

Marvellous metaphors

Student worksheets

Task 1 – As brave as a lion

When we want to compare two things that are alike in some way, we sometimes use 'as ... as ...'. For example, sometimes we compare people with animals:

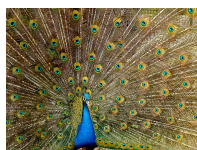
She's as brave as a lion.



We call these expressions **similes** to show that two different things can have similarities.

a. *With a partner, read the sentences and choose a phrase from the box to complete the simile.*

1. She is always working, in fact she's as busy as
2. He may look thin, but he's as strong as
3. When my Grandpa climbs the stairs, he's as slow as
4. My teacher knows a lot, in fact she's as wise as
5. When he showed me his new car, he looked as proud as
6. I tried to get her to change her mind, but she was as stubborn as



a peacock



a mule



a bee



an owl



an ox



a tortoise

b. *Now ask your partner if they know anyone who matches the similes above and why.*

Example: 'Do you know anyone who is as brave as a lion?'

'Yes, my sister is as brave as a lion, because she rides a bike in London.'

c. *See if you can think up two new similes using animals from your country.*

Task 2 – Finding metaphors

A **metaphor** is like a **simile** in that it compares and links two different ideas or things. However, with a **metaphor** there is no 'as ... as' or 'like' before it.

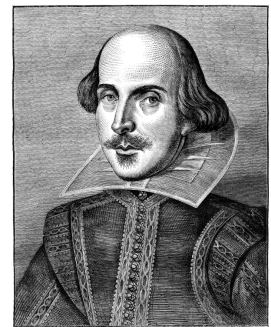
a. Read the text below and underline six metaphors that are connected to roads, travel or transport. The first one is done for you.

Mrs Smith has really got problems with her children. Her oldest son Jake is at a crossroads. He was in a dead-end job so he gave it up. Now he can't find another one and he doesn't know which way to turn. His relationship with his girlfriend is over. They have had a bumpy ride so they have decided to separate. Meanwhile the younger son, Cyril, has gone off the rails. He has stopped going to school. 'It's very worrying,' said Mrs Smith. 'I want both my sons to get back on track as soon as possible.'

Task 2 – Finding metaphors continued

b. Work with a partner and match the six metaphors in the text to the definitions below.

1. ended up in a chaotic state
2. something which has no future
3. a difficult time
4. a point where a decision must be made
5. to start working normally again
6. what to do next



Task 3 – Discussing metaphors

Shakespeare used a lot of metaphors to express his feelings about life. In Sonnet 73, he describes himself as an old man and compares himself to a time of year (a.) and then a time of day (b.). Read a. and b. in small groups.

- a. That time of year thou mayst in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon these boughs which shake against the cold
- b. In me thou seest the twilight of such day
As after sunset fadeth in the west
Which by and by black night doth take away

1. Which time of year does a. refer to?
2. Which time of day does b. refer to?
3. Decide which extract describes an old man best and why.

Glossary

thou mayst – you might

behold – see/notice

boughs – branches

thou seest – you see

fadeth - fades

doth take - takes

Task 4 – Writing metaphors

Below are three more of Shakespeare's metaphors and what they represent. Working in groups, can you invent another metaphor for each meaning?

<i>Shakespeare's metaphor</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
1. a 'well-tuned' instrument (from <i>Othello</i>)	a happy couple
2. 'pearls from diamonds dropped' (from <i>King Lear</i>)	tears
3. an 'undiscovered country' (from <i>Hamlet</i>)	death
