

An Activity from ...



GNOMES ARE FOREVER

By CECI JENKINSON

Purpose: Clarify the difference between **simile and metaphor** and look at examples of each from *Gnomes are Forever*, sorting them appropriately. Practise being creative with similes. It's possible, but not as meaningful, to do this without having read *Gnomes are Forever*. Everyone will need a copy of the Handout.

Introduction: If necessary remind students what SIMILE and METAPHOR mean or elicit definitions and examples to establish the difference. (A simile is used to compare one thing to another, often using 'like', 'as' or 'than', while a metaphor is used to describe something as if it was something else.)

Explain that the class is going to look at several descriptions from *Gnomes are Forever* and divide them into similes and metaphors. Read out or write up the following as an example to do together:

'Slugger Stubbins was the school thug and steam-roller of the Under 11 rugby team; a boy as thick as a brick.'

- 'steam-roller of the Under 11 rugby team' is the metaphor;
- 'as thick as a brick' is the simile.

Activity 1: Hand out the list of similes and metaphors and the answer sheet. (NB: some numbers contain more than one.) Allow time at the end for the class to discuss which were their favourites and why.

Activity 2:

Ceci Jenkinson says, 'Similes are really useful for describing things, but some of them are getting a bit boring because they are used SO MUCH ('as old as the hills' for instance) or else they are meaningless because we have no idea what they are about (like 'as daft as a brush'). That's why I try to use funny and original ones in my books.'

Can the class think up any more similes that are used all the time? (Examples: as bold as brass / as big as an elephant / as busy as a bee / as cool as a cucumber / as dead as a doornail / as pretty as a picture / as mad as a hatter / as right as rain / as thin as a rake / as hard as nails / as clean as a whistle / as black as coal...)

NOW: Can they think of some fresher, funnier ones? (It might be helpful to write up the first parts of the ones you've just elicited, e.g. 'as big as...', 'as cool as...' to help the class focus on finding a good final word/phrase.)

Follow-up Activity:

Keep a lookout for similes and metaphors in your reading books and make a note of the good ones to share with the class.

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Underline each **simile** and **metaphor**, decide which it is and circle **S** or **M**.

1. Mr Grimble glanced up sharply and his face darkened like storm clouds over Mount Doom. He scowled at the boys from under a long black hedge of eyebrows. S M

2. The passengers' interest in the boys melted away faster than a snowflake on a nose. S M

3. It wasn't just any old knock - it was like the thundering hammer of a hoard of bloodthirsty raiders with a battering ram. S M

4. Five seconds later, Oli and Skipjack were sitting in the back of Reggie's Morgan, more excited than a pair of monkeys in a banana shop. S M

5. They begged him to put the top down, despite the fierce January wind that nearly bit their ears off. S M

6. Slugger Stubbins went on charging at the tackling bags, like an angry rhino practising for the tourist season. S M

7. Tara was a human bloodhound; if you had a secret diary or an embarrassing list, she would sniff it out. S M

8. The huge dog had wild yellow eyes and fangs like bananas. S M

9. You had to have a cool head to be a cat burglar and Reggie was the coolest cat in town. S M

10. 'Ello,' said a voice as deep as a coal mine. S M

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G	U	M	G	E	T	R	U	N	S
A	R	P	N	X	Q	A	O	M	K
S	P	I	O	F	L	D	R	O	I
W	B	A	M	P	E	H	F	A	P
A	N	P	E	B	O	N	E	O	J
G	U	B	S	E	L	N	C	L	A
M	R	E	G	G	I	E	D	E	C
R	D	I	A	M	O	N	D	N	K
A	D	K	E	Y	R	I	N	G	V
Z	T	R	E	E	H	O	U	S	E

KEYRING GNOMES REGGIE OLI
 TREEHOUSE GRIMBLE FENCE TARA
 SKIPJACK DIAMOND SWAG POND

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G	U	M	G	E	T	R	U	N	S
A	R	P	N	X	Q	A	O	M	K
S	P	I	O	F	L	D	R	O	I
W	B	A	M	P	E	H	F	A	P
A	N	P	E	B	O	N	E	O	J
G	U	B	S	E	L	N	C	L	A
M	R	E	G	G	I	E	D	E	C
R	D	I	A	M	O	N	D	N	K
A	D	K	E	Y	R	I	N	G	V
Z	T	R	E	E	H	O	U	S	E

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