burleigh

I have heard of a land
Where the earth is red with promises
Where the redbud trees catch the light
And throw it in a game of sunbeams and shadow
Back and forth to the cottonwood trees.

I have heard of a land
Where the imagination has no fences
Where what is dreamed on night
Is accomplished the next day.

—*I Have Heard of a Land* by Joyce Carol Thomas

Simile:

Then it is as it should be.
Smooth as silk.
Easy as air on the face.
Right as falling water.

Then there is only
The echoey, nothing-quite-like-it sound
And soft feel
Of the fat part of the bat
On the center of the ball.

—*Home Run* by Robert Burleigh

The Eagle is like a gold-speckled bug falling out of the sky—

Its odd-shaped body plastered with many boxes,
Its outer walls thinner than human skin.

The spacecraft's spindly legs poke out as it rides on its back.

—*One Giant Leap* by Robert Burleigh

The river wiggles like a fat brown thread along the flat quilt of the Red River Valley,
Stitching North Dakota and Minnesota together.

Spring creeps into the city one toe at a time. Days are warm as the boots that snuggled my feet all winter.
(First sentence is example of personification.)

Two weeks of waiting to find out if we have anything left.
My parents don't know what to do.
They wander around like balls of string, winding and unwinding.

—*River Friendly River Wild* by Jane Kurtz

Using Metaphor and Simile for Teaching, Learning, and Writing

Authors often use similes or metaphors to help readers understand new information or to express feelings. They also help the reader to visualize—one of the strategies of proficient readers. Connecting the new with the familiar is an excellent way to remember information so helping students learn to create their own similes and metaphors is a worthwhile use of time. Since analogies are built on the relationship of one thing to another and then finding another pair that has the same relationship, learning to recognize and create analogies is a first step.

Students need to think about what they want to describe and what particular characteristic of this person, place, thing, or feeling they want to emphasize. Then they need to imagine what it might be like. What else that is different, but familiar to the reader, has this same characteristic which might be size, shape, color, texture, sound, or taste or it might be the way it behaves or moves.

In his book *Little Tricker the Squirrel Meets Big Double the Bear*, author Ken Kesey uses similes as if they were analogies. As the bear is chasing one of the small animals, the simile describing the two are similar in some way but the one for the smaller animal is smaller than the one for the bear.

Examples:

“. . . and then out across the territory rips the rabbit, a cloud of sand boiling up from his heels like dust from a motor scooter scooting up a steep dirt road. But right after him comes the bear, like a loaded log train coming down a steeper one.

[Longrellers] gathers his long ears and his elbows under him and he jumps for the brambles, springing up into the air quick as a quail flushing . . . But the big old bear with his big old legs springs after him like a rocket ship roaring. . .

. . . then off she shoots like the bullet out of a pistol. But right after her booms the bear like a meteor out of a cannon.

Sally springs out of the creek bed like a silver salmon jumping. The bear jumps after her like a flying shark. She catches the trunk of the cottonwood and climbs like an electric yo-yo whizzing up a wire. But the

bear climbs after her like a jet-propelled elevator up a greasy groove . . .

. . . off he goes, dusting back toward the cottonwood like a baby dust-devil, with the bear huffing right at his heels like a full-blown tornado.

And up the tree he scorches like a house afire, with the bear right on his tail like a volcano.

Older students may like to try their hands with metaphor poems. Here are some samples:

Metaphor for a Family

My family lives inside a medicine chest.
Dad is the supre-size band aid, strong and powerful
but not always effective in a crisis.
Mom is the middle-size tweezer,
which picks and pokes and pinches.
David is the single small aspirin on the third shelf
sometimes ignored.
Muffin, the sheep dog, is a round cotton ball, stained
and dirty, that pops off the shelf and bounces in my
way as I open the door.
And I am the wood and glue which hold us all
together with my love.

By Belinda

Fifth of July

My family is an expired firecracker
set off by the blowtorch of divorce. We lay scattered
in many directions.
My father is the wick, badly burnt
but still glowing softly.
My mother is the flackened paper fluttering down,
blowing this way and that, unsure where to land.
My sister is the fallen, colorful parachute,
lying in a tangled knot, unable to see the beauty she
holds.
My brother is the fresh, untouched powder that
was protected from the flame. And I,
I am singed, outside papers, curled away
from everything, silently cursing
the blowtorch.

By John

Excerpted from *Writing Process Activities Kit*

<http://www.teachervision.fen.com/poetry/literary-techniques/5453.html>

Personification and the "I" Poem

Personification

Many middle-grade and young adult novels are written in first person. In books like *Shiloh*, *Because of Winn-Dixie*, and *Red Kayak*, the narrator's voice is strong but intimate and draws the reader into the story.

Writing in first person allows students to express their feelings and write in their own voices. One vehicle for this is the "I" poem. The narrator can be a person (the writer or another person) but can also be an object or place such as in *The Barn* by Debby Atwell or *Sierra and Mojave* by Diane Siebert. These and other examples are on the **Examples from Literature** page included in this issue.

The "I" or I Am Poem does not have a set format. It can be rhymed (as in *Sierra and Mojave*) but it is usually better to encourage students to avoid rhyme and use free verse so they are able to concentrate instead on the thoughts and feelings they want to express.

The I Am Poem

(Not all of the categories need to be used. Students may choose from those given and also add others of their own.)

Examples:

I am the Kansas prairie.
I am rolling and lonely to see
But there is more to me than you think.
Gophers hide under me
Afraid of getting too much sun.
I have no trees to shade me
Only prickly tumbleweed blows through me.
I see killdeer proudly flaunt their tails
And I watch dandelions fight for sun
with the covering clover.
I hear the cows chewing on top of me
Taking almost all day to finish their lunch . . .

I am the once loved piano.
I wonder if I will ever be heard again.
I hear echoes of music from when
I was once played.
I see pain in the eyes of the little girl
who wants to play me.
I want to be played again.
I am the once loved piano.

The I Am Poem Format

I am	(two special characteristics the person or thing has)
I wonder	(something the person or thing could actually be curious about)
I hear	(an imaginary or actual sound)
I see	(an imaginary or actual sight)
I want	(a desire)
I am	(the first line of the poem repeated)
I pre-tend	(something the person or thing could actually pretend to do)
I feel	(a feeling about the imaginary)
I touch	(an imaginary touch)
I worry	(something that could really bother the person or thing)
I cry	(something that could make the person or thing sad)
I am	(the first line of the poem repeated)
I understand	(something the person or thing knows to be true)
I say	(something the person or thing believes in)
I dream	(something the person or thing could actually dream about)
I try	(something the person or thing could make an effort to do)
I hope	(something the person or thing could hope for)
I am	(the first line of the poem repeated)

The voice of the poem should speak directly to the reader while giving information or expressing emotions.

Teaching with Metaphors

by Karen Antikajian

Metaphor: A term or description that substitutes “one kind of object or idea . . . in place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy between them” (Merriam-Webster 2004, 780); a symbol.

Metaphors (using the broad meaning for the term which includes analogies, similes and other forms of figurative language) are a useful way to connect the unknown to the known and a valuable resource for both the teacher and the student. Besides using metaphors in your own teaching, it will be worth your time to teach students to recognize and create their own metaphors. Even young students can learn to recognize and use metaphors.

The following is from *Metaphors & Analogies: Power Tools for Teaching Any Subject* by Rick Wormeli:

Where to start? A good place to begin is focusing on something they probably already know. Take the term *brainstorm*, which teachers often encourage students to do when trying to unleash their creativity and prior knowledge about a topic. Ask students to picture the swirling ideas and chaos inside their heads as they try to brainstorm, or think of all the possible connections for a given term or topic. Explain that some of the ideas that emerge from a brainstorm won't be worth keeping, just as real storms deposit debris that we have to clean up and toss out. But during a brainstorm, we don't want to be paralyzed by correctness. The purpose is getting all the ideas out there so we can sift through them and find the treasures worth keeping. (p. 9)

With your students, create a list of familiar metaphors. Here are some you might start with:

- I'm rusty on this
- We can roll with it.
- Let's peel away the layers and see what lies in the center.
- The cafeteria was a circus!
- Let's bridge the two ideas.
- Let's toss that idea around.
- Wouldn't it be great to harness the power of the sun?
- We're not on the same wavelength.
- Can I grab two minutes of your time today?
- You're walking on thin ice.
- That would require a leap of faith

This is a helpful process for students to follow as they learn to identify metaphors and their use in constructing meaning. You might ask students to compile lists of metaphors they hear or read throughout the school day. They will be amazed at this unnoticed code passing between humans. (p.10)

If you're working with students who have not yet learned to write or who are learning English as a second language, you can start with basic descriptions that they can layer with complexity, as a child might do by adding articles of clothing to a paper doll. Start by asking them to think about a person, a pet, or a place that resembles something else. Offer a few examples: “That cloud reminds me of a big train.” “My cereal looks like a face.” “My dog eats like a vacuum cleaner.”

For English language learners, it might be helpful to cut out pictures of human expressions from magazines (or download them from the Internet) and match them with specific animals, such as a quiet person matched to a tree sloth, praying mantis, or sleeping cat, and an angry person connected to a charging rhinoceros or stinging bee.

Next, let students practice identifying metaphorical expressions by playing a quick classroom game. Describe something in the room in very basic terms: “The ball is round, and it is red.” Or “The ball sits on top of the box.” Then continue describing the ball, but use metaphors. Whenever students hear the ball or other objects being compared to something else, they can jump up and down (for younger students) or use some other mutually agreed upon signal, such as drawing a big “M” in the air with their pointer finger. Descriptions using metaphors might include: “This ball looks like a big tomato.” “That ball is a whole planet to an ant.” Anything that describes the ball, but is not a description of the ball’s attributes, should raise their interest. For extra points or affirmation, students should identify what two things are being compared: for example, “ball and tomato” or “ball and planet earth.” (pp. 10-11)

Wormeli states that it is important to show students how to evaluate the quality of metaphors in addition to recognizing and using them. He realizes that beginners may need more time to identify them before moving to this next step.

Wormeli’s book is an excellent resource and has many examples that will help teachers and students understand how to use and evaluate metaphors in all curriculum areas.

For younger students you might have them try to describe animal characteristics by comparing them to familiar objects. Some of the characteristics they might explore: head, legs, feet, tail, body, eyes, ears, nose, mouth, movement, what it does, how it eats, how it gets food, and what sounds it makes. They might consider size, shape, color, outer covering, texture, and pattern. After writing some metaphors, students can illustrate the characteristics and the metaphorical comparisons to show the similarities.

A book called *Creature Features* by Anita Ganeri, illustrated by Steve Fricker, compares the parts of several different animals to familiar objects. This is an excellent visual example to explain metaphor to students. To download a PowerPoint presentation of this book, click on or paste this URL into your browser: <http://www.oregonread.org/creaturefeatures.ppt>.

“After two days of gentle winter rains, the small pond behind my house is lapping at its banks, content as a well-fed kitten.” —*High Tide in Tucson* by Barbara Kingsolver

“Hello, harvest moon.
With silent slippers / it climbs the night stairs,
lifting free of the treetops / to start working its magic,
staining earth and sky with a ghostly glow.” —*Hello Harvest Moon* by Ralph Fletcher

“Mountains rise through the clouds / in a slow dance that goes on and on
for millions of years.
Every kind of mountain moves in its own way.” —*Mountain Dance* by Thomas Locker

Practice with Analogies

Analogies

What are they? Analogies are word relationships. They are sometimes written “water : liquid :: ice : solid” and read “water is to liquid as ice is to solid.”

The three main forms of figurative language used for comparison are analogy, metaphor, and simile. Here are the distinctions:

- An analogy says that A is to B as C is to D.
- A metaphor says that A is B, or substitutes B for A.
- A simile says that A is like B.

Analogies help us to understand new ideas in terms of familiar ideas. An analogy is based on an underlying similarity in things. Known relationships, ideas and concepts can be digested easily when an analogy is used. Sometimes analogies may not be exact parallels but are only aimed at giving the gist or a general idea of the concept. Analogies make it easier to grasp the underlying idea behind anything. The pattern of understood things in our minds is like a jigsaw puzzle. Analogies help in filling in these pieces to make things clear.

The features of a good analogy are:

- Based on an exact or similar idea
- Simplicity
- Embodies the concept or relationship between things clearly

A simile or a metaphor is related to an analogy but not exactly the same (as shown above). An analogy is an important tool in problem solving and reasoning.

There are many kinds of analogies. The five kinds of analogies listed here might be called (1) characteristic or what something is like, (2) part-to-whole, (3) member-to-group, (4) a thing and an action, (5) synonym/antonym.

The first step in solving an analogy is to decide how the first two words are related. Determine the connection between the two. Then see if you can think of a word that will create a similar connection or relationship for the other two words. Below are some examples for practice. Accept any answers that make sense.

Characteristic:

1. Elephant is to big as ant is to _____.
2. Box is to square as ball is to _____.
3. Rock is to heavy as feather is to _____.
4. Light is to day as _____ is to night.
5. Fast is to spaceship as _____ is to tricycle.

Part-to-Whole (or Whole-to-Part):

1. Feathers are to birds as fur is to _____.
2. Toes are to foot as fingers are to _____.
3. Bird is to beak as dog is to _____.
4. Grass is to blade as _____ is to petal.
5. Hand is to arm as _____ is to leg.

Member-to-Group:

1. Red is to colors as triangle is to _____.
2. Tree is to plant as giraffe is to _____.
3. Eugene is to city as Oregon is to _____.
4. Shirt is to clothes as _____ is to food.
5. Hammer is to tool as _____ is to furniture.

Thing and an Action:

1. Whale is to swim as eagle is to _____.
2. Milk is to drink as bread is to _____.
3. Game is to play as bicycle is to _____.
4. Saw is to cut as _____ is to pound.
5. Ball is to throw as _____ is to hit.

Synonym/Antonym (Similar/Opposite):

1. Dog is to puppy as cat is to _____.
2. Big is to huge as _____ is to tiny.
3. Up is to high as down is to _____.
4. Sun is to moon as _____ is to night.
5. Happy is to glad as unhappy is to _____.

Sometimes it is more effective to describe something by what it is not.

Reverse analogy (or “what I am not):

“I am to dancing what Roseanne is to singing and Donald Duck to motivational speeches. I am as graceful as a refrigerator falling down a flight of stairs.”
(Leonard Pitts, “Curse of Rhythm Impairment.”
Miami Herald, Sep. 28, 2009)

Another way to practice analogies is to use the card game described on the following page. The more students practice analogies and become familiar with them, the easier it will be for them to use analogies in their own learning and writing. If students have difficulty remembering important information, encourage them to get together and brainstorm some possible analogies or connections between the difficult or new material and things that are more familiar or common.

An optional activity is to have students take some new concepts and prepare analogy posters that illustrate the connections between the new and the known.

Analogies Card Game

Analogies is a card game for whole class, small group, or individual practice that encourages word associations, conceptual relationships, and vocabulary development.

Directions:

Prepare a set of cards on which you write the analogy on the front and the answer on the back. Present the concept of an analogy to your students, stressing the importance of looking for the relationship between the given pair of words. Remind them this is the key to determining the missing word.

- rich : money :: well : health
- land : river :: body : veins
- pig : pork :: steer : beef
- small : petite :: large : giant
- panel : door :: pane : window
- eye : sight :: teeth : chew
- hand : elbow :: foot : knee
- meow : cat :: bark : dog
- baby : adult :: puppy : dog
- mitten : hand :: sock : foot
- author : story :: poet : poetry
- seed : tree :: egg : bird
- Edward : Ed :: Suzanne : Sue
- four : rectangle :: three : triangle

- gas : car :: wood : fire
- creek : river :: hill : mountain
- plane : hangar :: auto : garage
- son : father :: daughter : mother
- stem : flower :: trunk : tree
- pen : author :: brush : artist
- rose : vase :: water : pitcher
- heat : furnace :: cool : air conditioner
- man : men :: sheep : sheep
- boy : shirt :: girl : blouse
- sit : sat :: bring : brought
- cat : mouse :: spider : fly
- knife : cut :: pen : write
- lion : cage :: book : bookcase

Options:

- Prepare the cards and place them in a learning center. Individual students can use them at a specified time or as an extra activity when their class work has been completed.
- Some of the cards might have the third word missing instead of the fourth.
- Prepare the cards and present one a day to the whole class. You may designate a specific time during the day as “analogies” time or allow the students to work on the activity throughout the day until a solution is reached.
- Award a small prize to the student or small group who reaches the solution first.
- Encourage students to create their own analogies.
- Create (or have students create) analogies that reflect content information and vocabulary.
- Color-code cards with different content or for different topics and subject areas.
- Use a database and/or label-making program to create professional looking cards.
- Notch the upper right hand corner of each card to make for easy sorting.

Source: <http://www.teachersdesk.org/vocabanal.html>