

Emotion Similes

Pillar: Positive Social Environments

Division: II

Grade Levels: 5

Core Curriculum Connections: English Language Arts

I. Rationale: People express emotions through a variety of communication mediums such as music, drama, art, and writing. This activity offers students a creative way to explore and express a broad range of emotions and experiences in a safe, supportive, and caring environment. Students create similes using visual, tactile, and other sensory comparisons to depict and describe different emotions that they feel. These similes not only help students to create mood and mental images in their writing, but can also provide a therapeutic venue of discussing and sharing personal emotions in a positive, non-judgemental way to reflect their individual circumstances and experiences.

II. Activity Objectives:

- Students will define and recognize similes.
- Students will write a poem using similes.
- Students will feel safe to share a variety of emotions in a positive environment.
- Students will write a hyperbole to exaggerate the message conveyed in their poem.

III. Curriculum Outcomes:

Grade 5 English Language Arts

General Outcome 2: Students will listen, speak, read, write, view and represent to comprehend and respond personally and critically to oral, print and other media texts.

2.2 Respond to Texts

Specific Outcome: Appreciate the Artistry of Texts

- explain how simile and hyperbole are used to create mood and mental images

IV. Materials:

- To obtain more information on colour psychology, or if students are having difficulty associating certain emotions with a particular color, check out this link: <http://www.infoplease.com/spot/colors1.html>
- plain white paper for final copies of poems.

V. Procedure:

Prewriting:

1. Define simile: a figure of speech that compares two objects using *like*, *as*, or *than*. (She is as red as a rose. I slept like a log.) The objects being compared are not similar except in one respect. The girl and the rose are unlike except they share a blushing quality. The tired boy and the log are different except for their inertia.
2. Explain to students that they will write a poem based primarily on similes.
3. Brainstorm on the blackboard for a list of words naming emotions.
4. Provide the following structure for their poems.

The poem is a definition using all the senses and similes that the students make personal by using original detail, which reflects their lives and experiences.

Emotion is color. (This line is a metaphor.)
It sounds like...
It tastes like...
It smells like...
Emotion feels like...

A sample:
Indifference is water-stained gray.
It sounds like hissing static on the radio.
It tastes like overcooked noodles.
It smells like a musty, closed attic room.
Indifference feels like a lukewarm bath in rusty water.

Drafting:

1. Ask the students to pick an emotion word of their own from those brainstormed on the blackboard and begin their own poem. (Encourage students to include onomatopoeia in the description of sound.)

Revising:

1. Have the students edit and shape their poems (adding specific original detail where appropriate, and writing their final copy on plain paper).
2. Work individually with students.

Sharing:

1. When the final copies are completed on unlined paper, ask student volunteers to share their poems with the class to build trust, encourage healthy expression of emotions, and discuss ways to cope with negative emotions appropriately.

VI. Extensions

1. Define hyperbole: an exaggerated statement for effect and then discuss how hyperboles are used to create an effect in our writing.
2. Challenge the students to make an exaggerated statement (hyperbole) that encompasses the message that they are trying to convey about the emotion described in their poem. The more outrageous and original the hyperbole, the better.

Sample poem:

Anger is red
It sounds like a volcano erupting
It tastes like old, bitter coffee
It smells like rotting meat
It feels like an inferno within

Hyperbole: I was so angry that the fire inside me couldn't be extinguished with a million buckets of water.

3. Create a display area for poems. A bulletin board titled, "A Rainbow of Emotions" with all of the colours of the rainbow and possibly others to categorize the poems according to the colours that students associated with different emotions as a way to validate the range of emotions they feel.

VII. Assessment Ideas:

- Collect student poems to evaluate the use of similes ensuring that they are clearly indicated with the use of *like*, *as*, or *than*.
- Assess the impact that the similes have on the mood, message, and mental images created by the poem and whether or not the mood is consistently reflected throughout the poem.
- If the students completed the extension activity of writing a hyperbole, check for consistency in mood, message, and mental images conveyed in relation to the poem.