

Objectives

- Students will understand the meaning and use of the terms “metaphor” and “simile.”
- Students will demonstrate their understanding of metaphors and similes by developing artworks representing the differences between them.
- Students will use effective techniques to create a real or imagined story.

Introduction

Teach students the difference between a metaphor, and a simile. Explain that both are commonly used in writing, but can be represented through art as well. Have the students brainstorm some similes they have heard before (i.e. as cute as a button, as hard as nails, as black as night), and write these on the board. Then create another list using metaphors (i.e. he is such a dear, the stars are sparkling diamonds, time is money). Show students Cynthia Lewis Clark’s, *Dancing Around the Elephant in the Room* and ask the following questions:

- What does the phrase “the elephant in the room” mean?
- How do you feel when there is an “elephant in the room?”
- How has the artist represented this metaphor?

Now show students Cassandra Christensen Barney’s, *Trying to Keep the Wind in My Sails* and discuss the questions below:

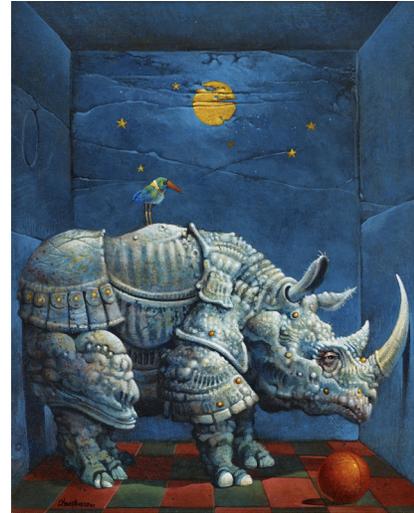
- What do you see in this painting?
- Is the artist just depicting a boat in the ocean?
- What other meaning could there be for “keeping the wind in my sails?”

Explain to students that these artists use metaphors to depict how they feel when they go through difficult times. Metaphors and similes can help us to describe things that are otherwise difficult to understand. By saying “I’m trying to keep the wind in my sails” people understand that you are having a hard time and trying to stay positive. When we learn to use these figures of speech, we can say a great deal in just one sentence.

Definitions

Metaphor: a figure of speech comparing two unlike things without the use of like or as.

Simile: a figure of speech comparing two unlike things using the words like or as.



James Christensen, *The Rhinoceros*, 1981

Materials

- 2 white sheets of paper, standard size
- Crayons/colored pencils
- 2-4 cotton balls
- 2 lined sheets of writing paper
- Cassandra Christensen Barney, *Trying to Keep the Wind in My Sails*
- Cynthia Lewis Clark, *Dancing Around the Elephant in the Room*

Images from the Museum

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Utah Core Standards

Reading
Literature Standard 4
Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in mythology (e.g., Hercules).

Writing
Standard 3
Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

Standard 5
With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.

Visual Arts
Strand: CREATE (4.V.CR.)
Students will generate artistic work by conceptualizing, organizing, and completing their artistic ideas. They will refine original work through persistence, reflection, and evaluation.

Activity

Pass out two blank sheets of paper to each student. Now that students have learned the difference between simile and metaphor, they will create works of art to represent each term.

With the first sheet of paper, students will create a Simile Rainbow. Have students write at the top of the page "A Rainbow is..." Students will then create similes by comparing each color of the rainbow to an object of that color, along with a description of that object (as red as a stoplight, glowing bright; as yellow as the sun, warm and happy; as purple as a grape, delicious and sweet). Once they have completed their Simile Rainbows, students should decorate their rainbow with cotton ball clouds, and maybe a pot of gold.

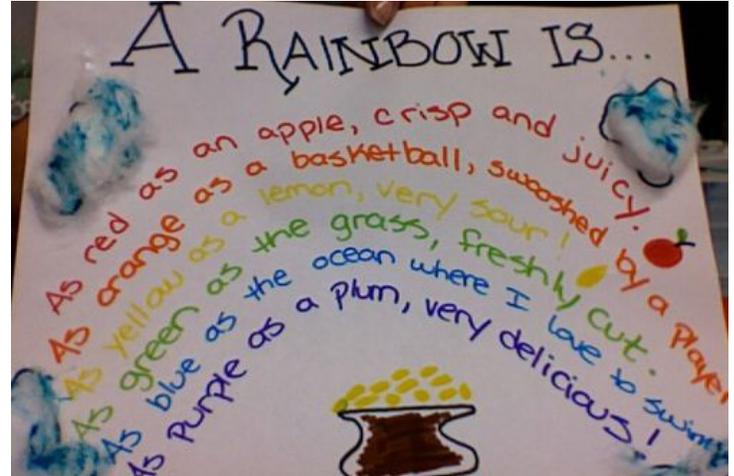
With the second sheet of paper, students will create a representation of a metaphor. Remind them of different types of metaphors they may have heard: time is money, America is a melting pot, the classroom is a zoo, you are my sunshine, etc. Have them choose one metaphor, and create a drawing representing that metaphor.

Once their pictures are complete, have the students create a story about their works of art. Encourage them to be creative in writing their stories, using their works of art as inspiration. Students should practice using both similes and metaphors in their story. Once it is written, help students to correct spelling or grammar mistakes within their story. These stories should then be displayed in the classroom, along with their works of art.



Cassandra Christensen Barney, *Trying to Keep the Wind in My Sails*, 2014

Student Examples:



<u>Simile</u>	<u>Metaphor</u>
A comparison of two different things using the words, "like" or "as".	A comparison of two different things that DOES NOT use the words "like" or "as".
Example: On her first day of school, Jane was <u>as cool as a cucumber</u> .	Example: Noah has a <u>heart of a lion</u> .

Variation

- Rather than one painting of a rainbow, students can make a book, using similes for each color on individual pages.
- Students can create metaphorical portraits of someone they know (i.e. My mom is my sunshine, my brother is a dear).

Assessment

Give students the opportunity to display their stories and pictures around the classroom. Each student should then take a few moments to present their artwork, and discuss how they used similes and metaphors in their story. Do you understand how to use similes and metaphors appropriately? What did you like about creating your artwork/story? Is there anything you could have done better?

Images:



Cynthia Lewis Clark, *Dancing Around the Elephant in the Room*, 2013



Cassandra Christensen Barney, *Trying to Keep the Wind in My Sails*, 2014 - courtesy of the artist



James Christensen, *The Rhinoceros*, 1981