Do You Ever Feel Like a Plastic Bag? Teaching Simile and Metaphor through Song

In this one day lesson, students will review similes and metaphors through the use of music and a graphic organizer. At the end, students will write two poems demonstrating their mastery of these types of figurative language.

Subject(s): English Language Arts
Grade Level(s): 5
Intended Audience: Educators

Instructional Time: 45 Minute(s)
Resource supports reading in content area: Yes

Suggested Technology: Computer for Presenter, Computers for Students, Internet Connection, LCD Projector, Overhead Projector, Speakers/Headphones, Microsoft Office
Freely Available: Yes

Keywords: simile, metaphor, figurative language, song, graphic organizer, poem, poetry, writing
Instructional Component Type(s): Lesson Plan, Worksheet, Assessment, Video/Audio/Animation, Formative Assessment
Resource Collection: CPALMS Lesson Plan Development Initiative

ATTACHMENTS
simile metaphor tchart.docx
Metaphor and Simile Scale.docx

LESSON CONTENT

Lesson Plan Template: General Lesson Plan

Learning Objectives: What should students know and be able to do as a result of this lesson?
By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Identify and describe the differences between similes and metaphors.
2. Interpret the meaning of similes and metaphors in context.
3. Use similes and metaphors in their own writings.
4. Explain and discuss the effect of these literary devices.

Prior Knowledge: What prior knowledge should students have for this lesson?
Students should have experience with:

1. Completing T-charts or other sorting activities
2. Conducting class discussions and working effectively with partners
3. General conventions of poetry

Students should:

1. Have a basic understanding of what similes and metaphors are, and be able to explain the meaning of simple similes and metaphors in context
2. Be able to distinguish the difference between literal and nonliteral meaning of similes and metaphors in context

Guiding Questions: What are the guiding questions for this lesson?
What is a simile?
What is a metaphor?
What is the figurative meaning of the simile or metaphor in the song?
Why do people use comparisons?
What is the importance and effect of figurative language on readers or listeners?

**Teaching Phase: How will the teacher present the concept or skill to students?**

1. As students enter the room, the teacher should have the bellwork topic projected or written on the board. Students should respond for 5 minutes to the following topic: Explain what one of your parents, guardians, or friends are like by comparing them to an animal. How are they like this animal? What qualities do they share? Be sure to write in complete sentences.

2. After 5 minutes have passed, ask students to pair with an elbow partner and share their writing. (2 minutes)

3. Bring the class back to whole group and explain that today they will be reviewing similes and metaphors. Remind students that these figurative language devices allow authors to compare two unlike things. By using comparisons authors are able to explain something more deeply in fewer words.

4. Pass out the T-chart. Tell students they will be listening to parts of popular songs that use similes and metaphors. They will need to listen carefully and also read the lyrics displayed as each song plays in order to identify the use of simile and metaphor. They will need to write down examples of similes and metaphors from the songs and place them on the correct part of the T-chart. Tell students that they should leave spaces in between their examples as they will also have to interpret and write down what they think the simile or metaphor means.

5. Play the TeacherTube video clip. This clip shows lyrics from popular songs that use similes and metaphors. Play the clip through the whole way without stopping once. Then, play the clip and pause when the lyrics are on the screen to give students a chance to fill in their T-charts. They should sort pieces of the lyrics into either the "simile" or "metaphor" columns.

6. As students fill in their charts, the teacher should circulate the room to check for understanding. If a student puts a lyric in the wrong column, the teacher should ask clarifying questions like "What is a simile? What is a metaphor? Should this lyric be moved to a different column?" Also, students should be interpreting what the chosen simile or metaphor means. Ask questions like, "What is being compared?" "Why would the singer want to compare these two unlike items?"

7. Teacher and students should come back together and discuss what students placed on their T-Chart. The teacher can provide corrective feedback where needed. Teacher and students can discuss these questions:
   - What is the effect of similes and metaphors in the songs?
   - How does it change your emotion/how does it effect you as a listener?
   - Why do people, especially singers and song writers, use comparisons?

**Guided Practice: What activities or exercises will the students complete with teacher guidance?**

For guided practice, students will be provided with a full length song that uses metaphors and/or similes. Teachers can use any song that suits the needs and maturity level of their students, as long as some similes or metaphors are included. One idea includes using the song "Stuck Like Glue" by Sugarland. Other options might include "You are the Sunshine of My Life" by Stevie Wonder, "Like a Rock" by Bob Seger, or "Like a Bridge Over Troubled Water" by Simon and Garfunkel.

1. Students will individually read through the song to identify the similes and/or metaphors in the song and interpret their meaning. Students can write their responses on the T-Chart provided during the teaching phase. Have students pair and discuss their responses.

2. The teacher can circulate and provide support and feedback as needed so that students will know if they have identified and interpreted the figurative language correctly.

3. With a partner, students should then brainstorm ideas to develop a short poem that uses at least two similes and metaphors. If students have trouble coming up with a topic, the teacher can work with students to brainstorm ideas as a whole class. The teacher can circulate and provide support and feedback as students write. Students will then present their short poems to the class. Then the teacher can provide corrective feedback as needed based on students' use of similes and metaphors.

4. The teacher may wish to return to some of the guiding questions and have students discuss, based on the figurative language they created and used in their poems, the following:
   - What is the figurative meaning of the simile or metaphor in the poem?
   - Why do people use comparisons?
   - What is the importance and effect of figurative language on readers or listeners?

**Independent Practice: What activities or exercises will students complete to reinforce the concepts and skills developed in the lesson?**

Explain to students that they will now individually write 2 poems using similes and metaphors to make sure they understand the difference. One poem will use ONLY similes to compare two unlike things, and the other poem will use ONLY metaphors to demonstrate a comparison. Students will choose two different family members or friends and write a poem about each.

The teacher should walk around and help students who need further assistance. Collect poems at the end of class. The teacher should use the simile and metaphor scale to grade the summative assessment.

**Closure: How will the teacher assist students in organizing the knowledge gained in the lesson?**

To close the lesson, the teacher can show student exemplar poems. Some of them may turn out really funny (ex. "My mother is like a broken record—constantly repeating") so they can be engaging examples to revisit similes and metaphors.

**Summative Assessment**

The Poem Activity in the Independent Practice Section will serve as summative assessment. A rubric/learning scale has been provided to help teachers assess the poem activity.

**Formative Assessment**
The simile and metaphor t-chart as well as the discussion during the TeacherTube Video Clip will serve as formative assessment. Please see the teaching phase for further information.

During the Guided Practice activity, students will work in pairs to write their own poem using similes and metaphors. When students present their work, the teacher will provide corrective feedback as needed. This activity will help teachers identify if students are ready to move on to the summative assessment or if re-teaching is needed on these skills.

**Feedback to Students**

Feedback to students will be given orally during the TeacherTube video and T-chart activity. As students sort lyrics into either the simile or metaphor sections, the teacher should ask guiding questions like:

1. What makes this a simile and not a metaphor?
2. Why do you think this musical artist chose to use this comparison?
3. What do you think the musical artist is trying to say?
4. What is the effect of similes and metaphors in the songs? How does it change your emotion?

During the Guided Practice activity, the teacher will provide support as students draft their poems by circulating the classroom and checking in on student partners as they work. If students struggle to develop a topic to write about, the teacher can brainstorm with the whole class ideas to stimulate their thinking for topics they could write about in their poem. As students present their poems, the teacher will provide corrective feedback on students use of similes and metaphors. Students can apply this feedback to the writing of their individual poems in the summative assessment.

**ACCOMMODATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Accommodations:**

Students who struggle during the T-chart activity can work with a peer or be given examples of a similes and metaphors. Also, if students are struggling with writing poems, they can be given previous example poems to guide their writing.

**Extensions:**

Students can use computers or iPads to find similes and metaphors in other songs, identify the similes and/or metaphors, and interpret their meaning.

**Suggested Technology:**

Computer for Presenter, Computers for Students, Internet Connection, LCD Projector, Overhead Projector, Speakers/Headphones, Microsoft Office

**Special Materials Needed:**

Copies of T-chart (attached)
Copies of learning scale (attached)
Copies of song containing similes/metaphors (suggestions in Guided Practice section)

**Additional Information/Instructions**

By Author/Submitter

My students enjoyed this lesson and after the YouTube video they were amazed at the similes and metaphors used in their favorite songs and by their favorite artists. This helped them to get excited about the next activity in the lesson and take ownership of their own writing using similes and metaphors.

This lesson addresses subpart a of standard LAFS.5.L.3.5.

**SOURCE AND ACCESS INFORMATION**

Contributed by: Debbie OSteen
Name of Author/Source: Debbie OSteen
District/ Organization of Contributor(s): St. Johns
Is this Resource freely Available? Yes
Access Privileges: Public
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**Related Standards**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>LAFS.5.L.3.5:</td>
<td>Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>a. Interpret figurative language, including similes and metaphors, in context.</td>
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<td>b. Recognize and explain the meaning of common idioms, adages, and proverbs.</td>
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<td>c. Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., synonyms, antonyms, homographs) to better understand each of the words.</td>
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<td>LAFS.5.W.4.10:</td>
<td>Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.</td>
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